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THE SHACK LOCKER

***YARNS OF THE DEEP SEA
FISHING FLEETS***

BY

FREDERICK WILLIAM WALLACE

*(Author of "Blue Water—A Tale of the
Deep Sea Fishermen.")*

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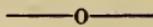
*TO MANY STERLING SHIP-
MATES — THESE TALES OF
THEIR LIVES ARE DEDICAT-
ED BY ONE WHO KNOWS....*

The writer is indebted to the Publishers and Editor of the ADVENTURE MAGAZINE for permission to reprint these short stories....

When a Canadian or American fisherman of the genuine deep-sea breed joins a Banker fitting out, the first questions he invariably asks are "Where's my bunk?" and "Where's the shack locker?" The one is essential to rest and sleep and the other is an institution on all Bank fishing craft, and every man who has hauled trawl, seine or hand-line off-shore on the Atlantic Banks knows its importance in the scheme of existence at sea. To be brief, the "shack locker" is a cupboard in the schooner's fore-castle in which is to be found the left over food of the daily meals. A fisherman is always ready to eat and between meals he can appease his appetite by a mug of tea or coffee and a rummage in the shack locker. The locker's contents are necessarily varied, consisting of the uneaten "grub" from breakfast, dinner and supper, and it is always appreciated. The stories published in this volume are varied too, and the author hopes they will be relished by those who love the sea and the truthful depiction of the lives of the men who wrest a heroic living from its depths.

INDEX.

	Page.
In the Bank Fog.....	9
Some Fishing!	39
Loot and Laundry	67
Hard Luck Finnegan	91
Winter Fishing	121
The Luck of the "Annie Crosby"	153
Clearing a Snarl.....	183
Stray Sheep	211
Dory-Mates	241
The Education of Billy Stream.....	275
A Skin Game at Deception Island.....	331



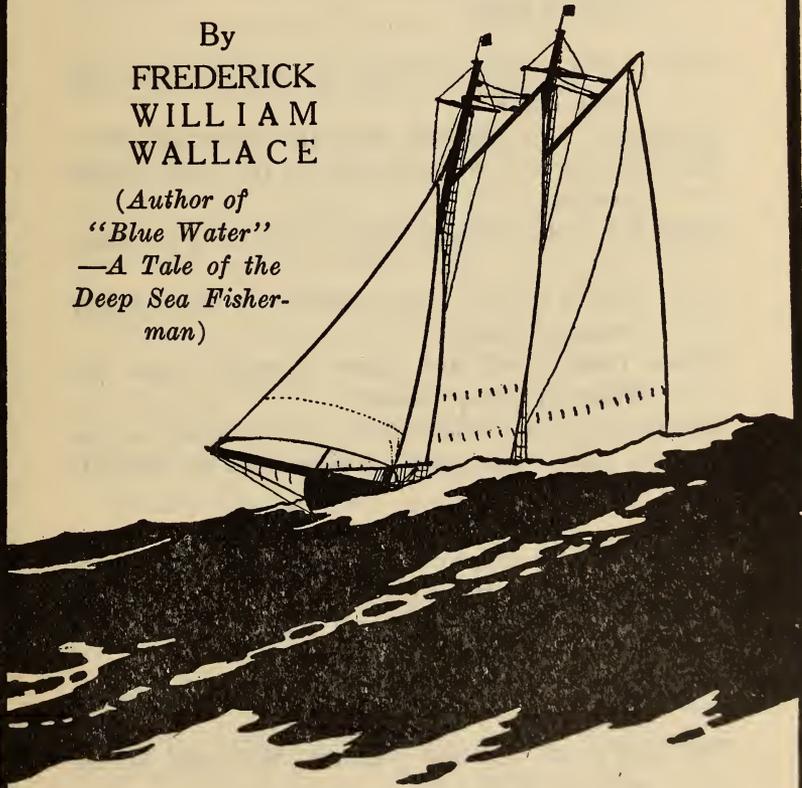
Decorations and photo by the author.

The Shack Locker

Yarns of the Deep Sea
Fishing Fleets

By
FREDERICK
WILLIAM
WALLACE

(Author of
"Blue Water"
—A Tale of the
*Deep Sea Fisher-
man*)



PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY THE INDUSTRIAL AND
EDUCATIONAL PRESS, MONTREAL AND TORONTO.

When it's snowin' an' ablowin' in a rousin' Winter
breeze

An' th' vessel's dancin' lively in th' roarin', crestin'
seas.

With a two-reef fores'l on her, lyin' on th' star-
board tack,

That's th' time th' hardy trawler gits a chanst to
ease his back.

Aye! they're smokin' an' they're yarnin', fore'n aft,
down below.

Or muggin' up or snoozin' while th' wild winds blow.
Th' gulls can't fly to wind'ard, an' th' liner skipper
swears,

There's a ruddy blinder ragin' as into it he tears.

Aye! they're makin' heavy weather in them gaudy
steamin' tanks,

When there's hell an' blazes blowin' 'crost th'
Western Ocean Banks,

But th' tiny little fisherman's as snug as she kin be
An' her gang's aswappin' guesses what th' cook 'll
have for tea.

Thar' ain't no breeze kin scare them when she's
headin' off th' shore.

Thar' ain't no seas kin daunt them though they
board her by th' score.

They laugh at windy weather, fog an' rain, an' bitter
cold—

For they're all blooded Bankers, boys, an' hardy
men an' bold.

In The Bank Fog



KIPPER WINSLOW swayed his body with the lurch of the vessel and glanced over the cards spread out on the locker. "I've got you, Jim!" he cried exultantly. "Two aces an' th' jack. Hand over th' pot, my bully! It'll jest about pay for that pair o' rubber boots I bought from Johnny there."

With a snort of disgust, Jim Cameron shoved the small collection of silver over, and as the skipper arose from the inverted bucket upon which he had been seated the card-players stowed the well-worn pack away and calculated they go for'ard for a "mug up."

While the cabin crowd were making their way full speed for the "shack" locker, Winslow tossed his winnings into the chart drawer and proceeded to study the well-thumbed map of the Atlantic coast from Halifax to the Delaware.

"Where are we now, skipper?" inquired Bill Logan, the spare hand, as he piled another shovel-ful of coal on the stove.

"Somewhere on th' western edge of La Have," answered Winslow. "Th' last sound was forty-six fathoms, an' as we've been a-joggin' for th' best part of th' day, I cal'late we ain't very far away from that. Jump on deck, Bill, an' see if th' fog's liftin' any."

The spare hand clambered leisurely up the companion—he was a fat man and could not be hurried—and took a squint at the dense pall which shrouded everything.

“Thick as mud, skipper,” he reported. “Ye cain’t see th’ forem’st from aft here, an’ th’ winds dyin’ or goin’ t’ shift. Fine night for a blame steamer t’ slam inter us.”

Winslow looked up from the chart with just a trace of anxiety in his clean-cut face. It is the skipper aboard a fishing vessel who does all the worrying, not the men; and fog gives him more concern than the wildest winds that blow. Closing the drawer he pulled on his oilskins and after a glance at the barometer hovering on the thirty, went upon deck. Pacing the quarter, a shadowy figure hailed him.

“Thick, skipper. Wind’s goin’ flat. In another hour she’ll be slammin’ them blasted booms about an’ keepin’ a man from his sleep with th’ racket. Dam’ fogs, anyway!” As an after thought, he added: “Who won th’ game?”

“I did,” answered Winslow. “Got Johnny Watson’s new rubber boots out of it. Who’s lookin’ out for’ard? Where’s your dory-mate?”

“Down muggin’ up, I cal’late,” replied the figure. “He’s an awful feller fur his belly is that dory-mate o’ mine. He’s eatin’ an’ muggin’ up th’ best part o’ his time——”

“He is, eh?” growled the other. “Waal, you go for’ard an’ haul him away from fillin’ that hole in his face, an’ tell him to stand on watch when it’s *his* watch! By th’ Lord Harry! Ye’d think it was to anchor in harbor we were, instead of bein’ in th’ track of steamers and a fog as thick as your dory-mate’s skull. Get him up an’ standin’ for-ard by th’ windlass with th’ horn, an’ tell him it’s only one blast for starb’d tack, or he’ll be pumpin’ that blame horn to whatever tune comes into his head. An’ say, you git a couple torches up aft here an’ keep ’em handy for showin’ as soon as you hear

anythin'. I ain't runnin' no risks after th' *Grace Thomas* was run down on this same spot. Ten of her gang went to their long port that time, ye'll remember."

All hands turned in early. Fishermen leave the skipper to worry about the fog and place more of their trust in him than they do in Providence. A "set" had been made in the morning, but the fog shut down at noon, and after "dressing down," the gang enjoyed a "lay off" after six days of hard fishing. Down in the schooner's hold were stowed some one hundred thousand pounds of fresh fish, and with enough herring bait for one more day Winslow kept the vessel jogging on the berth until the fog thinned sufficiently to warrant hoisting the dories out.

With her jumbo tail rope belayed to windward, the *Isabel Winslow* lifted to the oily roll of the swell, and as she wallowed in the trough with scarcely enough wind to keep the sails full, the canvas flapped; reef-points and gaff-downhauls pattered and slapped, and the booms fetched up on the jibing gear with shocks which caused the schooner to tremble in every timber.



AT MIDNIGHT, when the wind dropped, the pandemonium on deck was too much even for hardened sleepers like fishermen, and in their bunks they cursed the noise with weird oaths. From his berth Winslow bawled up the companion:

"Git th' boom tackle on! That infernal 'row is gettin' on my nerves. How's th' weather?"

A muffled voice from the deck answered:

"Jest th' same. Shuttin' down thicker, if anything. I never see sich a fog."

Winslow yawned wearily.

“I cal’late I’d better get up on deck for a spell,” he muttered. “These fellers are inclined t’ be careless an’ I ain’t got any desire t’ make my wife a widow. Blast th’ fog;” And grumbling to himself, he pulled on his boots and “oiled up.”

It was thick and no error. In the darkness of the night the mist wreathed the sea in a ghostly pall.

Burke and the skipper paced the quarter, smoking, and for’ard, Henderson, with the horn placed on the barrel of the windlass, sent the monotonous drone of the instrument into the mist at one minute intervals. It was wet and cold on deck, and Winslow’s thoughts went back to the neat little cottage overlooking Anchorville Bay.

“Ay, Isabel,” he murmured to himself, “ ’tis hard on th’ girl that marries a fisherman. Ye have all the anxiety when your man’s at sea. Every breeze o’ wind that blows keeps ye worryin’ about them on th’ water, but th’ winds are nawthin’, sweetheart—’tis th’ fogs that are th’ worst. Th’ cold, clammy, Atlantic fogs with th’ steamers a-tearin’ through them full pelt an’ th’ poor helpless devils o’ fishermen a-tryin’ to let them know where they are with a horn like th’ cheep of a sparrow—” He stopped suddenly in his ruminations and listened, and Burke, who was thinking of a warm bunk and a mug-up, paused as well. “Did ye hear anything?” cried Winslow.

“I thought I h’ard a whistle out thar’ jest now, but a feller fancies all kinds o’ things in them bloody mists.”

Whoo-oo-o-o-ah! Henderson was plying the horn for’ard, but beyond the gurgle and crash of water and gear nothing disturbed the otherwise uncanny stillness. Winslow stood by the gurry-kid listening intently, while Burke fell to pacing the deck again

and wishing that his watch was up and he was in his blankets with a good hot mug of coffee under his belt. Suddenly Winslow's voice sung out with strident harshness on the heavy air:

"D'ye hear anything for'ard?" And rolling back from the mist came Henderson's hail: "Vessel blow-in' a horn t' wind'ard. Close aboard!"

Burke had stopped in his three steps and a turn and was staring out over the stern.

"Steamer whistlin' dead aft here, skipper!" he cried. Winslow jumped to Burke's side. *Zzz-zz-zz-ah!* A steamer's siren all right. "Hell!" he ejaculated. "Two of them. Git them torches alight, they're both close aboard! Hurry, for th' love o' Mike, or they'll be into us!"

Zzzz-zz-zz-ah! The blare of the siren boomed out in the echoing fog. It seemed to come from various quarters, and hastily igniting the flaming torches, Burke and the skipper stared into the wall of vapor.

"Keep your eyes skinned for her lights!" cried Winslow. "She'll be——"

"Vessel's green light on th' starb'd bow!" sung out Henderson from the windlass for'ard.

With a muttered oath, Winslow snatched up a flaring torch and ran for'ard.

"Here, Henderson," he cried, "take this torch an' keep that horn goin'! There's a steamer astern of us as well." Stepping over to the foc'sle scuttle, he shoved the slide back and bawled in a hurricane roar: "All up, fellers! Git yer torches up here! Up on deck now lively!"

"She's showin' her red an' green, skipper!" cried Henderson, excitedly pumping away at the droning horn. "There's her masthead light——"

"Damn! She'll be into us, by th' Lord Harry!

Git th' cabin crowd out of their bunks, Burke, and all torches lighted!"



IN JIG time the whole crew were on deck and a dozen flaming, smoking kerosene torches illuminated the schooner's sails and spars in yellow effulgence, while the men, as they lounged around, stood out in silhouette against the glare—their anxious features limned in Rembrandtesque lines. *Hooo-oo-oo-o-o!* The steamer standing toward them shrieked shrilly, and almost imperceptibly her red light was eclipsed as she came around on a starboard helm. For a few seconds, the thresh of her screw and the pulsating of her engines could be heard by the listening fishermen, then she vanished.

"Where's that other craft astern?" queried Winslow. "Can ye see him yet, fellers?"

Zzzzz-zz-zz-z-ah! From out of the murk on the schooner's starboard quarter it came, but no lights could be seen. Men listened intently—the strain being almost hypnotic—and though few had oilskins on, the chill of the night passed unnoticed. It is an eery feeling—a sensation of utter helplessness—to be slatting around in a fog becalmed and with steamers shrieking their warnings in the gloom. The fishermen begin to think of the poor fellows lying fathoms deep, sent to their doom in the smoking mists of the Banks. One never knows where to locate the blasts. They may be to starboard or port, ahead or astern, for the Bank fog plays queer tricks with acoustics, and until a light penetrates the vapor one has a feeling of insecurity which is positively nerve shaking. The skipper was the first to break into speech, and his voice seemed to grate on the ear:

"I cal'late that feller has passed astern of us. Listen!"

Whoo-oo-o-o! Zzz-zz-zz-zah! The blasts, one high and piercing, and the other bass and vibrant, rolled out of the veil to starboard, and then something happened—

“What in Hades was that?” barked a hoarse voice. “Did ye hear it, boys? I c’d feel a shock of air on my face as if I was hit with a wet mitten!”

“They’ve come together!” cried Winslow. “Can’t ye hear th’ grind of metal? There go th’ whistles now! Hark to them! Hear th’ shouts! Holy Sailor!”

The skipper jumped for the wheel and cast the becket off while the air resounded with siren blasts. Glancing around, he sniffed at the light wind blowing over the quarter and bearing down with it the wreathing, smoking vapor.

“Draw away on your jumbo, there! Cast off that boom tackle!” Men sprang as if electrified to obey orders. “Mainsheet! Bring her aboard!” And the young skipper spun the wheel over and swung the vessel up in the direction from which the shrieking calls for help were rending the sight-veiling pall.

“See anything, fellers?” bawled Winslow.

“Nawthin’!” came the answer in a growling chorus from the crowd clustered for’ard. For ten minutes more they see-sawed over the swells, then Jimmy Thomas’s voice rolled down from nothingness aloft. “Come up, Harry! There’s a steamer off t’ starb’d. Looks t’ me as ef she was sinkin’!”

The young skipper brought the vessel to the wind.

“Make th’ tail rope fast!” he cried, then paused to listen.

Out of the fog came the shouts of men and the steady roar of escaping steam. There were screams as of frightened women. The continuous blare of the siren dwindled off to a feeble hiss and stopped.

“No more whistling,” muttered Winslow. “Water’s

floodin' her fire-room. Engineer's opened the escapes. I'm thinkin' there's women out yonder. Women? By th' Lord Harry!" As if he had not realized it before, he cried to Henderson who was standing mutely by: "I wonder ef that's a coal boat or one o' them passenger craft. God! Git th' dories over th' side! There may be folks drownin' while we're standin' by an' listenin' to their yells." Cupping his hands to his mouth, he roared: "Dories over, fellers! Pull out an' see what ye can do. Take torches with you. Lower away, starboard dory!"



IN LESS time than it takes to relate, ten double-trawl dories with their crews were pulling into the void of fog in the direction from whence the shouting came. From the schooner the luminous glare of the torches could be seen for a few minutes after the boats had been swallowed up in the mist, and when that disappeared the three men on the vessel's decks strained eyes and ears for sight or sound. All around lay the impenetrable blanket of the Bank fog, and the gallant schooner lifted and lurched to the long swell surging over the shoal ground of La Have.

The cook from amidships was the first to hail.

"Here's a boat a-comin!" he cried excitedly, and following his hail a ship's quarter-boat bumped alongside. The skipper jumped to the rail and the flaming torch he held in his hand illuminated the pale, panic-stricken faces of a number of men.

"What's th' trouble out yonder?" queried Winslow. "What vessel are ye from?"

A pig-faced fireman in grimy dungarees and with a sweat rag around his neck looked up and replied:

"We're th' Northern Coast liner *Alcestis* from Halifax t' New Yoick. Some blighter run us down an' she's sinkin'!"

“The *Alcestis!*” cried the skipper. “Holy Sailor! Any passengers aboard?”

The man hesitated curiously and Winslow noticed the look on his face in the sputtering glare of the torch.

“Any passengers aboard?” he repeated with a menacing harshness in his voice.

“Ay!” answered the fireman hoarsely. “I guess there were some.”

“Where are they?” The fishing skipper’s tones were harsher than before.

“We dunno,” snarled a member of the black squad shivering in his scanty clothing. “Let’s come aboard. God! we’re freezin’ out here!” Winslow glanced over the sullen, yet appealing faces in the boat.

“Cast their painter off!” he roared to the cook. “They’re a dam’ lot of bunker-cats who’ve rushed th’ boat an’ saved their own dirty skins! White-livered swabs! Back you go, blast ye, an’ get some o’ th’ passengers ye ran away from, or I’ll leave ye to drown as ye did the others!”

The pig-faced fireman, with a vicious oath, made a jump for the rail, but as he made the spring Winslow smashed him between the eyes with his fist and knocked him back sprawling over the quarter-boat’s thwarts.

“Sheer off now an’ get some of th’ people ye ran away from, or I’ll draw away an’ run ye under——”

“Dory on the starb’d!” yelled Logan, and out of the mist came Number Four dory loaded down to within an inch of her gunnel with a crowd of people Jimmy Thomas, pulling the dory’s bow oar, cautiously hove the painter aboard and the cook caught it, while Winslow stood in the waist and grabbed the rescued persons, most of whom were women and children, as the dory rose on a sea.

“By th’ Great Trawl Hook!” ejaculated Logan when the dory was discharged. “Ain’t that a dory load? How many? Two men, six women, four kids an’ Thomas an’ Jackson. Sink me ef I iver saw fourteen in an eighteen-foot dory afore! An’ here comes Henderson with as many more, by th’ Lord Harry!”

Dory after dory pulled out of the fog and, ranging alongside, perilously deep with their living freight, the rescued passengers were helped aboard. The schooner’s decks were crowded with them. Women in silken kimonos, half dressed as they had rushed from their berths; and men, barefooted and in pajamas. Children were crying pitifully with the cold, and mothers were endeavoring to quiet their fears with reassuring words. Winslow was bewildered for the nonce and stood gazing at the mob illuminated in the glare of the torches.

“What in th’ deuce am I agoin’ to do with this crowd?” he murmured in amaze. “An’ th’ gang has pulled back for more on them!”



A CLEAN-BUILT young man, bare-footed and in shirt and trousers, elbowed his way through the huddle of rescued people and approached the fishing skipper.

“Excuse me, sir,” he said. “I presume you’re the master of this vessel. I’m one of the passengers off that *Alcestis*. Can I help in any way?”

“Why, yes!” answered Winslow. “I cal’late some o’ th’ women an’ kids sh’d be got below an inter th’ bunks. Some of them are wet an’ cold, but Lord save us! there ain’t much room in a fishing vessel. Wait a second! Hey, cook!”

“Git plenty coffee on an’ some kind of hot grub. Hustle now! An’ you, sir”—turning to the young man at his side—“you might git th’ ladies an’ kids below deck and inter th’ bunks. There’s seventeen

bunks for'ard and eight aft, so fill yer crowd with coffee an' grub and arrange 'em fore an' aft accordin' to your judgment. No men to be berthed with th' skirts, mind, so ye'll have t' cram as many women in th' foc'sle as it'll hold." And having prescribed the fishermen's remedy for all ills of the sea. Winslow hailed some of the men passengers: "Say, you men from th' steamer! There's a quarter-boat with a bunch of coal-shovelers alongside here."

"The scoundrels!" cried a little gentleman clad only in pince-nez and pajamas. "They rushed the only boat we could swing out and pulled away in it —" And he paused in a fit of shivering.

Winslow grunted. "I cal'lated they'd done some-thin' like that. See that they don't come aboard. Let 'em swing aft an' we'll tow them, th' dirty ash-birds! I've a darn good mind t' cut 'em adrift an' let 'em pull for th' land. Here come th' dories! Stand by, Bill! Some o' you gentlemen catch th' dory painters an' help th' people aboard."

In the light of the torches the rescued were hauled over the rail and the women and children among them hurried below into the foc'sle.

"All aboard, skipper!" bawled Thomas above the buzz of excited voices and semi-hysterical cries.

"H'ist th' dories aboard! Let that ship's quarter-boat tow astern. Is that steamer's skipper there?"

A grizzled old man in soaking uniform detached himself from the shivering mob.

"I'm him, sir," he said dejectedly.

"How did it happen?"

The other shook his head.

"I don't rightly know," he answered dismally. "I saw your lights an' sheered off, then I h'ard the other fellow's whistle and saw his green light showing to port. It was up to him to keep clear of me. I rang my craft down to stop and the other vessel

tried to keep clear of me but he was too close and he banged into me jest for'ard of th' bridge deck. After he sheered off we examined our damage and it didn't appear to be much, so the other fellow, who was standing by, said he was making water and going to steam for the land, and it was only when he disappeared in the fog that the firemen came from below and said the water was rising over the stokehold floor. We then tried to get the boats out, but you know the condition of coasting vessels' boats—seams open an' jest covered with paint--and when we did get one swung out, the ash-cats rushed it and cleared out. I sure reckoned it was all day with us until you brave fellows came alongside and took us off."

"How many d'ye cal'late we have aboard here?" interrupted Winslow. "Is everybody saved?"

"Ay! We got them all clear, thank God!" replied the captain. "There's sixty passengers and thirty-five of a crew including those — swabs towing astern."

"By th' Lord Harry!" cried the fishing skipper in perplexity. "That makes over a hundred souls aboard here—a hundred an' eighteen to be exact!" The young passenger who had been detailed to look after the women and children now stepped up. "I've got all the women and kids below, skipper. Some of them are in the bunks and we've fixed up shakedown on the floor for others. We have thirty women and children there, and I'm putting eight kids into the cabin bunks. The poor little devils are only half clothed. There'll be plenty of room in the cabin for any of the men that want to go below."

"All right, good work!" Raising his voice, Winslow cried to the huddle of men around the decks: "Any of you fellers, barrin' th' steamboat's men, that's cold for want o' clothes kin git below in th'

cabin here. Ef there's any clothes down there that ye kin wear, help yourselves. I'll git coffee an' grub sent around jest as soon as th' cook kin make it. Clear th' decks now, please! Jimmy and Bill! Git th' riding sail out th' locker. Th' steamboat men kin rig a tent out of it between th' dories. It'll all help."

Glancing around at the wreathing mist which still enveloped them, the young skipper made up his mind quickly. The water in the schooner's tanks was getting low; there was a hint of windy weather in the air, and with such a crowd aboard there was but one thing to do, and that was to make the land as quickly as possible.

II.



SOUTHEAST HARBOR, the nearest port, was sixty miles away, and after taking a cast of the lead for a point of departure, Winslow swung the vessel off for the land, west by north, with a light breeze blowing over the starboard quarter.

"H'ist balloon an' stays'l, fellers!" he sang out, and elbowing their way among the crowd of men who thronged the decks the fishermen set the light sails and sheeted down. Handing the wheel over to Jimmy Thomas the skipper stepped down into the cabin, which was crowded with a number of gentlemen passengers clad for the most part in shirt and trousers. A huge pot of coffee was on the stove, and from out of cans and graniteware mugs, stock-broker, merchant, lawyer, capitalist and clerk sipped the hot brew with satisfactory smacks.

In the cabin bunks lay a number of little children rolled up in the men's gurry-smelling blankets fast asleep and totally oblivious of the hum of conversation buzzing around them. "Poor kids!" said Wins-

low, as he glanced at them. "They've had a hard night."

As he took down a dry pair of mittens from the hook rack above the stove a stout gentleman, ludicrous in a striped pajama jacket, a sleeping-cap and a pair of oilskin trousers, spoke to him.

"You're the captain of this fish-smack, sir?"

"Of this *fishing vessel*, sir!" corrected Winslow.

"Humph!" grunted he of the sleeping-cap. "How far are we from the nearest land?"

"'Bout sixty miles."

"When d'ye reckon we'll get there?"

"Waal, that's hard to say. This ain't a steamer, but I sh'd say ef th' wind 'll come away a little more, we sh'd make Southeast Harbor by nine or ten in th' mornin'. Ef I meet a steamer, I kin transfer you, but th' weather's still thick and there ain't much chance of seeing anything until we raise th' land."

"Yes, yes, I know," said the little gentleman impatiently. "Do all you can to get us ashore as quickly as possible. I'm sure I'll have an attack of rheumatism after this and the smell of this hole makes me feel sick already. Make your smack—I mean fishing vessel—sail as hard as possible."

Winslow smiled meaningly to himself as he glanced at the barometer.

"Twenty-nine an' nine-tenths. Falling." Turning around to the crowd huddling the stove and swilling coffee and eating doughnuts he said: "Make yourselves comfortable. If you want anything, sing out, but don't come up on deck." And amid their profuse thanks he left them.

On deck again, Thomas called his attention to the fact that it was breezing up. "An' she's purty deep, Harry. What with th' fish we have an' this crowd aboard, I'm thinkin' she's goin' t' be a trifle wet ef it starts blowin' any."

“I know it, Jimmy,” said the skipper with a laugh, “but there’s a stout old guy in th’ cabin there who wants us to drive this fishing-smack—that’s what he calls this able vessel—as hard as possible. He says th’ cabin smells bad.”

“Lord!” grunted Thomas. “We’ll drive her, never fear, an’ when she starts her caperin’ around, th’ cabin’ll stink a dam’ sight worse than it does now. Ha! ha! Wait till th’ bilge gets stirred up. How’s th’ glass?”

“Dropped a tenth.”

Humph!” Thomas bit off a chew. “I’m afraid, Harry, she’ll smash up somethin’ around decks ef it breezes up. She’s powerful deep. There’s lee an’ weather water sluicin’ through them scupper-holes an’ there ain’t a puff yet.”

“I’ve been thinkin’ of that, Jimmy,” replied the skipper slowly, “an’ I cal’late we’d better git th’ gang busy heavin’ out th’ fish. Ef they kin git th’ for’ard pens empty, it’ll bring her up by th’ head an’ lift th’ weight in th’ foc’sle.” Turning around to the crew lounging around the house and talking to the officers of the *Alcestis*, he cried: “Git th’ hatch off, fellers, an’ pitch out all th’ fish in th’ for’ard pens. I hate to’ heave good fish over th’ side, but we’ll have t’ do it. It’s breezin’ up.”



WITHOUT a murmur the men started in, and soon basket after basket of fine cod, haddock, hake and pollock were being reconsigned to the element they were taken out of, while the schooner headed lazily on her course. The young New Yorker who had proved such an able lieutenant in making things comfortable for the women and children watched the action of the fishermen with strange feelings and entered the cabin.

To his fellow passengers he related what the fishermen were doing and added:

“It’s pretty hard on these men to have to throw away their catch like this. God knows, they earn their living hard enough, and I say it’s up to us to make good their loss as soon as we get ashore.”

The stout party in the nightcap waved his hand with a short gesture of finality.

“Don’t worry about that, my friend,” he said pompously. “I’m a lawyer, and I’ll make it my business to squeeze that steamship company for a sum that’ll more than pay these fishermen for their loss. I’ve got a case against that company with their rotten life-boats—criminal negligence, I call it. These fishermen will be compensated—*aequitas sequitur legem*—so say no more about it.”

By three in the morning the wind stiffened and the fog was wreathing and reeling around in smoky gusts. Under her four lowers, balloon and stays’l, the schooner snored through the inky water with the lee-rail scupper-holes squirting jets of foam half across the deck. Astern lurched the quarter-boat with ten very miserable members of the steamship’s fire-room. Coffee and food had been passed out to them, but their plight was by no means enviable, for as they rode at the end of their painter they were drenched in the chilly spray and it was only by continual bailing that the boat kept afloat. Many times they implored to be taken aboard, but Winslow referred them to their own skipper, and he, a “Down-easter” of the old school, cursed them with lurid deep-water oaths and told them to “freeze and be damned!”

In the forecastle, dimly illuminated by two oil-lamps, John the cook sweated over the stove brewing tea and coffee and stewing a “whale of a chowder”—it takes a long time for one man to prepare food

and drink for over a hundred people — and in their bunks and on the lockers and floor women and children of all degrees in social status consoled one another or lay mute in the miseries of seasickness. Mrs. Stuyvesant Hopkins, a well known New York society woman, wrapped in a gurry-covered oilskin coat, conversed with plain Jessie Teebo bound for service in Brooklyn, and both sipped coffee from the same battered enamel mug.

Miss Anette Schiller, artist and literary woman, washed cups and plates at the galley sink and evoked the cook's admiration by the way in which she accomplished her self-imposed task in spite of the lurching and rolling of the vessel. In a noisome peak bunk, lately occupied by "Fishy" Williams—a fisherman who was by no means particular whether he turned in in slime-covered boots and oilskins—Mrs. John H. Potter, the wife of a stock-broker and the leader of an exclusive Newport clique, lay rolled in the aforesaid Fishy's blanket, detestably seasick. Muriel Wilson, a pretty Vassar girl with suffragette ideas and homeward bound from a vacation, assisted in passing around cups of coffee and in drying the sodden underwear of a number of her fellow passengers.

If John the cook hadn't been a married man, he would have felt highly embarrassed by the delicate position he was in. Winslow, in a tour of inspection forward, glanced around the foc-sle and saw that things were as comfortable as it was possible to make them aboard a fishing vessel.

"I'm afraid there'll be trouble here in a little while," he muttered as he passed the cook.

"How?" queried that worthy.

"Wind," replied Winslow laconically, and the cook understood.

As the vessel hauled off the Bank the wind increased to a fresh breeze and under the press of sail she dived and lurched into the seas with smashes that sent the spray flying over the decks. Amidships a crowd of men—officers, engineers, stewards and deck-hands — huddled under the riding-sail stretched across the space between the dories and smoked, chewed and cursed with seamanlike philosophy. Filled up with coffee and food, they were unceremoniously told to remain where they were, and sailor fashion they obeyed orders and growled as the flying spray flew over their improvised shelter.

Stepping down into the cabin at four, Winslow noted a further fall of one-tenth in the barometer. The wind was rising; the tide was backing against it; and the vessel was commencing the antics peculiar to fishing schooners when they are being driven, while the nauseating smell of disturbed bilge-water—fishermen's bilge-water, the kind that has sulphuretted hydrogen hull-down for aroma—was permeating the atmosphere below decks. Many of the passengers had succumbed to the pitching and the bilge-water and laid in grotesque contortions upon floor or locker, ashen-faced and horribly sick. The legal gentleman was perspiring and white looking and in a nervous voice asked the young skipper if there was any way of alleviating the existing conditions.

“Gentlemen,” replied Winslow decisively, “there is only one thing I can do. I've got to get this vessel into port in the quickest possible time, even if it blows a gale of wind. The water in our tanks is gone—the cook has used it all in making tea and coffee for you people. We fishermen had to drink melted ice off the fish for our coffee jest now, an' it don't taste nice. With women aboard I can't keep this vessel at sea an hour longer than I can help,

so if you are sufferin' any discomfort jest remember it won't be for long, and you'll oblige me by stayin' below deck. We're doin' our best.'" And he swung up on deck again.

III.



THE rescued passengers of the *Alcestis* are never likely to forget that drive for the land, nor will Captain Harry Winslow and the crew of the *Isabel Winslow*. The wind piped up to a stiff breeze and under all sail and bucking against the tide the schooner stormed hotfoot for Southeast Harbor with a roaring bone in her teeth. The weather was as thick as mud and called for extraordinary vigilance on the part of Winslow and his crew as they drove through the clammy veil. Three or four oil-skin-clad forms lolled over the windlass and the anchor-stock peering ahead through the mist and driving spray, while aft, Winslow and Thomas hung to the wheel and tried to ease the vessel as much as possible in her wild lurches.

With sheets started and boom over the quarter the schooner made conditions below decks a state of refined misery for the passengers. The lurching and pitching, the thunderous crashes of the sea on the bows, began to imbue the women in the foc'sle with a feeling bordering on panic, and John the

cook was quick to notice the feeling. *Crash!* would go her bow into a surge, the starboard anchor-stock would thump against the side and the jumbo fetch up on the traveler with a sudden shock. Children began to wail in fright and women sobbed hysterically with fear and seasickness. John sang all the songs he knew with the laudable endeavor to calm the nervous women, and as he pottered around the reeling foc'sle the ladies were highly edified by the exploits of "Captain Billy Bester of the Seiner *Mary Ann.*"

Flying on the wings of the wind, the vessel began to pull over the shoal water of Roseway Bank, and bucking the tide on shoal water with a breeze of wind driving her under sail there was the devil to pay and no pitch hot. The gang speedily left the windlass lookout and took to the rigging; the survivors camping amidships huddled in the dories and on top of the booby-hatch to get clear of the boarding seas, and Thomas and the skipper lashed themselves to the wheel-box.

"Look out for yourselves," bawled Winslow, above the din. "She's goin' t' be wet for a spell!"

And she was. *Swash!* Down went her long bowsprit into a roaring comber and coming up she scooped it aboard wholesale. Tearing along the deck, swirling draw-buckets and loose ends of gear in its path, it finally sluiced over the taffrail. *Swish!* She side-licked a cresting greenback and, shuddering to the shock, sent the spray flying like rain. Up and down, staggering, trembling, lifting

and heaving, the gallant vessel surged and stormed along through the rip like an express train and made the water fly.

Below decks it was "hell fur sartain," as the cook afterward remarked. The bilge-water was going full blast and the lamps were beginning to burn blue; the passengers were being heaved about like peas in a pod, and the cabin resounded with the curses of men and the foc'sle with the screams and howls of frightened women and children. *Crash!* Down the foc'sle scuttle came an avalanche of green water, and, swirling and sputtering around the stove, it would only drain away to be followed by another one. The Vassar girl, unaffected by seasickness and with her suffragette notions, scornfully chided the weaknesses of her fellow passengers, and for a while kept them in hand.



AFT in the cabin there was trouble of a similar nature. Nervous men insisted on coming on deck to avoid being poisoned by the bilge reek or burned by being hove against the stove, and Winslow left the steamship's captain to deal with them. This he did with a diplomacy which was surprising in such a rough old sea-dog, and with his body jammed in the companion he practically bottled the inmates of the cabin up while he regaled them with anecdotes of his own experiences.

"Why, cuss me, 'tis impossible to sink these fishin' vessels. They're reg'lar submarine boats, that's what they are, an' I'd sooner ride out a blow

in a craft like this than in th' blame steamer we jest got clear of. This ain't nawthin' but a light breeze. Shippin' awful seas, ye say? Pah! There's only a bit o' spray flyin' an' bein' a small vessel ye feel it more. Heavens! When I was win'jammerin' in clipper ships we'd bury our bows under until th' solid green 'ud fetch up agin th' break o' th' poop, an' we'd be scrapin' paint in that an' think nawthin' of it. Why, Lord save ye! I've bin runnin' the Eastin' in a bark an' never saw th' deck for four weeks. We had t' sleep an' eat in th' bight of a rope or th' belly of a clewed-up mains'l. We couldn't git inter th' foc'sle, an' by th' Lord Harry! every mother's son of us got fat on it!"

Winslow laughed silently and spoke to Jimmy Thomas at the lee wheel.

"Ain't that old mossback a prime yarn spinner? Whoop! Look what's comin'. Come aboard! Hang on, Jimmy! Gee! that was a blinder an' no error. Here's another!"

The vessel buried her whole port bow into a comber and in the foc'sle everything fetched adrift in the cook's racks. In the thunder of the sea and the crash of breaking crockery and clattering tins a dozen women jumped from floor and bunk and made a frantic rush for the ladder.

"We won't stay down in this place to be drowned!" they screamed as the cook barred the way, and for a few minutes John had an exciting time pushing them off. Screaming hysterically, they

rushed him time and again, and the poor man, not knowing how to handle women, yelled for help. It was to Winslow the call was passed, and handing the wheel over to Jackson he picked his way for'ard. Glancing down the scuttle, he saw John trying to fend off a dozen frantic women who screamed at him in incoherent words.

"I don't wonder at them being frightened down there," he muttered, "but they're safest where they are." Calling down to them, Winslow told the panicky females that there was no cause for alarm, but they wouldn't believe him.

"You're trying to drown us!" they cried, and Winslow made up his mind.

Running aft to the gurry-kid he pulled a formidable bait-knife out of the becket and arriving back at the companion again, roared in the harshest voice, he would assume: "Stand from below John! I'll fix them!" And he jumped down the ladder with the gleaming bait-knife in his fist.

This, together with his dripping oilskins and unshaven face, blackened with torch smoke and with a streak of bloody gurry across his cheek, make him look a fearful object. The knife, too, was stained with blood—herring blood—and that was enough. Whimpering in fear, the hysterical women recoiled to the farthest corners of the foc'sle and listened in abject terror to Winslow's voice. "Th' first woman that comes on deck without my permission will be

—waal, I won't say what I'll do, but stay where you are if you value your lives!"

Vivid and distraught imaginations pictured the ugly looking knife plunged into their hearts—Ugh! It was stained with blood already! Winslow left them quietly resigned to the terrors of the early morning and made his way aft again.

"Women kickin' up a racket?" queried Jimmy Thomas, as the skipper took his place at the wheel.

"Ay!" growled Winslow. "They're frightened, an' t' keep 'em from rushin' on deck I had t' scare 'em worse. I'm sorry for them, but things are easin' off now. We got clear of Roseway."

For another hour they stormed along through the mist with the dull snore of the wind in the sails and the thunderous hiss of whitewater streaming aft and astern. The men on deck were feeling the cold and wet, while those below had fallen into a kind of apathetic doze, sprawled around on locker and floor.

"Light dead ahead!" came a sudden hail from the bows. "Hard down! Hard down!"

"Noxon Rock buoy!" ejaculated Winslow in surprise, as he and Thomas brought the vessel to the wind. "Holy Sailor! We must ha' bin slammin' her at some clip. Main-sheet, some o' you! Trim your jibs! Sway her in! Down stay'l and balloon! We don't need 'em now."

Close-hauled, the schooner bore up for Southeast Harbor ten miles to the W.N.W. and the reeling buoy marking the dangerous Noxon Rock swung past the port quarter but a scant cable's length away. The steamboat skipper in the companion opened his eyes.

“Ye’re sailin’ fine courses, skipper,” he said. “That was a narrow shave!”

“For a steamboat, maybe,” answered Winslow coolly, “but fishermen are used t’ scrapin’ th’ paint off’n buoys.”



AT DAYLIGHT, with the mist still eddying around her, the schooner slipped into smoother water. Though nothing could be seen but green sea for a radius of a hundred feet from the point of observation, yet Winslow knew he had fetched in the lee of Salvage Island, and instructed the watch for’ard to keep a lookout for the Southeast Harbor fairway buoy.

“Ye sh’d sight it on th’ port hand, I cal’late,” he said. “Keep yer eyes skinned for it, or by the Lord Harry, if we bring it on th’ starboard we’ll fetch up on th’ Man o’ War Rock!”

In the cabin his voice was distinctly audible and the male passengers forgot their sickness with the ominous import.

“Did you hear that?” cried the lawyer. “My God! This fish boat will be the death of me yet. If that skipper don’t drown us with his sailing, he’ll dash us on the rocks with his reckless navigation. I never spent such a night in all my life, and hereafter I’ll always travel by train on my vacation trips. No more sea for me.”

And others voiced his sentiments with half-scared heartiness. When the next hail came from for’ard, the inmates of the cabin blanched and waited for the inevitable.

“Buoy on *starboard* bow! Hard down!”

Coolly whirling the wheel over, the young skipper gave his orders as calmly as if he were navigating a yacht in broad daylight. “Let go yer jib sheet! Hands to th’ mainsheet! Trim her down,

fellers! Round she comes! Are we goin' to clear it?"

Bang! Bump! Thud! Coming around on her heel, the schooner side-wiped the big can buoy with her port quarter and it bumped protestingly against her side and careened in the eddy of her traverse.

"We've struck that rock!" cried the lawyer and he started up with panic written large on his face.

"Hah!" cried Winslow, with a laugh. "We gave her a wipe that time. Th' Government'll need ter be paintin' that buoy again after I hit it a few more times. I'll write th' Department ter shift it outer my way. I cal'late we've got clear by now, so we'll swing her up for Clancy's Wharf. Ready there! Helm's alee! Round she comes! Trim yer sheets!"

And this is the way they came up Southeast Harbor. Came up under sail in weather as thick as the inside of a tar-pot; dodging gaunt harbor spiles; scraping fairway buoys and maneuvering in a manner which caused the old steamship skipper and his officers to murmur their admiration of such reckless seamanship. Reckless in a way, but not so from the fishermen's point of view, for no men afloat know their beautifully modelled vessels better and none can handle them like the fraternity.

When a tug nosed out of the gloom and hailed them, she was declined with sarcastic gibes and her master stared with open mouth at the crowded decks.

"What's th' matter, skipper?" he called. "Where d'ye pick that mob up?"

"'Tis in the excursion business we are these days," replied Winslow facetiously. "Sheer off an' git th' folks ashore ready ter receive a crowd o' shipwrecked passengers—women an' children. Th' Halifax boat *Alcestis* was sunk in th' fog on La Have.

Slide now, or I'll beat ye t' th' wharf!"

Ten minutes later they rounded up to the dock under foresail and jumbo and made fast, while a ship's quarter-boat manned by ten very wretched human beings sneaked into a wharf lower down the harbor.

IV.



IT DID not take long for the passengers to get ashore. They needed no help. Pale-faced women stood on the wharf stringers and shook their fists at Winslow standing by the wheel. "Heartless brute!" "Wretch!" and "Callous Thug!" were some of the epithets applied to him. The lawyer was the first to reach terra firma, and once ashore he regained his dignity.

"Many thanks, captain," he said. "I'll communicate with you in Anchorville. Good-by!"

The young skipper waved a tired farewell and turned to find the Vassar girl and the young New Yorker coming aft.

"Captain Winslow," said Miss Wilson, with a wan smile on her pretty features, "I hope you won't think we're ungrateful, but I cannot say enough to thank you for what you have done. Some of the ladies have been very uncomplimentary after what you have done for them, but they'll be all right when they get over their fright, and I'm sure they'll be very sorry for what they've said."

"That's all right, Miss," replied Winslow laughing. "We fishermen are not looking for compliments, an' th' mere fact that we were able t' rescue you an' land you all safe and sound is all th' thanks we want. I hope you'll soon get over th' shakin' up we gave you, but we were lucky in get-

tin' a light wind. Ef it had come away stiff at all, I'm afraid things would ha' bin worse."

And when they left Winslow turned to the gang: "Up on yer mains'l, fellers! Water's aboard, John? All right, stand by your bow lines!" And a few minutes later they were standing out to sea in the fog again. "Anchorville now, bullies, with only fifty thousand below. Th' smallest fare the *Isabel* has ever taken into port."



ON THEIR return from their next trip each man found a little package awaiting him at Clarence Dickey's office, and while waiting to draw their shares the gang swapped problematical guesses on the cost of the cuff-links and stick-pins they contained. Winslow examined a diamond pin and a fine pair of binoculars with appreciation, but seamanlike favored the binoculars. "Th' stick-pin'll do for th' wife," he said laconically, then he reread the letter which accompanied them:

The passengers of the late S. S. *Alcestis* desire to thank you and the crew of your fishing-smack for their services in rescuing them from a watery grave last month. The little tokens of appreciation are sent by the ladies, while on behalf of the men I am forwarding a draft for five hundred dollars to be divided among your crew. A check will be sent you shortly from the Northern Coast Steamship Company in payment of the fifty thousand pounds of fish jettisoned by you, and which I trust you will find satisfactory. On behalf of your late passengers, I wish you and the crew of your fish-

smack the most cordial good wishes for the future, and beg to remain,

Faithfully yours,

JOHN HUPFIELD WOTHERSPOON,
Attorney-at-Law.

“Humph!” grunted Winslow with a slow smile. “‘Fish-smack,’ he still calls th’ able *Isabel*. Waal, I’ll forgive him, for he an’ th’ ladies have come over handsomely. There’s money in rescues, but no more for me, if there’s women in them.”

Some Fishing !



THE halibut schooner *Leona T. Himmelman* of Anchorville, Nova Scotia, was jogging in a dense fog a few miles to the eastward of Cape Observation, Island of Anticosti. The skipper, Johnny Himmelman, had been looking for the fish all the way from West Point and had an idea that halibut might be struck in the deep water on the north shore of the island.

The *Leona T. Himmelman* was a ninety-five-ton semi-knockabout schooner carrying eight double-trawl dories and a crew of nineteen men. The skipper and a few members of the crew hailed from Lunenburg County, which accounted for his Teutonic name.

Captain Johnny could speak German and had a taste for certain German dishes—sauerkraut being one of them. Though German in origin, and retaining many of the old German tastes and ideas, Captain Himmelman was a Canadian first, last and all the time, and his eldest son, Corporal Roy Himmelman, was even then in France, fighting the Empire's battle in the ranks of the First Canadian Expeditionary Force.

With her jumbo weathered up, the mainsheet started and the wheel down a spoke or two, the schooner washed lazily over the fog-shrouded sea, marking time until the morning, when the dories would be swung over and a "set" made for the valuable flat fish. On deck, the two fishermen on watch smoked and lolled against the lee nest of dories. They did not bother sounding the mechanical fog-horn, as traffic on the north shore of Anticosti was scarce, being

but rarely navigated by any other craft than fishing-vessels.

Below in the cabin, the skipper and some other members of the crew read old Halifax papers and discussed the all-absorbing topic of the war.

"I cal'late dat feller of mine will be in der trenches now," remarked the skipper, puffing away at his pipe. "I got a card from him marked 'Somewhere in France.'"

"He ain't seen nawthin' o' them submarines, has he?" queried a fisherman, busy overhauling a skate of halibut gear.

"Said der transport was chased by one o' dem off der Irish coast," answered Captain Johnny, "but der navy boats chased der submarine away."

"Ain't they the divil now, them submarines!" said another. "They say they kin travel acrost th' Western Ocean an' back an' stay fur days under water. How d'ye s'pose they kin cotch them beggars?"

"Shoot at der periscope, I cal'late," replied the skipper, "or ram dem. I cal'late dat's de only way mit dem."

"It's a wonder none o' them comes acrost to this here gulf an' lays for th' Montreal boats comin' out with th' sojers aboard. Ef they kin travel th' distance they say they kin, why don't they?"

"They'd need more gasoline to take them back," said a fisherman, looking up from the newspaper he was reading. "They kin only carry ile enough to bring them out——"

An oilskinned figure appeared in the gangway.

"Say, Skip, fur th' love o' Mike, hev a look up here! There's a bloomin' sparbuoy or somethin' headin' agin th' tide off'n th' starb'd beam. Come up quick!"



THE skipper and a few of the men jumped on deck and stared in the direction indicated by the fisherman's mittened hand. The fog was hanging heavy over the smooth surface of the sea, and about a cable's length away a small grey-colored pole was traveling slowly in a westerly direction.

"It's movin' all right," remarked one of the fishermen. "Looks like a spar——"

"Limb o' a water-logged tree, I cal'late," said some one sarcastically.

"Aye, headin' to wind'ard agin' th' tide!" countered another. "Use th' small amount o' brains God give ye."

"It's us that's movin'—not it," growled the other. "A driftin' spar-buoy or maybe a halibuter's watch-buoy on the end o' his gear."

The object was vanishing from sight in the mist when the skipper, who had been staring at it through his marine glasses, suddenly exclaimed:

"Bubbles! A reg'lar wake an' der bubbles! By yiminy, boys, *dat's der periscope of a blasted Yerman submarine!*"

All hands were on deck now, staring into the fog, and for a minute no one spoke. A German submarine in the Gulf of St. Lawrence! It was incredible! The simple-minded Canadian fishermen, plying their vocation on the waters off that deserted Anticosti shore, could scarce believe one of the enemy's deadly engines of war would venture across the Atlantic to these peaceful waters so remote from the prescribed area of submarine warfare.

"What's her business here?" A husky fisherman broke the silence.

"Layin' for th' Montreal troopships, I cal'late!"

"Sufferin' Judas!" growled a New Brunswick

man. "I hev a brother in one o' them Montreal kilty regiments leavin' soon. What'll we do, Skip?"

The smoke was coming from Johnny Himmelman's pipe in a veritable cloud, a sure sign he was thinking.

"Dere's a telegraph at Natashkwan an' dat's 'bout fifty miles to de no'theast. Fox Bay's 'bout de same to der east'ard. Mit der engine goin' we kin make eider o' dem in 'bout eight hours——"

"Here's a vessel comin'," cried a man standing for'ard.

"A warship, by Jupiter!" shouted some one. "She's chasin' th' submarine, I'll bet."

The pulsating of engines throbbed across the water and the fishermen peered into the mist excitedly.

"Thar she is!"

A shadowy hull loomed out of the pall and masts and spars broke into hazy view. The sight of a bowsprit, with a trio of furred jibs lying upon it, caused the skipper to speak in surprise.

"What der defil! Dat ain't no warship. Dat's a t'ree-mast tops'l schooner mit an auxiliary engine——"

"Looks like a Frenchman from Sint-Malo. What's one o' them craft adoin' up here? They're Grand Bank craft—By Jupiter! He'll be into us! Hi-yi! Sheer off, you!"

A bull-roared shout of warning came from all hands on the *Leona Himmelman's* decks, as the skipper sprang for the wheel and hove it up.

"Draw away der yumbo!" he bawled, as the other craft drove down on their port bow.

The lookout on the other vessel must have seen them. A guttural shout came from her forecandle-head. Their wheel was put hard aport, and the big schooner, her decks crowded with men and dories,

forged past the Canadian fishing-vessel, but a scant twelve feet between them.

“*Sacré!*” shouted a voice. “Why t’ hell ain’t you soundin’ der horn? Dam’ Anglais!”

“What vessel’s dat?” roared Himmelman.

“Schooner *Yuno* of Fecamp, cod-fishing. Who’s dat vessel?”

“*Leona T. Himmelman* of Anchorville, halibuting. See any halibuters to de east’ard?”

“Yaw!” came the voice out of the fog, as the larger vessel swept by.

“Two or t’ree schooners fishing off Heath Point. *Au revoir, m’sieu!*”

Captain Himmelman stared abstractedly into the wall of mist which swallowed up the Frenchman. Scratching his head wonderingly, he inquired of the gang loafing around:

“Did any of you fellers read der name of dat craft as he went past?”

“Aye,” answered a fisherman. “‘*Juno* of Fecamp’ was on her stern board. Didn’t ye hear him sing out her name? I c’d hear him plain enough.”

“Yah, I heard him,” answered the skipper slowly. “But he said ‘*Yuno*’ instead of ‘*Yuno*.’”

“You’re Dutch, Skipper,” laughed the other. “You mean he said ‘*Yuno*’ instead of ‘*Juno*.’”

“Aye; just so,” replied Himmelman. “I’m Dutch and can’t pronounce my yays—I cal’late dat oder feller was Dutch, too. A Frenchman ain’t a ‘yaw-for-yes man.’ When dat feller first sighted us under his bows, he sung out ‘hard aport’ in Yerman. Boys! I’m a Nova Scotia Dutchman, but I kin spot an old-country Deutscher ten faddom away, an’ I’ll bet a dollar to a doughnut dat dat French fishin’-craft ain’t nawthin’ but a Yerman supply-boat follering dat submarine!”

Fishermen of the deep-sea type are quick thinkers, and Captain Johnny Himmelman was as smart as any of them. For a few minutes he sat on the wheel-box, shrouded in a pall of tobacco smoke which rivalled the fog for density, and his methodical German-Canadian brain arrayed the suspicious facts and evolved a plan of action.

He had many things to consider. First of all he wanted to get his valuable information to the Dominion Government. Natashkwan, on the north shore of the gulf, fifty miles northeast, was a Government telegraph station. Fox Bay on Anticosti Island was a small lobster cannery settlement with a private telephone-wire to Heath Point signal-station. At Heath Point there was a powerful Marconi apparatus which could flash the news to the mainland or a government patrol boat. Fox Bay was also some fifty miles to the eastward along the Anticosti shore.

"Hey ye go, fellers!" he shouted at last. "Hook ders stay'l halyards on to dat power dory and git her over. Put a ten-gallon can o' gasoline in and some water and grub. Jack Hanson an' you, Tom Peters, git in an' make for Fox Bay. See de boss at de lobster factory dere an' telephone to de lighthouse at Heath Point. Tell dem dat a Yerman submarine and a supply-schooner passed along de north shore of de Anticoast an' git dem to send a man-o'-war as quick as possible. Away you go, boys. I'll stand to de west'ard an' look for dem queer craft."

Within five minutes the power dory was hoisted over, and the two fishermen grabbed their oilskins and jumped in. A deft turn of the fly-wheel and a "So long, fellers!" and the little boat pattered into the fog on her fifty-mile journey.

The skipper watched them vanish and turned to the waiting gang.

“Now, boys, we’ll tack ship an’ head to de west’ard, along shore. Maybe we’ll locate dem pirate Yermans.”

II



WHEN Captain Himmelman headed the schooner in the direction the submarine and her supposed consort had taken, he had absolutely no idea of a plan of action. Neither he nor the gang took into consideration the danger of such a step, or had any idea as to what they would do should they discover the enemy craft. As a fisherman would say, “They barged along to find out things for themselves.”

The wind was westerly and freshening, and with the four lowers, the balloon jib and the big fisherman’s staysail set, they swung close-hauled up the coast within a mile or two of the fog-shrouded land. Over the windlass lolled a group of men, smoking and conjecturing. Aft at the wheel, the skipper glanced alternately at sails and compass and blew mighty clouds of smoke. The loafing trawlers refrained from curious questions and left the skipper to his thoughts.

“Keep a good lookout for’ard, fellers,” cautioned Himmelman after a while. “Look an’ listen. We don’t want to pass dem in de fog.”

They held on through the mist and passed Cape Observation, by soundings, about five in the afternoon. Supper was a hastily gobbled meal that evening, as most of the gang preferred to be on deck keeping a lookout. By the laughing comments and remarks passed among the men, one would imagine they were out on a picnic instead of looking for a German submarine. One significant aspect, however,

was the sight of four fishermen seated on the house aft and busy oiling and cleaning two double-barreled shot-guns, a Winchester "thirty-thirty" and an old Snider rifle of the make sold extensively in rural localities for five dollars.

The god Chance threw them across the track of their quarry with a suddenness which was almost startling. The mist lifted landward and disclosed the topsail schooner and the under-water boat lying, side by side, a cable's length away on the *Leona Himmelman's* port quarter.

"Thar she is!" roared a dozen voices at once, and as their excited shouts carried across the water, the topsail schooner started her engine and sheered away from the huge submersible.

"Stand by der sheets!" bawled Himmelman excitedly. "Swing her off!"

The gang jumped to bitt and cleat, vaguely wondering what the skipper intended to do. The wheel was being rolled up by the great hands of Himmelman, and the able schooner was paying off rapidly.

"Stand by for a yibe!" he almost howled.

"What are ye goin' to do, Skip?" cried the crowd from their various stations. "Runnin' for it?"

"Run be damned!" answered the Lunenberger, his face ablaze with excitement. "I'm agoin' to ram dat dere submarine. Let der sheets run and hang on when I hit him, for, by yiminy, we'll hit hard!"

Crash! The booms came over and fetched up on the patent jibers with the shock incidental to jibing all standing in a fresh breeze; shouting and cursing men caught the turns on the sheets, and as the schooner drove for the submarine with the big mainboom over the port rail and the foreboom over the starboard, the men cleaning the guns commenced slipping in cartridges and banging away at the submersible's crew

hastily scrambling into the conning-tower amidships.

They had good reason to be afraid. A ninety-five-ton fishing-schooner, with her great sails bellying iron hard with a strong breeze and a welter of white water roaring up from under her bows, is an awesome sight.

The great spars towering aloft for one hundred and twenty-five feet and clothed with canvas from top-mast truck to deck constitutes a formidable driving-power to a deep hull laden with forty-five tons of ballast and fifty tons of ice, salt and fish. The German raiders sensed it, and no sooner was the last man below and the conning-tower hatch clamped, than the great war-fish began to dive.

"She's divin', Skip!" yelled Tommy Morrissey from forward.

The rifles and shot-guns kept a continual fusillade on the turret which was beginning to disappear from sight into a swirl of water; the schooner drove ahead at a twelve-knot clip, a thing of life, eager and vengeful, ready to smash her storming stem on the fragile cylinder sinking into the sea under her bows.

Twenty feet! The conning-tower had vanished leaving only the periscope, an air pipe and two steel wireless masts above water. Ten feet! These also disappeared and the fishermen on the *Leona Himmelman's* decks howled and squirmed with disappointed rage. The schooner stormed over the great vortex of the submarine's displacement and the men swore, shook their clenched fists and yelled meaningless expressions with the savagery of primeval man cheated of his prey.

All but Tommy Morrissey. Tommy kept his head, like the long-sighted old trawler that he was, and as the schooner surged for the vanished under-sea boat, he deftly cast the shank painter of the starboard

anchor adrift, severed the ring stopper with a shack knife and leaped for the butt of the bowsprit as the great seven-hundred-pound anchor crashed for the bottom with thirty fathom of chain cable thundering through the hawse-pipe.

Instinctively the gang ran aft or jumped feet first down into the forecastle. The schooner fetched up in her headlong career with a terrific jerk, and with tremendous cracks both masts snapped at the deck and the spars hurtled down in a welter of twanging wire stays and thunderously flapping canvas.

Himmelman, crouching down by the wheel, caught sight of Morrissey crawling out from the protection of the bowsprit butt, and he raced forward, leaping over the wreckage with fists clenched.

"You infernal swab!" he yelled. "What dit you mean by dat crazy trick?"

Morrissey glanced over the bows, noted something, and closed with the infuriated skipper.

With the old fisherman's arms around him, Himmelman struggled to plant a blow. "I'll 'murder you," he screamed. "You——"

"Easy, Skip! Go easy!" shouted the other without relaxing his bear's hug. "Can't you see, you crazy Dutchman? *She's bein' towed, you fool!* She's bein' towed! Can't you understand or will I have to bash some sense inter yer thick nut? The anchor's hooked into that gaudy submarine! That's why I cast her adrift!"

The skipper jumped for the rail and looked over. A ripple played around the *Leona's* bows and the chain cable led out straight ahead. He stared at the convincing sight for several seconds and turned slowly to the triumphant Morrissey.

"Waal, by yiminy!" he ejaculated. "If dat don't beat all my goin' afishin'! She's hooked for sure,

Swamp me, if dat ain't th' queerest goldarned fish I ever hooked in all my days — an' mit de anchor for a hook. Sink me!"



ALL hands speedily made their way forward to satisfy themselves that Morrissey's claim was correct, and the increasing gurgle of the bow wave and the chain cable straightening out ahead soon convinced them.

"By golly!" remarked the skipper. "Funny thing dat we should have had dat range of chain over de windlass, all ready. I was for anchoring to-night, but when she started breezing up I changed my mind. Boys, ye'd better clear away dis raffle. Lash dem spars an' we'll tow dem astern. Cut the sails adrift and fetch dem aboard. Yiminy! She's smashed up dem rails and stanchions in good shape. Git busy now!"

With feverish haste, the men cut and slashed the spars clear of the encumbering rigging and sails, and bending on warps allowed the mainmast, foremast and mainboom to town astern. The lighter gaffs and booms were kept an deck.

Himmelman gazed over the taffrail with a glance of approval.

"Dey will help to make us tow harder. Ha! ha!"

The submarine was still submerged and hauling the dismasted fishing-schooner along at a speed of four or five knots. The topsail schooner had vanished into a wall of fog which still hung over the water to seaward.

"That under-water craft'll be for comin' up an' havin' a look 'round soon," remarked a fisherman apprehensively. "What are we agoin' to do then?"

"What ef she does?" growled another. "What kin she do? She cain't git adrift from us. That

seven-hunder-pound anchor'll hev bitten well inter some part o' her top deck. Them flukes'll go through thin steel easy and th' way o' this vessel under sail 'ud make them bite for further orders. That anchor's fast for keeps. Th' way she fetched up an' jumped th' spars out 'ud tell ye that——"

"Aye, that may be so, but s'pose that there submarine starts to dive deeper an' drag this here hooker under?"

"Yes! And ef she did we'd moor her for all time soon's we filled an' sunk. We c'd batten down an' we couldn't be sunk. 'Sides, that submarine ain't strong enough to drag this craft down."

"S'pose she comes up alongside an' tries to board us? What then?"

"We got guns, ain't we? They kin only crawl out that connin'-tower one at a time, an'I cal'late we c'd pick 'em off nicely."

"By Jupiter!" broke in Morrissey. "They might try an' loose a torpedo at us. With thirty fathom of chain out, it might give him a chanst to swing around an' give us a shot that 'ud blow us to flinders."

"For'ard dere, fellers, an' heave short," yelled the skipper instantly. "Git twenty faddom o' dat cable aboard, quick!"

The crowd had the brakes shipped and were windlassing in the links ere the words were out of Himmelman's mouth. Never did men heave down on windlass bars with such efforts as did the *Leona's* gang. The most exacting Yankee wind-jammer mate could not have roused a homeward-bounder's mud-hook aboard in quicker time.

Panting and sweating, they clustered in the waist and gazed at the bubbling wake ahead. The skipper had his pipe going again and was busy thinking, with the wheel in his hands. The submarine was towing

them to the eastward, just the direction that Himmelman wanted.

“She’s comin’ up, Skip!” cried a man, pointing ahead to where the periscope was emerging from the water.

Himmelman laughed and gave the wheel a savage wrench.

“We’ll steer wild,” he said easily, “and give him some drag—Yiminy!”

A terrific explosion shook the vessel, and the fishermen were thrown to the deck. Splinters of wood flew high into the air followed by a tower of water which came like a cloudburst from aloft and almost swamped the dismasted *Leona*. The atmosphere reeked with the acrid fumes of a high explosive.

“Holy mackerel!” cried the gang as they scrambled to their feet, almost deafened and blinded by the shock. “We’re torpedoed!”

The water was sluicing off the schooner’s smashed decks, and the skipper looked around.

“De vessel ain’t hit!” he cried. “It’s de spars towin’ astern—Yudas. He’s shot a torpedo out of his stern and it missed us when I give her de wheel dat time. Haul up on him, fellers, or, by Yupiter, he’ll be givin’ up anoder! Yump, fellers, yump! Shoot away dat periscope, somebody!”

The crowd ran for the windlass brakes and plied them desperately, while Dexter Anson plumped five thirty-thirty bullets into the head of the periscope. At such close range, the mirrors were effectually smashed and the U-boat was rendered helpless as an under-water menace.

Slowly but surely, with fifteen husky men on the windlass brakes, the chain came in link by link until the fishermen could discern the black bulk of the submarine in the clear green water ahead. Its propel-

lers were churning up the water almost under the bowsprit of the fishing-schooner.

“They cal’late they’ve blown us up,” remarked Morrissey sagely, “so, with that perryscope out o’ business, they’ll come out for a look. They kin see through them glass ports in that there turret. Thar she comes now — jest like a whale. See ef ye can put some shots through them glass ports, Dexter.”

The fishermen with the rifle took careful aim and fired, and the submarine dived again.

“I cal’late we got him jammed in a clinch!” joyously ejaculated Morrissey, as he watched the great steel hull subside. “We’ve got that there fish poke-hooked, by Godfrey! He can’t do nawthin’ nohow but draw us to blaze-an-gone-out acrost to Dutchland.”

“That’s just th’ divil of it,” remarked the cook. “Ain’t we got no way of stopping him? He’s liable to tow us off somewhere an’ we’ll miss th’ man-o’-war that the boys hev gone to Fox Bay to fetch.”

“By golly, but de cook’s right!” said the skipper. “We’ll have to stop dat beggar somehow——”

“You bet we will!” interrupted Dexter Anson dolefully. “It ain’t got no more cartridges left. Thar’s no more ammunition but three number sixes for the shot-guns, and if them Germans take a notion to come up and open fire on us, we’re done for.”

The ingenious Morrissey smashed his great fist on the staysail box.

“Boys,” said he triumphantly, “I’ve an idea that I cal’late will work. I’ll git them jibsheet chains and crawl out on th’ bowsprit. You fellers heave ahead on that windlass and I’ll drop them chains inter his perpellers. If that don’t fetch him up, I’m a Dutchman myself.”

Quickly unshackling the sheets from the jib, Morrissey made each of them fast to a piece of line and crawled out on the bowsprit, with Dexter Anson lugging the chains along the foot-ropes. While the rest of the gang manned the windlass again, Morrissey sat astride the bowsprit-end and swung the chain as he would heave a lead. Anson, on the foot-ropes, held the lines already bent to the sheets.

“Watch, there, watch!” cried Morrissey, carefully judging the distance from the spar to the boiling froth a few feet ahead of him. “Heave!”

The chain flew from his hands and shot into the submarine’s wake.

“Nawthin’ doin’!” bawled Anson, as he felt the weight of the chain on his line. “Try again, Tommy, boy!”

He hove the chain up again and passed it along to Morrissey, who made another attempt.

“Must have guards over them wheels,” growled he, after four unsuccessful attempts. “Haul up on him a bit more, boys! Another fathom ahead and I’ll be able to drop ’em right down on them screws. Ready? Stand by, Dexter. Heave!”

The fishermen clustered over the bows gave vent to an excited shout of triumph as the retaining line was whipped out of Anson’s hands.

“She’s fouled!” roared Morrissey. “Gime that other chain for th’ port screw! Heave!”

The watchers held their breath and expelled it in a joyous howl as the line almost wrenched Anson from his perch.

“She’s snarled, by the holy old sailor!” he yelled as he clutched at the back-rope to save himself from falling. “She’s stopped.”

In the midst of their triumph, the skipper gave vent to an excited ejaculation and pointed to the

sea-line astern. In the glow of the sunset, the square sails of a sailing-vessel were silhouetted some five miles away.

“Dat tops’l schooner!” he cried. “An’ she’s head-in’ for us. We’ll have to beat it!”

“Beat it?” questioned the gang.

“Yes, beat it, an’ dam’ quick. Dere’s ’bout t’irty men aboard dat craft an’ dey may have guns.”

“What about this here submarine? Will we cut her adrift?”

The skipper thought for a moment.

“No! We’ll moor her. Knock out the first shackle on that chain cable abaft the windlass and bend de fishin’ hawser and de port anchor to it. When we’re ready we’ll let go, and Mister Submarine will be moored to t’ree hundred faddom of good eight-inch manila hawser and an eight-hundred-pound anchor. He’ll hang to his forty-faddom water for all time even ef he clears dose chains from his screws. Billy, go down aft and start de engine. We’ll have to git out quick!”



THE bleak shore of northern Anticosti was about two miles away and the sun was setting. It was hazy to the eastward and nothing broke the sea line but the sombre shores of the island and the rapidly approaching schooner.

“All ready for’ard?” shouted Himmelman from the wheel.

“All ready, Skipper!”

“Den let her go!”

The men had bent the chain of the anchor which was fast to the U-boat to the cable of the Banker’s fishing-anchor and with a heave of the fluke bar sent the big mud-hook crashing to the bottom with the great fishing hawser snaking out after it. The chain

cable was clear of the windlass and with engine going, the dismasted fishing-schooner backed away from the still submerged submarine.

"She's moored for fair, now, Skip!" remarked a man. "Lord Harry, but we've had some fun this afternoon! Ha, ha!"

As they sheered off, the rugged fishermen gave vent to expressions of relief.

"Some fishing!" they said gleefully. "Won't Jack Hanson an' Tom Peters be sore at missing this day's sport?"

As they drew away, the submarine slowly emerged to the surface. A man crawled out of her conning-tower, followed by three or four others. A forward hatch also opened and the submarine's decks were crowded with men who shouted and shook their fists at the retreating fishing-schooner.

Suddenly a disappearing gun elevated itself from the submersible's decks; two men swung the muzzle around; there was a flash of fire in the twilight and a shell struck the *Leona* forward by the windlass and exploded with a stunning detonation. Luckily all hands were mustered aft and flopped to the deck as soon as they saw the gun.

Bang! Another shell struck the stump of the foremast and blew the forecastle hatch into a mess of splintered and shredded wood.

"Holy mackerel!" cried a man anxiously. "There's agoin' to be some killin' yet. What are we agoin' to do, Skip?"

"Kin we run for it?" inquired Morrissey looking at the skipper.

Crash! A shell struck the rail amidships and tore the gunwales off the dory on the port nest.

"Lord Harry, Skipper!" shouted the crowd in a panic. "We're agoin' to git killed!"

Himmelman's usually placid face was white now. He wasn't afraid, but he was mad—berserker mad. Rolling the wheel over, he swung the *Leona* around on her heel and headed for the submarine.

"Gedt down, boys, down on der deck!" he shouted, relapsing in his excitement into broken English and German. "I'll finish dot feller, by Gott!"

Plunk! A shot struck the water astern of them as the schooner forged ahead at eight knots under the drive of the powerful auxiliary gasoline engine. A continuous fire of gun and rifle shots was coming from the submarine's crew now and the bullets bit into the solid woodwork of the rails and houses and scattered splinters over the crouching fishermen. The shells went whistling over the vessel, but in the gathering darkness, with the target rapidly approaching and bows on, the German gunners were shooting wild.

A rifle bullet knocked the skipper's cap off and plowed a furrow across his scalp. The blood poured down his face and he dropped down by the wheel.

"Head her for dat turret amidships," he growled, dashing the blood out of his eyes with his great fist.

Morrissey and Anson knelt by the wheel and glanced over the bows to where the submarine lay. It was only fifty yards away now and the fire was slacking off. The submarine crew were preparing for an abandonment of their craft and were buckling on life-belts ready for a swim to the three-mast schooner which was rapidly coming up.

"Stand by!" yelled some one.

The fishermen leaped to their feet with wild whoops and hurled belaying-pins, coal, pieces of wood and other missiles at the German sailors, as with a staggering crash, the schooner rammed the U-boat amidships.

The force of the blow rolled the great cigar-shaped hull over. A few of the Germans were knocked into the sea; others hung to the hand-rails and opened fire with automatic revolvers, and two made a leap for the schooner's bobstays and scrambled aboard, only to be laid out by windlass bars in the hands of the maddened fishermen.

With her engine still going ahead and her bow rammed against the submarine's turret, the *Leona* held the underwater craft over on her side. Some of the crew remained hanging to the hand-rails, firing with revolvers at the black bulk of the fishing-vessel, but as it was dark, the shooting was largely pot-luck shots. On the *Leona*, the gang kept up a continuous bombardment with whatever missiles they could lay their hands on, and dory water-jars burst like shrapnel on the iron decks of the U-boat.

"More ammunition!" yelled Morrissey, and the cook jumped below and threw his pots and pans up through the splintered forecastle hatch.

The top-sail schooner had come up within a hundred yards by now and was launching her dories.

"Look, Skip!" cried Dexter Anson. "There's eight dories full o'men acomin' for us. I cal'late you'd better reverse that engine an' git out o' this."

Himmelman grasped the clutch and hauled it over. The motor, which had been going continuously, gave a few explosions and stopped.

"Jump below, Billy, and give her a crank!" cried the Skipper, anxiously peering into the darkness.

The fisherman who had charge of the engine, jumped below and almost as quickly appeared again.

"The gasoline tank's punctured!" he cried in alarm.

"De hell, ye say! Yiminy! We're done for! Git ready, fellers, to fight for yer lives!"

As he spoke, Billy the engineer ripped out an oath and clapped his hand to his left shoulder.

“Jumpin’ Jupiter! I’m hit!”

From all around them in the darkness came the flash and snap of rifle and revolver fire.

The crouching fishermen on the *Leona Himmelman’s* shattered and splintered decks knew that they need expect no mercy from the enraged Germans, and each grasped knife, bar and ax and prepared to sell his life dearly.



THE operator at Heath Point Signal Station laughed as he received the telephone message from Fox Bay.

“What d’y’e think of that?” he said to the other two operators. “Some crazy fishermen have come into Fox Bay, saying they saw a German submarine up on the north shore of the island. Seem quite excited over it and want us to inform a patrol boat or the Government.”

The other grinned.

“Wonder where they got the rum? Anyway, you’d better flash it over to that destroyer off here. There’s some troopships coming down soon and we’d better send it, even though it’s only a fisherman’s yarn.”

The operator on duty entered the wireless room and sat down to the key. His fingers pressed the dots and dashes denoting the call of the war-vessel somewhere out in the gulf.

The connection was made and the wireless man repeated his message, adding—

“Guess it’s a joke!”

The reply rather startled him.

“No joke. Inform Fame Point and all stations

within your radius. Most important. We're off. Keep your wire clear for the next twelve hours."

A long slate-colored destroyer slid through the haze off East Cape, with smoke belching from her three funnels. The commander on her bridge talked with his senior lieutenant in excited tones.

"They have done it after all," he said. "We knew they planned getting some of their subs over here, but they caught two of them in the Channel and we thought they'd given up the attempt. Those fishermen are in Fox Bay, so we'll haul in and pick them up.

As they approached the lobster factory settlement, the motor dory with Jack Hanson and Tom Peters aboard rounded up alongside the destroyer. The dory was hoisted aboard, and the two fishermen were escorted to the bridge.

The commander questioned them at once.

"You saw the periscope proceeding in a westerly direction. You also saw a three-masted schooner, presumably a French fisherman, following her. Umph! Up off Cape Observation, you say. All right, men, if your information turns out to be correct, you will have done your country a great service — a great service. Better go below and have something to eat."

"If ye don't mind, sir, we'd rather stay up here an' watch th' fun. Holy sailor! This craft kin travel some. What kin she make, mister?"

"We're running at thirty-two knots an hour, now," replied the officer with a smile. "We can make more — thirty-six. Fog's lifting, thank Heaven."

At ten o'clock it was dark and Cape Observation was abeam. The fishermen lounged in the lee of the canvas dodger, while the spray swashed up from the racing bows of the destroyer and the wind of their

passage roared overhead in the aerials of the wireless.

A quartermaster, scanning the horizon ahead with binoculars, reported:

“Something firing ahead, sir. Can make out gun flashes!”

“Hands to stations!” ordered the commander, and the wondering trawlers noted the activity which followed the order.

Bluejackets scurried into the gun turret forward, and at the numerous quick-firers along the rail the gun crews hauled the canvas covers off and carried ammunition boxes. Hanson and Peters were anxious.

“Gun flashes ahead,” muttered the latter. “Calculate the boys are inter a scrap with them fellers. Hope we’re in time to prevent any killing scrapes.”

It was black-dark now and the sky was cloudy and devoid of stars. The destroyer was forging ahead through the gloom at a tremendous speed, her whole fabric trembling to the drive of her powerful engines. The officers peered ahead through their glasses.

“Searchlight!” ordered the commander. The dazzling glare cut into the darkness like a huge sword. “Sweep the horizon!” The great beam of light wheeled and illuminated the deserted scrub-clad cliffs of the Anticosti shore, two miles away, and then methodically described a searching arc from port to starboard.

“There they are!”

The light settled on a strange tableau a mile away on the starboard bow. A fishing-schooner, her masts gone, rolled in the swell alongside the long black hulk of a great submarine. In close proximity was a three-mast topsail schooner lying hove-to and all around the three craft were dories crowded with men. When

the light played on the scene, all the dories with one accord made for the topsail schooner.

“Starboard—two points!” The destroyer’s commander, fearing a torpedo from the submarine, swung his ship off suddenly. “Port—two points!”

“Fire a shot over that schooner!”

A gun thundered below the bridge and the destroyer’s whistle shrieked a warning to halt.

“All right. Never mind him. We can catch that fellow any time. We’ll come alongside that submarine. Looks as if there was something wrong with him. By Jove! He’s making no move. Swing all your guns on him and as soon as I give the word, pump shell into him as hard as you can go.”

“By gorry, mister!” ejaculated Hanson, “th’ *Leona’s* in a whale of a mess! She ain’t got a spar standin’, an’ her decks are all smashed up. Jupiter! Thar ain’t no sign o’ th’ gang.”

“They’ve bin wiped out!” growled Peters ominously. “God, mister, they’ve bin killed. Thar ain’t a man on her decks. We’re too late!”

Both fishermen feared the worst, and a slow rage consumed them. Peters grabbed the commander’s arm.

“Blow that schooner an’ submarine out o’ water, sir!” he cried hoarsely. “Give the order to yer men. They’ve wiped out Johnny Himmelman and the gang!”

The officer rang down for “Stop!” and shook off the fisherman’s detaining hand.

“Wait a minute, my man,” he said grimly. “We’ll investigate. If anything has happened to your friends, they’ll be avenged. Two boats and a full boarding-crew, Mr. Jones! Call them away and overhaul that submarine and the fisherman. If he tries any monkey tricks, sheer off and I’ll sink him.

Nothing to fear from that schooner—she can't get away from us, but look out they don't open fire on you with rifles or concealed guns. Call your men away!"

A boatswain's whistle warbled out and two boats splashed into the water, with the crews swarming down the falls fully armed with cutlasses, rifles and revolvers. Peters and Hanson ran down from the bridge and leaped into the first boat. The oars were shipped and with the steady pull of a well-trained man-o'-war's crew, the two boats headed rapidly in the direction of the helpless fishing-schooner.

Peters and Hanson were the first men over the smashed rails.

"Lord Harry!" cried Peters. "She's all smashed an' ripped to blazes!" He ran to the cabin gangway. "Oh, below! Any one aboard?" Hanson had run for'ard and was hailing down the splintered fore-castle.

"Godfrey, Jack, there's nobody aboard!" cried Peters hoarsely. "They've bin murdered and hove overboard! Look at the blood on the wheel-box! Look how th' decks hev bin shot up! God — poor boys! Poor boys!"

They reported to the officer in the boat.

"Nobody aboard, sir. Th' boys hev bin murdered an' thrown over th' side by them murderin' devils. Seventeen o' them, sir! As fine a gang as ever hauled a trawl or stood a trick——"

"Jump in, m'lads, and we'll overhaul this submarine," said the officer kindly. "She's making no move, and I'm thinking she's disabled in some way. We'll get her crew and they'll pay the price, never fear!"

Illuminated in the glare of the destroyer's search-lights, the boats pulled for the submarine, which rest-

ed motionless on the water, with her conning-tower and decks just awash. A fisherman's small trawl-anchor bent to a stout line which led to the *Leona* was fluked in the handrail.

"Now, lads, board her!" shouted the lieutenant, as the boats ranged alongside the great steel hull.

The bowmen hooked in with the boat-hooks, and the bare-footed bluejackets, with cutlasses and revolvers drawn, swarmed out on the submersible's decks. The conning-tower hatch was down and the lieutenant banged on it with the butt of his sword.

"Open up and surrender!" he roared.

The hatch opened slowly and a voice answered.

"All right, mister! Der blasted hatch was hard to open. Yiminy! You was a long time coming."

Out of the hatch appeared a haggard face with a blood-stained bandage around it.

"*Johnny Himmelman!*" howled both the fishermen at once.

The lieutenant and the bluejackets stared in surprise as the two trawlers grabbed the skipper and helped him down on the submersible's decks.

"How in th' name o' Moses did you git in there? Where's th' gang?"

The gang were coming. The whole seventeen of them came crawling out of the U-boat conning tower, and the naval men gaped at them open-mouthed.

"Where the dickens is the crew of this craft?" stuttered the lieutenant of Himmelman.

The skipper waved toward the topsail schooner lying to the wind a cable's length away.

"Aboard her, I cal'late, or in der drink maybe!" he answered nonchalantly. To Peters and Hanson he remarked: "Boys, oh, boys, but you've missed all der fun. What a session we've had, to be sure!"

The officer looked over the assembly of rugged

fishermen — cut, bleeding and bruised. He noted their daredevil faces and their powerfully muscled arms.

“By Jove!” he murmured. “What divils they are, those Bank fishermen! What boys they’d make for the navy! Eh, what?”



THE war is still on and the censorship is strict. The fate of the submarine, the topsail schooner and her crew, are known only to the naval authorities. Our story deals only with Captain Himmelman and the *Leona Himmelman's* gang.

Captain Johnny was speaking.

“Yes, sir,” he was saying, “when we saw de dories comin’ for us from dat schooner an’ bangin’ away at us mit rifles, I says, ‘We’ll have to git out!’ De *Leona* had drifted a few feet off from de submarine, so we hooked her mit a trawl-anchor and a bit o’ line and den we hauled de *Leona* up on it.

“De whole gang of us scrambled out on der bow-split and yumped aboard der submarine and got into her and closed de hatch yust as dey rushed us. We were all right den — yust as safe as a lobster in a can; and we stayed dere ontill de man-o’-war come up. Now, mister, I want to know if der Government is goin’ to pay for de damage to my schooner.”

The destroyer’s commander smiled and stretched forth his hand.

“Captain Himmelman,” he said with admiration in his voice, “we’ve heard of nervy deeds done in this great war, but I must say that there is little I have heard that can beat the exploits of you and your daring crew. You recklessly braved death a dozen times; you have shown a truly marvelous ingenuity in capturing this submarine, her crew, and that

supply schooner; you have also been the means of averting a great peril to the flotilla of transports coming down the gulf this week.

I haven't the least hesitation in stating that when I have made my report to the authorities, you and your men will be fully compensated and rewarded for the work you have done and the dangers you have faced. Allow me to shake hands with you and your brave boys. By Godfrey! I'm proud to know you!"

Some months later Captain Himmelman proudly exhibited a medal to the visiting mayor of Anchorville and members of the town council.

"Yes, sir, me an' Tommy Morrissey an' Dexter Anson got one of dem things mit a letter from King George himself. Dey call it de 'Distinguished Service Order,' an' I cal'late I'll hev it made into a brooch for de ol' woman. De *Leona* is bein' refitted at de expense of de government, and de whole gang got a check from dem, so I cal'late we ain't lost much. I ain't a highliner this season, but we've got one thing to brag about when it comes to fishin'."

"What's that, Captain?"

"We're de only gang dat ever jiggid a submarine—an' mit de starb'd anchor for a hook. Ha! Ha!" And Captain Himmelman chuckled.

Loot and Laundry



ACK HENDERSON, deep-sea fisherman, and belonging to the Anchorville fishing schooner *Isabel Winslow*, was engaged in wordy altercation with Henrietta Murphy, washerwoman. The trawler, red-faced and indignant, was commenting freely on the condition of his laundry after having passed through the Celtic washlady's fair hands, and he produced certain pieces of his wearing-apparel to prove his assertions.

"Now, look at this shirt, Mrs. Murphy," he was saying. "Lord! it was white once, but with th' cussed blue ye've bin usin' it's all spotted like a blame' cusk! 'Sides that, ye've ripped every darn' button off'n it. Look at them there collars! Ye've got iron-rust on them an' th' blasted ink ye use for identification hez completely spiled them as collars. An' this singlet! Devil a button left an'——"

Mrs. Murphy placed her brawny arms under her apron and replied to the accusations with Hibernian vigor.

"I sp'iled yer ould rags, did I?" she shouted. "An' d'ye think it's a pleasure fur me t' be washin' them! Dirty fishermen's clothes reekin' o' gurry, bilge an' terbacker. Ugh! It makes me sick ivery time I hev them in th' tub——"

"I don't wear my white shirts an' collars a-fish-in'," interrupted the other.

"It don't matter. They reek o' fish jest th' same," volleyed the lady of the tub. "It's in yer blood! Ye breathe it, eat it an' sweat it — an' iver since I was a child I c'd niver abear cod-liver ile! Take yer

duds away out o' this! I niver want t'see them or you ag'in!"

Henderson collected the heap under his arm.

"All right!" he roared. "But this'll be th' last ye'll iver git from any vessel what comes in this port. We've stood for it long enough, an' th' crowd is git-tin' sick an' tired o' spendin' their lay-offs patchin' your rents an' skags an' sewin' on th' buttons ye rip off in yer wringin' machine. An' ye don't even return th' buttons!"

Mrs. Murphy grasped a bar of soap.

"Out o' my house, you miserable fish-pedler! I don't want yer custom, nor yer fr'en's' either. I got all I kin do now wid dacent folks' washin', an' I ain't depindin' on a scaly gang o' cod-haulers fur a living'! Get ye gone or I'll beat yer brains out wid a sthick o' yaller soap!"

And, putting her threat into action, she lunged from behind her tub and stove Henderson's best three-dollar derby in with a shrewd blow.

"You infernal cat!" yelled the fisherman, hugging his laundry with one arm and trying to push the stove-in hat off his eyes with the other. "I'd like t' roll ye up in a tub o' trawl!"

Smack! smack! The soap descended with no light hand on the trawler's head and shoulders and he retreated from the Murphy domicile with hasty steps. Out in the street he turned for a parting shot at the belligerent washerwoman standing, arms akimbo, in the doorway.

"I'll queer you!" he yelled. "No more fishermen's laundry for you! No more——"

Mrs. Murphy gave a disdainful sniff and, turning, entered her house and slammed the door. A raw-boned rustic standing near, sniggered, and inquired flippantly:

“Tryin’ t’ do th’ poor woman, Henderson? Why don’t ye pay her what ye owe her? What’s th’ matter with yer hat?”

The trawler pushed the hat to the back of his head and glared at the questioner savagely.

“Do you want a poke in th’ jaw?” he growled. “No? Waal, take a hitch aroun’ yer tongue, my bully, or I’ll put a stopper on it with my fist. See?”

The other saw, and Henderson lurched down the street with a miscellaneous collection of wearing-apparel under his arm and a lot of vituperative language on his mind.

He was laying down the law to an appreciative crowd in the Isabel Winslow’s foc’sle when the skipper’s voice rolled down the hatch.

“All up, below, an’ git her down to th’ end o’ th’ dock!”

And the incident closed for the nonce.

II



THEY swayed up, sheeted in and stood out the bay, bound for the Cape Shore and La Have. Off Anchorville Heads, the stays’l and balloon were hoisted, but they had hardly made a mile off the land before sea, sky and earth were blotted out in a steaming Fundy fog. And it was a fog! A drenching, impenetrable shroud of wet vapor which muffled all sight and sound, and played queer ventriloquial freaks with the horns and sirens of the vessels crawling through it. A fog which was destined to keep the engine-man at Anchorville Head Lighthouse busy for fourteen days with the fog-alarm going every thirty seconds during that period!

Skipper Winslow heard the preliminary blasts with

no satisfaction. Fishermen do not mind bad weather, but they hate fogs.

“Bring up your music-box,” he growled to the man on watch. “Three blasts — we’re runnin’, an’ keep your ears open an’ your eyes skinned.”

It was blowing a fresh breeze, and the schooner, with sheets started, was knocking off an easy ten knots — just a trifle too fast for a vessel in a fog, but Winslow was willing to take chances. The Cape Shore grounds were a hundred miles to the south’ard, and with such a nice breeze. Pah! A man would be a fool not to make use of it in making good southing. Besides his own lookout, pumping the horn, the other vessels would have theirs too, and, like the bridge-player who takes a chance and trusts to his partner to help him out, Winslow kept his kites flying and trusted to luck and the other fellow.

There was a card-game going on down for’ard and, in the cabin, the after gang were regaling themselves with selections on the phonograph which all hands had recently subscribed for. The skipper paced the quarter, oilskins streaming with the vapor, and hummed accompaniments to the music floating up the companion.

“I was strolling along, simply roaming along,
Merely humming a song, thinking nothing was
wrong,
Roaming here, roaming there, and I didn’t much
care,
For I didn’t know where—I was strolling along!”

“Um!” grunted Winslow to himself. “That’s a good tune.” And he started to sing.

“Roaming here, roaming there, and I didn’t much
care,

For I didn't know——”

He stopped suddenly, while the phonograph continued the ditty.

“Did you hear anything?” he inquired of the man at the wheel.

“Naw,” replied the other. “How kin ye hear anythin’ with that blame’ machine squeakin’ out all th’ time?”

The lookout by the windlass was plying the horn but, as Winslow strained his ears, he fancied he heard the swish-swash of water and the pulsating of a steamer’s engines.

“I was roaming along, thinking nothing was wrong——”

The phonograph droned on, and Winslow sprang from a quiescent, listening attitude into one of vociferous activity.

“Holy Jumpin’ Sailor!” he roared. “There’s a steamer astern of us!”

Zzzzz-a-a-ah! A siren seemed to shriek overhead, and through the mist on the port quarter appeared the slate-colored stem of a large steamer. There was a roaring of whitewater under a salmon-and-rust-streaked wall of plates; a mud-covered stockless anchor hung from a hawse-pipe; and, as Winslow spang to the wheel he noted subconsciously that the hissing bow-wave shut off the other vessel’s draft-gage at fifteen feet. Knocking the man off the wheel-box, he whirled the wheel to starboard as the driving iron stem forged ahead.



THERE was a shout from the mist above. The fluke of the pendant anchor hooked into the *Isabel Winslow's* boom-foot-ropes as the big mainsail started to slat in the wind. Grinding

and crashing, both vessels swept on, side by side.

“Let th’ sheet go! Let th’ sheet go!” yelled Winslow to the man standing dazed alongside of him.

The fisherman jumped at the command and, as the sea commenced pouring in over the quarter with the drag, he cast the mainsheet off from the bitt and let it run.

With a squealing of sheaves, the rope ran through the heavy double and triple blocks until the knot fetched up in the deck fairlead. The boom, still entangled, swung outboard until it struck the port main-rigging. The vessel rolled down. The whole port quarter went under in a yeasty boiling which swirled around Winslow’s shoulders as he clutched the spokes of the wheel. Then something snapped — it was the boom-foot-ropes.

Bumping and grinding along the steamer’s hull, the schooner barely escaped the whirling slash of the propeller, which churned the water into foam a scant fathom away.

White-faced and panting Winslow stared at the receding stern under which revolved the racing screw and, speechless, hung to the wheel, while the gang came tumbling up from cabin and foc-sle.

“What an escape! What an escape!” gasped the skipper, when he found his voice. “Has he stopped?”

“Stopped?” It was Jimmy Thomas who spoke. “No, damn him! He won’t stop. What in blazes do they care?”

Winslow crawled slowly off the wheel-box and stared at the big boom, swinging idly in the wind to all the slack of the cast-off sheet.

“Look her over, fellers,” he said. “See ef she’s sprung or started in any way. Hell! I thought she’d ha’ bin drug clean under.”

“D’ ye know what vessel it was?” inquired Henderson.

“Yes, I read her name on th’ starn as she went by. Th’ *Westonhall* of West Hartlepool. Ain’t that what it was, Dexter?”

Dexter was the man whom Winslow had knocked off the wheel-box, and he had scarce recovered enough from his fright to give a coherent reply.

“Lord Harry! skipper, I don’t know,” he answered. “I’m all of a tremble. I never saw nawthin’ but th’ water streamin’ over th’ quarter, an’ I jest cast off th’ main-sheet when you yelled. Lordy! I was scared!”

The color was returning to the skipper’s face and he laughed.

“Yes, Dexter-boy, you were scared, I cal’late, but you did fine. I don’t mind admittin’ I was pow’ful scared myself!”

A man known as Sleepy Dick Johnston came aft, and pushed his way through the mob.

“What’s the racket, skipper?” said he. “Squall?”

“Squall?” roared Winslow amid the hilarious laughter of the gang. “Squall? For Heaven’s sake, go down an’ finish your sleep or I’ll kick ye over th’ rail.”

Nothing was found to be damaged. The boom footropes had drawn their bolts on the boom-end, and a few of the mainsailhoops were sprung but, in spite of the dragging and buffeting she had received, the schooner was none the worse. With the gang setting up the slackened lanyards of the main-rigging, Winslow swung the vessel off on her course again, after unnecessary cautionings to the watch regarding the use of eyes and ears. After what had happened, they needed no admonitions.

That evening some one started the phonograph with

the "Strolling Along" record. Winslow, on deck, heard the opening words and dived below.

"Shut that off an' gimme that record!" he demanded.

When it was handed to him he clambered on deck again, and hove it into the sea.

"Strolling along, was I?" he muttered. "Thinkin' nawthin' was wrong, eh? Well, there ye go, you hoo-doo! I'll have lookouts for an' aft in future, an' no phonographs a-playin' in fogs."

III



THE second officer of the tramp steamer *Westonhall* knocked respectfully on the chart-room door.

"Come in!" growled a thick voice, and the mate opened the door.

"Shuttin' down very thick, sir," he said. "Jest side-wiped a fishin' vessel a few minutes ago, an' I'm afraid there'll be a lot o' them around as we get down the bay. Hadn't I better ring her down, sir?"

"No! let her drive!" replied the master. "We've got t' be in Sydney to load that coal within th' nex' forty-eight hours. Nawthin' damaged when ye hit that fisherman, eh?"

"No, sir." The second greaser paused and added, "I didn't stop, sir. I don't think we hurt him."

"Ye did right, m' lad," said the captain thickly. "Never stop if ye sh'd smack one o' those Yankee fishermen. They're always under your bows — always; an' ef they get hold of your name they'll raise all kinds of hell with their darned consuls. You're smart off'sher, m' lad, smart off'sher. All ri'—keep her goin' an' don' sthop for fish-vess'ls. Call me when y' getsh Ca' Sable on four pointsh."

The second mate closed the door. "Drunken swine," he muttered. "Hope he'll pile her up an' give us all a chance for promotion." And he clambered up on the fog-drenched bridge.

In the wheel-house a Swede was steering, while a seaman of undeterminable nationality was pulling the whistle-cord at one-minute intervals. Over the canvas dodger, it was hard to discern the foremast from the bridge, and the second officer, who had never been in the Bay of Fundy before, anathematized the weather and wished he was elsewhere.

A bell tolled one stroke in the gloom ahead, and the officer peered over the dodger into the mist.

"All right!" cried he, as out of the pall loomed a three-masted schooner close-hauled under lower sails. A feeble horn wailed a note, and she was swallowed up.

"What a fog!" mused the officer. "And us loggin' ten or eleven knots through it. Jove! We'll be deuced lucky if we don't hit something."

He stepped over and peered at the clock in the wheel-house. "Fifteen minutes to eight. Um!" Then, to the sailor at the whistle-cord, "I'll take that. Go down an' call the chief officer."

The mate, stout and elderly, appeared on the stroke of eight bells. "Still hittin' it up?" he remarked. "Skipper still suckin' th' bally rum?"

"He's in his bunk," vouchsafed the other. "Told me t' keep her goin' an' call him when we get Cape Sable on th' four points. He'll never see th' Cape in this weather an' he must be crazy t' go anywhere near it. I'd be for haulin' her out a bit more."

"What's th' course?"

"South-forty-east was th' last I got at four o'clock. She's still headin' it. Skipper said it was all right till midnight."

The mate nodded. "I wonder ef he allowed for th' set o' th' tide they get in this place? There's a set o' two 'n' half knots with th' flood aroun' here."

The second mate was clambering down the ladder.

"Well, that ain't our business, Mr. Canning. He's skipper, an' he's th' joker that sets th' courses. He ain't given me any instructions, so if you want any, go an' see him yourself. Me for th' bunk — my middle watch t'-night."

Left alone, the mate nodded as the wheel-relief passed into the wheel-house and repeated the course. Then he leaned over the dodger and stared into the wreathing mist.

"Thick as mud," he murmured, "an' th' Old Man's tight as a drum—drinkin' ashore all mornin'. Nice night for a wreck. Breezin' up."

The crow's-nest man tolled the bell, and the mate peered into the vapor.

"All right!" he growled, as a reeling gas-and-bell buoy flashed and clanged a scant ship's length away.

"Wonder what that is?" The officer was worried and, half hesitant, he took another look around and clattered down the ladder to the chart-room.

After repeated knocking, he opened the door and found the master snoring in drunken slumber in his bunk.

"Whatsh marrer?" growled the Old Man, after the officer had shaken him.

"Just passed a flashing light-an'-bell buoy on starb'd hand. We're still steerin' that south-forty-east course you set this afternoon. Ain't it time t' change it?"

The Captain rolled back on his pillow. "'S'all ri'," he rumbled. "She's clear of everythin' till raise Ca' Sable.

The mate was not satisfied. "I think you'd bet-

ter turn out, sir. It's thick as mud outside."

The skipper was snoring.

"Swab!" murmured the officer, and clambered on the bridge again.

"I'll take charge on my own hook," he said to himself and, reaching for the engine-room telegraph, he rung her down to "half speed."

"Now I'll haul her out. She must be gettin' in-shore with th' set o' that flood-tide. Um! Wheel there!"

"Aye, aye, sir!"

"Let her go south, ten degrees east!"

"South, ten degrees east, it is, sir!"

The mate felt better, and the vessel slid through the fog-and-night-swathed sea at six knots. The firemen were cleaning fires. The ash-lift was clanking, and the lookout on the foc'sle sing-songed:

"All th' lights are burning bright,
An' all's we-e-ll!"

He broke off in his report with a half scream. "Light dead ahead!"

The mate jumped to the rail and mechanically grasped the engine-telegraph.

"Breakers ahead!" came from the crow's-nest, and the officer hauled the lever down to "Stop" and "Full astern."

Crunch! He was too late.

With a fearful grinding under her keel, the steamer's bow drove up on a sunken ledge, and the impact hove the officer against the after rail. Out from the foc'sle streamed the watch-below of sailors and firemen—a dozen tatterdemalion figures, Chinese stokers, Swedes and Norwegian deck-hands — all shouting with the first panic of fear.

While the steamer ground the bottom out of her in the sea, piling over the dangerous two-fathom ledge, the mate ran down into the chart-room.

The Captain was up—he was sailor enough to know what had happened—and he was sober.

“Well,” said the chief officer, “we’re done for. It’s breezin’ up an’ she’ll pound t’ pieces in a little while. Will I get th’ boats swung out?”

The skipper was white-faced and puffy with the after-effects of his carouse.

“Yes,” he stuttered. “Let’s get away from here. She’s on th’ Two-Fathom Ledge. We’re too far in-shore. You passed a buoy a little while ago, eh? We’ll get our tickets smudged for this if we ain’t careful. Get your log-book an’ bring it here. We’ll fix it up an’ slide. Godfrey! How she’s pounding!”

Thirty minutes later, two ship’s boats were pulling through the fog for Cobtown Harbor, fourteen miles away, while the tramp steamer *Westonhall* banged and pounded her bottom out on the weed-covered Two-Fathom Ledge.

IV



UNDER her four lowers, the *Isabel Winslow* was slouching along through the steaming shroud. The phonograph was tabooed as long as the fog lasted, and the gang, except the skipper and the double watch of four men, had turned in early.

Winslow had taken a cast of the lead at four in the morning, and with the intimate knowledge of depths possessed by fishermen, accurately placed his position as being two miles to windward of the Two-Fathom Ledge gas-and-bell buoy. Noting the spot on the

chart, he took off his oil-coat and, stretching out on a locker, glanced over the pictures in a magazine.

A story of the wild and woolly West was claiming his attention when he heard the watch for'ard shouting something about a steamer. In a flash, he was on his feet.

"What's that?" he bawled. "A steamer bearin' down?"

He had scarce uttered the words before eight stocking-footed fishermen were tumbling out of their bunks — alert, nervous and with all the sleep banished from their brains.

"A steamer?" yelled Jimmy Thomas excitedly. "Gimme a shack-knife till I cut my throat! What a night!"

And, following the skipper, they crowded on deck.

"What's that, for'ard?"

The answer rolled back in the fog.

"Looks like a steamer ashore on Two-Fathom Ledge!"

The transition from fear to expectant joy was simply marvelous, and the manner in which Winslow scrambled up the forerigging would have done credit to a monkey.

"A steamer ashore? By th' Great Trawl-Hook! I believe it is! There's th' gas-buoy flashin' off our port an' there's a vessel's green light an' a masthead light showin' behind that. It's a steamer on th' Ledge all right—must ha' got out o' his course in th' fog. Oh, below thar! Jibe her over an' run down t' loo'ard o' th' gas-buoy!"

The August dawn was tinting the vaporous pall to a pearly gray when the schooner rounded to leeward of the wreck, and the growing daylight revealed a slate-hulled, rust-streaked tramp steamer of some three thousand tons almost high and dry on

the rocks. It was low water, but the fresh westerly wind was driving a long creaming swell over the ledge and, as the breakers rolled in under the steamer's stern, she could be seen lifting perceptibly.

Winslow was peering at her through his binoculars, and the trawlers crowded around him to hear his comments.

"Anybody on her, skipper?" inquired Jimmy Thomas anxiously.

Jimmy had partaken of wrecks before, and he was naturally solicitous.

"Not a soul as I kin see," answered Winslow. "There ain't no boats—davit-tayckles are hangin' over th' side.

Old Jimmy gave a wild whoop and executed a few steps of the fisherman's horn-pipe.

"She's abandoned! She's abandoned! Horray! Over with th' dories, Harry, afore th' cutter comes pokin' around'!"

"Easy thar', Jimmy," cautioned the skipper. "Shin aloft somebody an' see ef ye kin make out th' cutter. She's likely t' be pokin' around' this aways."

Wally Burke was hauling himself up the maintop-sail-halyards for a clear sight, when Winslow made an ejaculation of surprise.

"Well, I'll be darned," he exclaimed, placing the glasses in their case. "That there's th' identical craft what banged us last night. *Westonhall* o' West Hartlepool! Lord Harry! What luck!"

Burke had crawled to the topsail-halyard block, and his voice came rolling down from aloft.

"Nawthin' in sight!"

"Good!" Winslow turned to the waiting gang.

Wrecks don't occur every day, and it would be a very peculiar fisherman indeed who did not take advantage of one.

“Make th’ jumbo tail-rope fast. Sheet in your mains’l, an’ away you go with th’ dories! Dexter, Wally an’ John — you stay aboard with me t’ keep an eye on things.”



DORIES never went over a vessel’s side so fast as did eight of the *Isabel Winslow’s* and, with the whole of them pulling their hardest in order to reach the prize first, it was an object-lesson as to the energy begotten in a man by the blood-firing, buccaneering incentive of “Loot!”

Dory after dory reeled alongside during those early morning hours, and their contents were a revelation in the way of variety. Number one, with Jimmy Thomas and Andy Watson in it, came to the vessel almost awash with plunder in the shape of a bulky Sir William Thomson standard compass; two brass engine-room telegraphs; a wheel-house clock and barometer; the bridge-wheel itself; chart-room sofa-cushions; swivel-chair; brass lamps; blankets, mattresses, pillows and towels, besides a hundred smaller articles. These were all transferred to the hold, while the dory went back for another load.

It does not take long to loot a three-thousand, Tyne-built tramp steamer laden with water-ballast, as most of the spoils are to be gotten only from the vessel’s fittings and the personal effects of her crew. In addition, Tyne-built tramps are not bristling with valuable standard compasses and brasswork, nor is there any service of silver to be found in the steward’s pantry. Sleepy Dick Johnston thought he had hit a silver mine when he rifled the sideboard in the saloon, but the heavy plate turned out to be nickel and pewter.

Hawsers, wire and manila, side-lights, cushions, carpets, bedding, canned food and iron gin-blocks

constituted the bulk of the material "salved," and all dories, except Henderson's, were aboard and nested when the ominous blare of a siren rent the mist.

"Holy Sailor!" cried Winslow. "Th' cutter, by th' Great Hook Block! An' me a respectable married man, a shareholder in this vessel an' son-in-law to an Anchorville town-councillor, caught lootin' a wreck! Draw away for Heaven's sake!"

"Wait for Henderson, skipper!" said old Jimmy. "He's a-comin' now!"

And Henderson—the foe of Mrs. Murphy, washer-woman—*was* coming! He knew that whistle and it made him lay to his oars as he never did in trawling. Henderson had done some lobster-poaching in his day, and many a time had blessed the perspicacity of a Government which equipped its Fishery cruisers with whistles peculiar to themselves!

He was the only one who had not brought anything aboard and the gang were curious, so curious that, when he came alongside all hands were craning their necks to look into the dory.

A queer huddled heap lay crouching between the thwarts. It was clad in dungaree slops, oily—greasy rags, while the face, hands and feet of the creature were black—sooty black.

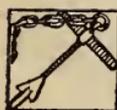
"It's a monkey!" cried one man, as he helped it over the rail.

"It's a negro!" vouchsafed another Sherlock Holmes.

Henderson leaped over the rail and set all deductions at naught. "Monkey an' nigger be damned," said he. "It's a Chineyman—an' I'm a-goin' t' spike Mrs. Murphy's guns with him! Come on, ol' son!"

And, lifting the little coal-and-grease-stained Oriental in his arms, he carried him down into the foc'sle.

V



IT WAS Henderson who was talking, while the schooner glided silently through the fog for the Seal Island grounds.

"Yes," he was saying, "I was jest takin' a turn aroun' her engine-room with a crowbar t' see ef thar was anythin' w'uth liftin' whin I hears a howlin' an' whinin' from th' stoke-hold. I wades through about three feet o' water inter that b'iler-room an' finds my yaller fr'end with his body jammed in a bunker-door. I cal'late he was trimmin' coal when she struck an' got caught somehow, while his mates skinned out an' left him. That's the idea, cook. Fill th' poor joker up with that coffee! He's a-goin' t' be th' best piece o' loot we ever scoffed from a wreck. Mrs. Murphy 'll wish she'd never bin so free with her blasted bar o' soap after I'm through with her!"

"What are ye a-goin' t' do?" queried a dozen mystified trawlers.

"What am I a-goin' t' do?" cried Henderson. "Why, I'm a-goin' t' take this yaller-belly back t' Anchorville an' set him up in th' laundry-business!"

And, while the gang pondered over this statement in a maze, the fisherman outlined his plan.

"Chineymen are born laundrymen. It's second natur' to them. Now you fellers know what trouble we've had with that Murphy woman to Anchorville; how she sp'iles yer duds an' rips all th' buttons off'n them an' sasses ye inter th' bargain. She give me a wipe on th' nut th' other day an' bust my new hat while I was argyfyin' with her, an' tells me she wanted no more fishermen's washin' t' do. She'll get no more, for, after this, Chop Suey here will do all th' washin' for the Anchorville trawlers."

Winslow, mugging up at the shack locker, broke in.

“That’s all right, Jack, an’ a mighty good scheme, too—but how d’ ye know he kin wash? He’s been a coal-passer, by th’ looks o’ him.”

Henderson addressed the blinking, slant-eyed figure in his bunk.

“Hey, you!” he bawled, under the impression that a foreigner understands you better when you shout at him, “You wishee-washee, eh? No tickee, no shirtee job?”

The Oriental shook his head.

“No savvy. Me tlimmer. Me tlimmer, gleaser an’ donkeyman Hong Kong boat. Alee samee good fli’-man. Got good discha’ge—velly good!”

“What in blazes is he a-sayin’!” queried Andy Watson. “Who knows his lingo?”

“Bring Tom Collins for’ard,” said Winslow with a smile. “He oughter know th’ Chink language pretty well. He’s forever yarnin’ about th’ chop suey he got in Chinatown in Boston. Give him a hail.”

Tom Collins came clattering down the ladder and the gang cleared the way for him.

“Tom,” said Henderson, “you’ve th’ name o’ bein’ quite a langwidge-ifyer an’ ye have, by yer own sayin’, traveled some among the Chinks in Boston. Now get busy an’ ask this guy ef he kin wash clothes!”

Collins was endowed with a wit which might have been put to better use in other vocations than trawling and, after a glance at the blinking Canton coolie, he swung around and asked the cook for a cake of soap and a dirty towel.

“Look-see!” he said when the articles had been handed to him. “Ching, ching, Chinaman, hi mucka hi! Chop suey, savvy!” And he held out the soap

and towel. Comprehension seemed to dawn upon the yellow man's sooty face at once and, tumbling out of the bunk, he grasped the soap and towel and shuffled to the galley-sink.

"Tom's got him!" cried the gang slapping the blushing linguist on the back, and they crowded around the Oriental, *who calmly proceeded to wash his face!*

When Collins had discreetly retired, it was Sleepy Dick Johnston who rolled out of his bunk and saved the day. Slouching aft with an old, gurry-smearred shirt and a pair of socks, he threw them easily into the sink and touched the Chinaman on the shoulder.

"Wash 'em!" he growled, and retired, slopping his stags into his bunk again.

To the delight of all, the yellow man washed the clothes, and it almost brought tears into Henderson's eyes to see the manner in which his prize scrubbed and wrung out that old shirt.

"By th' Lord Harry! He's a-goin' t' be a bird," he ejaculated, and the Chink nodded. "Yes! I good wash! I wash secon' enginee's clothes all time on 'Tina Malu boat. Me wash chop-chop!"

During the whole ten days the *Isabel Winslow* was fishing, the survivor had plenty of practice, for he washed out the clothes of every man aboard.



THERE is a law in Canada which decrees that a Chinaman can not enter and reside in the country unless he pays a head-tax of five hundred dollars. While the majority of the *Isabel Winslow's* crew were ignorant of this, yet the skipper was better informed and, when they swung off from La Have with seventy-five thousand of shack, there were many plans to be discussed. The loot, stowed in the after pens of the hold,

was to be stored in Johnny Leblanc's bait-shed on Gull Island until a deal with either an Anchorville or Cobtown junk-dealer could be made. Jack Henderson and the Chinaman were to be landed in a dory at a cove some ten miles below Anchorville and to remain at a lobsterman's place until telephoned for.

Under cover of the fog, which had scarce lifted the whole time they were at sea, they shot in and transferred the salvage and, standing up the coast again, the Oriental and Henderson were landed on the beach "to await further orders."

Back in Anchorville once more, each man was pledged to secrecy, and the skipper went and rented an old shanty near the wharves for, as he said, "a Chinese laundryman that Jack Henderson was bring-in' up from Cobtown to do trawlers' washin'."

The hat was passed around the gang and, when Henderson and a respectable looking heathen landed from the Cobtown train one fine morning, there was a new and fully equipped laundry in town which, as the notice pasted upon the window said, catered exclusively to the washing of fishermen at most reasonable rates.

The rates were indeed most reasonable. The washing was done well. And Mr. Chop Suey, ex-fireman S. S. *Westonhall*, logged with the British Consul at Singapore as Yuen Lung, drowned in loss of vessel on Canadian coast, prospered accordingly.

VI



IT WAS two or three trips later when each man pocketed a substantial little check for some "junk" bought by a Cobtown dealer who had ways and means of disposing of it. Henderson was feeling particularly good and, on a bright Oc-

tober morning, he swung down the road from his boarding-house whistling a song. As he stepped past his former laundrywoman's establishment, he heard his name called, and wheeled around to see Mrs. Henrietta Murphy beckoning to him.

"Th' top of th' mornin' to ye, Mr. Henderson."

She greeted him effusively, and Henderson grunted most ungallantly.

"Won't you sthep inside a moment, Mr. Henderson," entreated the washlady, with a beguiling look on her Celtic features.

"Naw," answered the fisherman. "I remember th' last time I was in your place."

"Ah, Mr. Henderson," replied Henrietta sorrowfully, "'Tis me that felt a sad woman afther that regrettable incidint. Sure, I jist lost my timper intoirely that day, Mr. Henderson. I was worried, so t' spake, what with th' price o' soap, bleachin' an' starch——"

"Hum!" grunted the other.

The washerwoman clasped her hands.

"O Mr. Henderson! What did ye want for t' ruin a poor widow woman by bringin' that slant-eyed heathen to Anchorville? Me with five childer, an' wearin' my fingers t' th' bone in order t' keep th' poor dears from th' almshouse? Mr. Henderson! Why, sh'd ye go out o' yer way t' ruin me? Th' yaller idolator has taken all my work away from me! He's washin' starch shirts fur five cents an' I c'd jest make a livin' on ten. Collars he's doin' fur a cent apiece, an' two cents is th' lowest I c'd charge t' make a livin'. Underclothes an' other things at half my rates, an' he's gittin' all th' town-folks' custom. O Mr. Henderson——" the trawler winced at the repeated appeals—"how in Holy Mary's name kin I compete with a man what lives on ten cents'

o' rice a week an' gits all th' salt hake he wants by liftin' thim off th' flakes?"

And Mrs. Murphy collapsed in tears.

Henderson felt perturbed and was about to move away when the lady of the tub began again.

"O Mr. Henderson, I'm a poor trawler's widow, I am, an' you know it. Poor Mike Murphy—wan o' th' finest o' th' deep-sea trawlers out o' Anchorville—drowned while carryin' out his dooty on th' waters——"

"I thought he got out on a drunk in Cobtown an' fell inter th' dock?"

"O Mr. Henderson! How kin ye sthand thar an' despise th' name o' wan o' th' finest men that iver hauled a trawl? God knows, ye've worked me enough ill 'thout slanderin' my pore husband. We'll be starvin' soon, an' 'twill be laid at your door—yes, ye'll hev much to answer for, Mr. Henderson, whin th' houly St. Peter calls ye to account. Ochone! 'tis a heart of flint ye have, an' a poor widow woman's tears can not move ye!"

While the lady's shoulders were heaving in elephantine sobs and she was swabbing her eyes with her apron, Henderson was thinking.

Mrs. Murphy was the relict of a deceased fisherman—albeit a lazy, dissolute one—yet the common bond of sympathy which unites the fraternity of the deep-sea trawlers was working on his sympathies. He was wavering and, with a woman's intuition, Mrs. Murphy sensed it.

"O Mr. Henderson," she wailed, "get that yaller heathen away from here an' I'll look afther ye. Ye'll git yer washin' at half the old price an' done up like a lord's——"

"An' th' buttons?" grunted the other. "How about th' buttons?"

“Iv’ry blessed button that’s gone shall be sewed on agin whether I bruk them off or not! I’ll patch an’ mend any little skags for ye, Mr. Henderson, an’ not a cent extra will I charge.”

“Um!” The trawler scratched his head. “I’ll do my best, Mrs. Murphy, but it’ll be quite a job! Ef I git him away, ye’ll need never open yer trap about me bein’ in it.”

“S’ help me, Mr. Henderson,” vociferated the lady, “I’ll niver breathe a word, an’ ’tis a poor widow woman’s blessin’s that’ll be showered on you this night..”

And as the fisherman walked away, her beatitudes on his head rang in his ears.

“Holy Sailor!” he muttered when he got out of hearing. “I wonder what I kin do’ thout gittin’ th’ gang down on me? I can’t make th’ Chink go away. He’s doin’ too well. An’ I can’——”

He paused as an inspiration shot through his mind.

“By th’ Lord Harry!” he cried triumphantly. “I’ve got it! Th’ head-tax!”

A casual word dropped in the course of a conversation to Zebedee Publicover, the Anchorville customs-officer, resulted in the unlucky Chop-Suey being apprehended and taken to Halifax in custody of an immigration-officer. Two months later the one-time Anchorville laundryman was shoveling coal on a steamboat trading in the Gulf of Mexico. Mrs. Murphy’s star was in the ascendant again.

Henderson was pleased with his laundry, while Harry Winslow, thinking over events, and fingering a substantial “salvage” check, decided that the schooner’s phonograph needed a new record. He purchased one entitled, “Strolling Along.”

Hard Luck Finnegan



APTAIN MICHAEL FINNEGAN was an optimist of the first water, and for a skipper who was universally known among the men of the deep-sea fishing fleets by the sobriquet of "Hard-Luck Finnegan" he was the most cheerful specimen of a down-and-outer it would be possible for one to meet in a dog's age. Mind you, there was nothing wrong with Finnegan himself. He was no booze fighter, and possessed no vices which could be chalked up against his peculiar streak of misfortune, but in everything he did Fate always dealt him a wallop which left him gasping, but always ready to toe the line again.

The skipper was a clever navigator, as far as fishermen's navigation goes. He was a good fish killer and a very careful sailor man, and what is more important, the gangs all liked him. The best of fishermen, however, can hardly be expected to ship with a skipper who seems to have the peculiar faculty of driving butt end first into all the hard luck knocking around the Banks, and the result was that Finnegan found himself out of a vessel and forced to command a very humble schooner carrying two dories and fishing in the narrow waters of the Bay of Fundy.

Hard-Luck Finnegan happened to be in Anchorville when the old ninety-five-ton "toothpick" halibuter *Ayacucho* arrived with her skipper, Judson Kemble, disabled with a broken ankle. The *Ayacucho's* owners, not wishing to have the vessel lying to the dock until Kemble recovered, scouted around for another skipper to take her out, and as ves-

sel masters were scarce they sent for Finnegan.

“Now, Captain Finnegan,” said Mr. Dickie, the managing owner; “the *Ayacucho*’s got her gang an’ stores aboard, so you’ll please get to sea right away. You’ll be very careful with her, an’ run no risks. The vessel’s insured, but we’d sooner have her a-fishin’ these days, with the good prices goin’ for halibut. Take no chances whatever. She’s a trifle old, ye’ll please remember, an’ ye’ll need to handle her careful——”

The grizzled Finnegan laughed happily.

“Sure, Mr. Dickie, an’ ’tis mesilf that has th’ name o’ bein’ a careful man, an’ I’m thinkin’ Judson Kemble ain’t got th’ name o’ bein’ over cautious. Ef th’ *Coocho* kin stand his drivin’, I cal’late she ain’t a goin’ t’ lose a rope yarn with mine. I niver was a sail carrier——”

The vessel owner nodded.

“N-no, that’s true enough, Captain, but—but ye’ve been a trifle unfortunate. Ye took th’ masts out of th’ *Carrie B. Watson* y’ know——”

“Lor’ bless ye, sir,” interposed Finnegan, “but that wasn’t with carryin’ sail, ye’ll mind. They were rotten in th’ steps an’ she simply rolled them out in a ca’m. I niver was a sail carrier, an’ I’ll promise ye that th’ *Coocho* ’ull be snugged down quicker an’ sooner than any vessel I ever had th’ handlin’ of. I’m out t’ kill my hard luck this time, Mr. Dickie, an’ I’ll be as careful as a mother with her first babe.”

So, on a warm May morning, the *Ayacucho* swung out past Anchorville Heads bound on a long halibut trip to the north and east grounds with an eight-dory gang and Hard-Luck Finnegan to the wheel. The crowd—a rough and tough Anchorville mob who had followed the redoubtable “Driving Jud Kemble” ever since the trip he had made in

the ill starred *Annie Crosby*—sat around the decks rigging halibut gear and passed loud-voiced comments on Finnegan's reluctance to spread sail.

“Look at her now!” cried one man, loud enough for the skipper to hear. “A nice little breeze like this, an’ her down to th’ four lowers. ’Tis positively sinful. Ef Jud Kemble were here he’d have all th’ muslin hung an’ be down to th’ Cape by sundown——”

Finnegan smiled and twirled the wheel. “That’s all right. John,” he said, “You ain’t with Jud Kemble now. Th’ four lowers is quite enough for this vessel on a squally day like this. We ain’t got no ice in her yet, an’ with nawthin’ but her ballast she’s carryin’ all she’ll stand with safety. We’re goin’ fishin’, not yacht racin’.” And the gang chewed and spat disgustedly.

“Waal, shucks!” growled they. “This is a goin’ t’ be a walk of a trip. Finnegan’s got about as much nerve as a sick, crawlin’ cat. She’ll never make enough speed t’ take the kinks out th’ log line at this rate. Ef Jud Kemble c’d see us now, he’d drown hissself with shame at seein’ th’ ol’ *Hootchie Cootchie* mishandled so!”



WHETHER the *Ayacucho* herself felt ashamed of her new skipper's carefulness it is hard to say, but she crawled dejectedly around the coast at a snail's pace, and made the entrance to the Gut of Canso after four days' leisurely ambling under four lowers. When they made Cranberry Island, a snow squall struck in from the nor'west, and Finnegan had the rags off her in jig time and was lying to under foresail and jumbo before the wind began to pipe up a decent sailing breeze.

"Y' see, boys," said Finnegan to the indignant crowd rolling up the mainsail with curseful comments, "this here Canser ain't no place t' be pokin' around in thick weather, an' iver since I missed stays in the ol' *Andrew Coston* an' hung her up on Mackerel Rock, I don't believe in takin' chances. We'll let her hang until this blows over; then we'll git our ice aboard an' strike for our baitin' at th' Madaleens."

"Don't see no reason why she couldn't make Canser in this bit o' a flurry," growled a man. "'Tain't a blowin' no gale o' wind, as I kin see. Ef Juddy Kemble war here, he'd poke her in quick enough."

"Aye," chipped in another of the gang, "ef Juddy Kemble was on her now, 'tis makin' our first set off th' Bird Rocks we'd be by this time."

Finnegan laughed.

"Aye, Tom, but 'tis Careful Mike Finnegan that's sailin' th' *Coochie* this trip, an' not Drivin' Jud Kemble. We'll git in soon enough, so don't worry."

Twenty hours later the wind eased up and they shot into Canso and loaded ice and salt. When the hatches were battened down and the tide served, Finnegan went ashore to look at the weather bulletin, and came aboard with an apologetic smile.

"We'll not go out this tide, boys," he said. "Forecast says 'Strong nor'west winds,' so we'll hang to th' wharf until it fairs up. Tain't no use beatin' up th' Straits in this——"

"Why not?" growled the gang. "Let's git on our way to th' Madaleens. Ef we wait for fair winds we'll never git our bait, an' there's th' whole o' th' Bank fleet makin' for the Islands."

"Let 'em go," answered Finnegan. "Th' her-rin' 'ull be around th' Madaleens for a month or

more yet, an' there'll be enough for all of us. I ain't takin' no chances in beatin' up them Straits o' Canser since I run th' *Oleander* on Sand P'int. 'Twas jest sech a breeze as what's makin' up, and in them narrow channels thar's all kinds o' flukes an' back drafts a comin' off'n th' hills. It cost nigh four hundred dollars t' pull th' *Oleander* off."

And while Captain Finnegan went below whistling a song to himself, the gang hung around the decks and watched the Gloucestermen and Lunenburgers standing out through the Net Rock Passage bound for their herring bait at the Magdalen Islands.

"What kind of a skipper does that gazabo call himself?" growled John Timmins. "'Tis runnin' as deck hand on a ferryboat in Boston Harbor he sh'd be. Ain't he got no nerve at all? Gee! I've a bit o' a girl to home what 'ud run him under ef she was skipperin' a vessel. Look what he calls a breeze! Lord Harry, boys; let's go up to th' post-office an' send a letter to Juddy Kemble. He'll hev a fit over this."

And the crowd trailed off to write the *Ayacucho's* former skipper a scrawling screed detailing all the careful Finnegan's doings since the schooner cast off from Anchorville wharf. Among the epithets bestowed upon Mike were such figurative phrases as "coodunt carry biskits to a chaned bare"; "nerve of a T Dock willy-boy"; "afraid of gittin' his feet wet"; "should be to hoam mindin' calfs an' sheap," and so on. Finnegan still whistled.

II.



THE *Ayacucho* managed to sneak up to Port Hawkesbury in light airs, and, for the first time since leaving the home port, Finnegan had staysail, balloon, and topsails set. Off

the port they lay for another twenty hours waiting for a fair wind to carry them across the North Bay to the Magdalens. The gang remonstrated, but the skipper came across with the usual objection.

“It’s no manner o’ use to go bucketin’ an’ beatin’ around in that shoal water Bay with them no’therlies raisin’ a chop. I mind th’ time I was in *th’ Constellation* an’ lost all th’ dories off’n her decks in that same Bay. It’s sure a tough place in a wind——”

“Say, skip,” interrupted John Timmins sullenly, “is this a fisherman or a sick millionaire’s yacht you’re runnin’? What are we—deep-sea trawlers or a bunch o’ Summer rusticators from th’ city out for a little sail? D’ye think we’re liable t’ be seasick in a little swell? Or afraid o’ gettin’ our feet wet in th’ nasty spray? For th’ sake of our common pride, git th’ muslin on th’ *Hootchie* an’ git acrost to th’ Madaleens. Every blame’ Gloucesterman an’ Lunenburger is laughin’ at us, an’ ashore they call this vessel th’ *Crawlin’ Cootchie*.”

Finnegan laughed.

“Let ’em say what they like, John. ’Tis hali-butin’ we’re a goin’, not sailin’. ’Tain’t yer hard drivers what’s allus draggin’ sail an’ hustlin’ on passages what comes out best when th’ stocks are made up. I’ve been up against a hard-luck streak too long now t’ be runnin’ chances. I’m out t’ kill it this trip. Git yer gear overhauled an’ ready, an’ try an’ forget th’ way Judson Kemble used t’ do things. I’m gettin’ sick o’ hearin’ ’bout him every five minutes.”

And with a little gesture of annoyance—the first sign of it that the gang had seen—the skipper went below.



THEY got outside next day and crawled out past Cape Porcupine and the Judique Highlands under all sail. At nightfall, when Port Hood was abeam, it commenced breezing up from the sou'west, and, to the disgust of the gang, Finnegan ordered the staysail, balloon jib and topsails in. There was an American halibuter on the lee quarter shaping a course for the Islands, and the language of the crowd when she hauled ahead was sulphurous, to say the least.

“Oh, you ol' rat!” growled Timmins aside, stamping the staysail into the box. “Wouldn't I jest like to have ye crammed in this here box an' be jumpin' on your ol' carcass! Lettin' that ol' Gloucester plug overhaul th' *Cootchie*—her that can show heels to th' best o' them!”

And out on the bowsprit and aloft on the cross-trees the men rolled up the sails to the accompaniment of vicious tugs and lurid oaths. Finnegan heard, and still smiled.



THEY made Entry Island out of a smother of rainy mist, and Careful Mike had the jib in and the mainsail rolled up as soon as they struck five-fathom water. It was thick in the Bay, and with so many fishing vessels at anchor and standing in and out, Finnegan was jumping with anxiety. Twice they were within an ace of being run down by hard driving Gloucestermen bound out for the grounds with their bait aboard, and when the *Ayacucho*, under foresail and jumbo, refused to tack and drifted down upon an anchored Frenchman, Finnegan just managed to let go his anchor in time to prevent a mix-up.

“Why didn't t' ol' swab keep th' mains'l on her while workin' in here?” growled a man. “What a

lubber's way to come in to anchor! Here we are, now, bung up agin this S'int Malo craft an' away outside th' rest o' th' fleet. Give her all th' cable, he says, so we'll hev t' bust our hearts out windlassin' it all in again. Sink me! I never was shipmates with sich a spineless skipper in all my gaudy life afore!"

Though they were anchored four miles off from Amherst, yet Finnegan would not take the schooner any closer in. It was a sullen and cursefully indignant trio which rowed him ashore to the wharf. There were about forty fishing vessels in the Bay waiting for bait, and upon the wharf and the beach loafed a good hundred or more trawlers, all eager to hear and chew over scandal and gossip. To this receptive gang the *Ayacuchos* retailed their trials with Finnegan, and when that worthy came down from the telegraph office the jeers and jibes of the crowd rang in his ears. The timid skipper took no notice of their chaff, and though he was subjected to a running fire of rough pleasantries during the whole four days they were lying in to Amherst Island, yet he did not evince annoyance.

"Let 'em talk," he remarked to the skipper of another vessel. "I've been up against hard luck all my life, and I'm for takin' no more chances. I'm runnin' th' vessel, not th' gang, an' when I want t' take in sail, I'll take it in whether they like it or not."

"Aye, that's all right, Cap'en Mike," replied the other, "but you know how th' boys feel. The *Ayacucho's* a fast sailor, an' that gang have been used to Juddy Kemble's drivin'. What kin you expect? I like t' see a vessel sail myself, an' no man likes to have a skipper haulin' down his kites afore there's any need for it. What's come over you, Finnegan? You ain't by no means a narvous man.

You've seen some rough dustin' in your day. Why don't you sock it to that ol' toothpick some breezy day an' show that crowd what's what? She kin stand it, I cal'late."

Captain Mike smiled.

"Can she, John?" he said quietly. "She's eighteen year old, an' her mains'l is th' best sail she has. Her iron knees hev rusted out, an' her starn framin' is punky with dry rot. Her butt ends are shaky, an' she ain't been calked this season. She leaks quite a bit—jest a bit too much for my likin'. Her iron work aloft is 'most worn through, an' her whole framin' an' plankin' is rim-racked with Kemble's sail dragging. Now, John, with a vessel in that condition, an' a man with my unfortunite reputation, how would ye like t' be in my place ef I took chances with her, drove her, an' lost her? I lost my own vessel once through no fault of my own, an' I've put two others ashore. I've lost sails an' dories oftener than I care to think on, but—" and into his voice there entered an iron ring— "though I'm careful, I hev never lost my nerve, an' some o' these fine days I'll show them sail carriers a thing or two."

And he strolled down to the wharf end where his dory was waiting for him.

The other skipper cut a fill of tobacco and watched him go.

"You're all right, Mike, an' I don't blame you," he muttered to himself, "but I'd like t' see you rouse that gassy gang o' yours up an' show them a thing or two. An' you're th' boy what kin do it ef you want to."

III.



THE *Ayacucho* got her herring bait at Grindstone after dodging around the Magdalens for a week. On her passage to the grounds off the Bird Rocks in the Gulf of Saint Lawrence, Finnegan passed orders for the balloon jib to be unbent and stowed away.

“Aye,” said the gang. “Stow it away, for Heaven’s sake. Th’ light sails sh’d ha’ bin left to home for all th’ use they’re gittin’. Th’ blame’ things hev bin under th’ stops so long that th’ mildew is in ’em. Condemn our gory eyes for shippin’ with sich a crawlin’ peddler. Hope he’ll fish better than he sails, sink him!”

Was Finnegan aware of the remarks made about him? If he wasn’t, it was no fault of the men. The gang did not lower their voices when passing their comments, and when the skipper dropped below for a “mug-up” he was reasonably sure of hearing some bull-roared reflection upon his timidity in carrying sail. At meal times in the forecastle men would jeer and joke among themselves about it, and apologize to Finnegan with a sarcastic——

“Excuse me, skip, I didn’t know you were there.”

Even the cook took a hand, and as he busied himself around his stove and galley sink, he sung out his little observations to the crowd chewing the rag “for’ard of the pawl post.” In spite of it all, Finnegan the optimistic smiled, and when that seraphic grin stole over his broad, kindly features, the gang cursed him for a “gaudy grinnin’ image” and ventured the hope that some of their number would put a different expression upon the skipper’s countenance.

They started on their first set off the Rocks, using the small halibut and shack gear in the dories. The halibut and cod taken in the first sets were split, flitched, and salted, and working the different depths of water they made some fair hauls. Following the fish, they worked over to Heath Point, Anticosti, and made sets all along the Island shore to West Point, until the Straits of Belle Isle cleared of ice along in the beginning of July. Up through the Straits and along the Labrador they trawled during the long Summer days. Procuring fresh bait, they swung south to the Funks Grounds to fill up on fresh stock.

If Finnegan was a poor hand at carrying sail, the crowd had to admit that he was no slouch at fishing. Though they made no extraordinarily big hauls, yet he found the fish in all the spots he strung the dories over, and by the time they made the Funks they had a good trip of flitched halibut and salt cod in the pens below.

"I really believe I'm goin' t' git clear with a good trip at last," said Finnegan to himself. "I've had no accidents so far, an' I've struck fish. Gimme a few good sets on th' Funks, an' I'll jog her home quiet-like in spite o' Kemble's sail carryin' bazoo artists aboard her. Ef they want sail carryin', they kin have Kemble back again. Let me land a good trip an' I kin git a vessel an' a quiet crowd o' men who're content t' go fishin' 'thout tearin' full pelt atween port an' Bank. It don't pay."

They made the desired grounds and baited up their gear. In the afternoon of a pleasant July day the dories were dropped, one after the other, and the long skates of trawl were anchored over the bottom of the sea. Setting the watch buoy with a lighted lantern to the end of the gear, the men returned aboard, and during the night the vessel made

short tacks, keeping the watch light in sight. At sunrise, while a light sou'wester was ruffling the calm surface of the sea, the dories were hoisted over and the gang got on their gear.

Left upon the schooner were the skipper and the cook, and the two of them had scarce shipped the checkerboards to receive the fish before the weather dory had an oar up.

"Ho! ho!" chuckled the skipper. "Loaded up an' jest started haulin'! That looks good. Draw away th' jumbo, cook, an' git your halibut gaffs an' pews ready. Timmins has his oar up——"

"Aye, skipper," cried the cook excitedly, "an' so has Jimmy Watson an' Jack Sullivan. Look! There goes another. Th' whole crowd are on fish."

Finnegan twirled the wheel over.

"Now, ef th' weather'll only hold good we may get a jag out o' this set, but th' glass is low an' that red sunrise ain't a good sign with a southerly wind. Stand by dory painter, cook!"

Down the string of dories they went. All had to be lightened of a load.

"Watch th' vessel," said Finnegan, as they departed for their gear again. "Ef it breezes up I'll want ye aboard. Buoy your trawls an' leave 'em ef ye see the ens'n in th' riggin'."

"Like fun we will," was the general comment. "Think we're a goin' t' leave loaded trawls when you begin t' git nervous? When your gaudy ens'n 's flyin' I'm blinded in one eye an' can't see out the other, Old Woman Finnegan. Ef 'twas Juddy Kemble skipperin' th' *Cootchie*, he'd hev us on th' gear ontill th' blame' gulls couldn't fly to wind'ard, an' we're th' gang to stand th' racket!"

When they were gone the skipper gave the wheel a savage wrench.

“Oh, ye will, will ye?” he muttered, with the smile still on his face. “Ye’ll not see the ens’n, eh? Ye’ll hang out till th’ gulls can’t fly to wind’ard, so ye say. Ye’ll leave me aboard here with full decks an’ all this sail on her when it breezes up. Waal, we’ll see who hangs out th’ longest, me or you!”



FOUR times the dories lightened that morning. When the lee dory had left for the gear again the breeze struck in, lightly at first, but latterly in savage squalls which caused the deep-laden schooner to roll her fish-littered decks into the lee froth as the big mainsail felt the heft of the wind. The sea was beginning to rise and break in ugly, savage crests. The reckless, daredevil gang out in the frail dories chuckled to themselves and speculated on the sweat of terror their skipper would be in with the vessel taking charge of him in the breeze blowing.

“Ha! Ha!” laughed Timmins, as he clubbed a squirming halibut into quietude. “I’d like t’ use my club on th’ skipper an’ beat some sand into him. Look, Percy! Th’ beggar’s haulin’ down th’ jib already. Thar’ goes his blame’ ens’n. We don’t see it, do we, Perce?”

His dorymate sniggered.

“Naw! I done left my specs aboard th’ vessel, so I hev. ’Sides, I think th’ skipper’s only flyin’ th’ flag ’cause he’s gittin’ sich a big jag o’ fish.”

“A celebration like th’ Fourth o’ July or Dominion Day, Perce!”

And both men hauled on their trawl, and gaffed and clubbed halibut, while their dory rose and fell over a rearing hill and dale of sea, and occasional sprays slopped in.

The crowd jeered mightily among themselves when they saw the recall signal in the schooner's rigging, but the banter and chaff died away when they saw the flag hauled down again and the vessel heading up to windward. The sea was becoming ugly and the savage squalls were slicing the tops off the waves and driving the sprays athwart the water in a threatening manner. Instead of laughing, the dorymates began to squint anxiously in the direction of the schooner and regret their rash boasts. Even the most reckless and daring will forget to laugh in the face of impending death.

"Where the howlin' Tophet is that crazy galoot a-goin'?" growled Timmins, dashing the spray out of his eyes. "Sinful Judas! This here sea 'ull take charge of us soon. Kin ye see him, Percy?"

Percy Wilson knocked off coiling trawl to have a squint over the roaring crests.

"He's away down to loo'ard. Somethin's th' matter. His fores'l 's down——"

"Halyards parted, I cal'late. Keep an eye on him, Percy, boy—— Look out! Sufferin' catfish! We're swamped——"

A seething grayback struck the dory and piled over the low gunnel.

"Over with some o' them halibut!" yelled Timmins, seizing his gaff. "Cod-eyed Christopher! another brute like that an' my wife's a widder!"

All along the string of dories the gang were having their troubles, and several of the little craft, heavy with the weight of a ton of fish in them, were within an ace of swamping in the savage combers. The wind was coming away in squalls and driving the rain and spindrift across the tumbling waters, and the boats were performing antics to make even a fisherman's hair curl.

“Where th’ flamin’ Hades is th’ vessel?” yelled dorymate to dorymate, and with no little trepidation they scanned the misty sea-line for the *Ayacucho*.

The schooner, however, was out of sight to all but Timmins and Wilson in the lee dory. Becoming nervous at the appearance of the weather, the men in the windward dory buoyed their remaining trawls and pulled for a Gloucester vessel lying to under foresail and jumbo near them. When they got safely aboard the American, her skipper swung off and commenced picking up the rest of the *Ayacucho*’s crowd, and wet, tired and viciously profane, fourteen of Finnegan’s gang crowded the *Carrie Carson*’s cabin and fo’c’s’le and retailed the old growl about their skipper. With the unreasonableness of children, they blamed their present plight on Finnegan, and forgot to mention their disregard of the recall signal.

Timmins and his dorymate, Percy Wilson, jettisoned half a dory load of prime halibut, and, sighting the *Ayacucho* some three miles to leeward of them, promptly cut adrift from half a skate of trawl and made for the vessel under a Spanish-reefed dory sail. They spent a wild half hour swooping and plunging among the thundering, heaving surges. When they finally swung alongside, the skipper caught their painter and inquired sweetly—

“Who told ye t’ come back?”

“Who told me?” sputtered Timmins. “Holy red-headed Judas! Ain’t this enough t’ make any one want t’ come aboard?”

“Waal,” drawled Finnegan ironically, “it might be for ornery trawlers what ain’t brought up with Judson Kemble, but when I saw th’ gulls still flyin’ to wind’ard, I cal’lated thar was plenty o’ time yet

for you fellers to pull th' rest o' yer gear. Where's all yours? Did ye buoy it?"

"Naw!" snapped Timmins. "We cut it!"

"Huh!"

There was contempt in the skipper's voice, and it seemed to sting the mortified Timmins like a whiplash.

"Cut yer gear, did ye? Huh! Waal, git aboard with ye now. Put yer dory in th' chocks an' we'll git that fores'l on her again an' pick up th' gang. I'll promise you an' them a lively session. While you gear cuttin' artists an' Kemble's gulls-flyin'-to-wind'ard bullies were havin' yer little game with me this mornin' an' leavin' th' vessel with all this sail on her, *she started spewin' her corkin' in ten-fut strakes*. Turn to, now, an' splice that peak halyard; wench that fores'l up an' git busy on th' pumps. Ye've lost me nearly all th' deck o' halibut we had, an' it's home we'll go with half a trip."

With consternation on his bronzed features, Timmins stared and gasped:

"Spewin' her corkin'? Lost yer deck o' halibut? How?"

"How?" snapped Finnegan, with an ugly light in his gray eyes. "How, you infernal thickhead? D'ye think halibut kin stay in th' checkers when a vessel rolls down to her hatches in a breeze o' wind with four whole lowers on her. Why didn't ye come aboard when I bent the ens'n in th' riggin'? D'ye think me 'n th' cook kin reef that mains'l an' shorten her down ourselves? Naw! Unfortunitley we couldn't, so we had t' keep it on her an' rack an' strain her all to pieces. Git to work, now. We'll pick up th' rest o' th' gang an' git to home afore she fills an' sinks."

IV.



IT WAS as Finnegan had said. The tremendous press of sail on the heavily laden schooner had caused her to work the calking out of her underwater seams; a man could look over the side and see the oakum trailing. Timmins, Wilson and the cook winched the foresail up again, and while Finnegan swung her off preparatory to bringing her up to windward again, the three men manned the pumps. Instead of black, foul smelling bilge and gurry water, they spouted clear brine.

Plunging and rolling in the seaway, the *Ayacucho* buried her lee rail in the froth alee, with her decks like the side of a house and the luff of her huge mainsail a-shiver. The wind was blowing great guns and smallarms, and the rain came down in sheets.

"There's a vessel runnin' down to us, skipper!" bawled the cook, and out of the smother stormed the *Carrie Carson* with her decks piled with the *Ayacucho's* dories. As she drove past the *Ayacucho's* quarter under foresail and jumbo, a stentorian voice came across the broil of water.

"Coocho ahoy! Seven dories here!"

"All right," roared Finnegan. "Keep the swine! I don't want 'em anny more!"

And as the *Carson* tore into the rain mist again, the toilers at the pumps wondered at their skipper's words.

Wilson spelled Timmins at the pump brakes, and the latter clawed his way aft.

"How about gittin' that mains'l off'n her, skip?" he shouted. "We kin heave her to an' git th' boys off th' *Carson* as soon as this eases up."

“Kin we?” answered the other with a harsh laugh. “Waal, maybe we kin, but we ain’t. Th’ *Coocho’s* got a fair wond now an’ for port she’ll go, gang or no gang. Th’ mains’l will stay on her until th’ wind drags it off’n th’ mast.”

“You’ll be makin’ for S’int John’s then an’ hev her put on th’ railway?”

“S’int John’s be blowed!” replied Finnegan decisively. “Does a market for halibut exist in S’int John’s? Is Clarence Dickey wantin’ th’ *Coocho’s* trip in Newf’n’land or Nova Scotia? Naw! Th’ vessel may not fetch Anchorville, but she’ll fetch Canser. Canser is in Nova Scotia, an’ to Canser th’ *Coocho* will go——”

“Canser!” almost howled Timmins. “An’ her leakin’ like this! Holy trawler, skipper, you must be gone crazy! Four of us aboard here t’ sail this leaky barge from th’ Funks to Canser? Five or six hunder’ mile? I refuse duty! By Judas, I do; an’ you can’t make me——”

Finnegan smiled as he hove the wheel down a spoke.

“An’ you’re th’ guy what was doin’ all th’ talkin’ about Jud Kemble an’ his reckless, drivin’ ways. You an’ yer friends, th’ tough mugs o’ th’ fleet! This afternoon called yer bluff, though, an’ ye cut yer gear like a green trawler in his first breeze. Huh! Ye make me sick! I see thar’s more’n me got yaller streaks when it comes to a show-down——”

“Aw, skip, be reasonable,” pleaded Timmins. “You know this vessel kin never make th’ trip with only four on us aboard. Wait an’ git th’ rest o’ th’ gang——”

“She’s on her course for th’ south’ard now. You made me lose a good deck o’ fish with yer nonsense this mornin’. Ye’ve made a fool o’ me th’ whole trip, an’ now I’m a goin’ t’ make a fool o’ you. It

ain't Old Woman Finnegan what's takin' charge now. It's me, Michael Finnegan, an' ef you don't like it I'll leave th' wheel here an' bash your ugly head off. I'm Irish, I am, an' when I'm nasty, I kin raise a row by whistlin' on th' devil to come an' fight me. Call th' cook to th' wheel here, an' I'll start in an' show you who's boss aboard th' *Coocho!*"

The cook came, and as soon as he had grasped the spokes Finnegan went for Timmins and knocked him into the lee scuppers. Timmins was powerful, and so was the skipper, and for two minutes half the *Ayacucho's* crew rolled in the yeasty boiling of scupper froth and pummeled one another. The cook, in his excitement, allowed the vessel to fall off, and the combatants were submerged in the broil of water which poured over the rail.

"Lemme go, skip!" gasped Timmins, coughing salt water, with his head jammed under a staysail sheet cleat. "I'll give in. This ain't no place to be scrappin'——"



FINNEGAN disentangled his fingers from the fisherman's throat.

"All right, bully," he growled menacingly. "You obey orders in future. Maybe your dorymate wants a lesson——"

Percy Wilson hastened to assure the skipper that he did not require instruction of any sort. As he took the wheel again, Finnegan threw his crew of three into a fit by ordering the light sails to be set.

"Eh?" gasped Wilson. "Did you say we was to give her th' stays'l?"

"That's what I said," snapped Finnegan, and in silent wonder the men busied themselves bending on the halyards and sheets. Finnegan was not smiling now, and the frightened trio, as they glanced at

the skipper's hard, set face, felt cowed by the glint in his eyes and the savage determination expressed in mouth and jaw. Gripping the spokes of the wheel with the knuckles showing white through the skin of his hairy brown fists, Finnegan rolled them over as the "hey-hoing" three on the lee quarter sweated the staysail sheet down.

Swash! With the weight of the wind in the staysail aloft, the *Ayacucho* careened until the rail went under and the crowd on the staysail sheet were buried to their waists in seething brine.

"For th' love o' Mike, skip, go easy!" they yelled. "Ye'll hev us over th' side." •

Finnegan gave them a saturnine glance.

"Git that balloon jib on her, an' Timmins, you kin lay aloft an' git that maintops'l ready for settin'——"

The three men scrambled up the deluged deck and stared at the skipper in amazed fright.

"Not th' tops'l, skipper!" said Timmins. "You ain't a goin' t' risk th' masts an' our lives by givin' her th' tops'l?"

"Th' maintops'l, I said," rasped the other, "an' while you're about it, we'll set th' foretops'l as well. Rouse 'em up now! Ef your friend Judson Kemble c'd carry sail in a breeze, I kin do it too. Ye've bin howlin' for sail th' whole blame' trip, an' when I want to put it to her you squeal. The *Coocho's* got to sail now—sail or sink."

Thoroughly afraid of the skipper, Timmins clawed his way aloft and cast the topsail gasket adrift.

"Set yer gaudy sail and be blowed to you!" he shouted viciously, and as the two on deck manned the halyard and out-haul, he scrambled off the spreaders as the topmast began to buck to the weight of the sail.

Through the whirling rain the *Ayacucho* stormed with the wind blowing a howler from the south-east. Aloft, the slender topmasts bent and bucked with the weight of the wind in the topsails, and the sheets set bar-taut with the tug of the canvas. A steady roar of resisting water mingled with the whine and drone of the gale in the rigging, and rolling and plunging, the schooner drove her bows into the lifting surges and filled her decks with hissing, foam-laced brine.

The long Northern evening came with the wind breezing stronger for night. In the half light the sea looked gray and terrible to the wearied trio spelling one another at the pumps. Finegan, still at the wheel, gave a satisfied glance aloft at the iron-hard curves of the sails, and sung out above the roar of the wind and sea—

“Aft here to th’ wheel, some one, while I git a mug-up!”

Wilson and the cook gave a scared look at the roaring surges which upreared their frightful crests over the low rail.

“Durned ef we’ll take her!” they said, and Timmins, who was pumping, growled an oath. “Let him run her, blast him! He put th’ sail on her; now let him drive her!”

“Aft here to the wheel, some one!” roared the skipper again, and seeing no movement on the part of the three men clustered by the mainmast, he laughed. “What’s the matter with Juddy Kemble’s sail carriers? A durn lot of ol’ women when it comes to a shown down! Ha! Ha! Alright, bul-lies, ef no one cares to relieve th’ wheel, I’ll slip her in th’ becket an’ let her take a chanst o’ steerin’ herself——”

“Judas! H’s lashin’ th’ wheel!” gasped Wilson. “She’ll roll over in this——”

Timmins knocked off pumping.

“Take a holt here,” he growled, and running aft he grasped the spokes just as the skipper left them.

“I’ll take her!” he snarled savagely. “What’s th’ course?”

“Sou’west, an’ keep a good full on her!”

“Sou’west, an’ keep a good full on her!” repeated the other. As Finnegan went for’ard, he added viciously:

“An’ I hope you choke yerself on yer grub. You’re out to scare me, but, by the ol’ red-headed Jupiter, you can’t do it!”



IT IS one thing to drive a vessel under sail in a breeze during daylight, but it is quite another matter to do the same thing at night. The men fully expected that Finnegan’s burst of bravado would cool off with the coming of the dark, and that he would haul the light sails down, but when he came from having a mug-up in the deluged forecastle, he was smacking his lips over the reminiscent taste of lemon pie and cold coffee, and thinking of nothing but getting the *Aya-eucho* across the Gulf of Saint Lawrence and into Canso in the quickest possible time.

Relieving Timmins at the wheel—and Timmins was glad to be relieved—he shouted into that worthy’s ear:

“Keep a pumpin’, John. Water ain’t over th’ fo’c’s’le floor yet. I’ll sail her. You ’n’ Wilson spell at the pumps. Cook kin git side lights out an’ keep a watch out for’ard——”

“How about sleepin’ an’ eatin’?” growled the other. “Hev we got t’ keep up this game ontill we git into port?”

Finnegan answered shortly.

“You have, bully. When she’s tied up in Canser you kin sleep an’ eat all ye hev a mind to!”

And Timmins lurched for’ard to the pump brakes, spitting lurid profanities.

The darkness shut down, black and frightful with the roar of warring elements. With her lee rail awash and the breeze coming in a steady thunder from under the booms, the *Ayacucho* stormed through the night swathed sea with white water booming away to leeward from her driving bows. Ever and anon a boiling yeast of brine would topple over the weather rail and stream across her decks. In the heavier puffs the masts would creak alarmingly and she would car-
een until the water spurted up to her hatch coamings, and the frightened men toiling at the pumps would hang on to windward expecting to see the masts roll over the side.

“This is a terror,” remarked the cook to Timmins. “Ef we see daylight again without some-
tthin’ happenin’, I’ll swaller the anchor. Finne-
gan’s gone crazy, sure.”

“What d’ye say ef we turn to an’ git th’ sail off’n her?” suggested the other. “We kin yank th’ stays’l an’ balloon down without askin’ him. He darsen’t leave th’ wheel to stop us. What d’ye say?”

The cook agreed readily. Calling Wilson away from the pump, Timmins told him of their intention.

“Stays’l first!” commanded Timmins, and the two others cast the halyards off the pins.

Bang! Flap! Bang! With the sheet still be-
layed, the big square of canvas filled with wind and flapped and slatted thunderously as the hal-
yards were slacked away.

“What you doin’?” roared the skipper from the wheel.

Timmins, heaving with desperation on the tack rope, yelled to his frightened assistants, “Git on to th’ sheet, for th’ love o’ Mike, an’ haul her down—”

Cr-r-ack! Flap! Bang!

“Stand from under!” roared some one, and down from aloft thundered a slatting mass of gear.

“Holy trawler!” yelled Wilson. “Th’ blame’ top-masts are gone——”

“Clear away that raffle!”

•It was Finnegan’s voice.

“Weather up yer jumbo!”

With her two topmasts hanging to leeward and the balloon jib trailing over the lee bow; with the staysail caught over the fore gaff and a welter of hal-yards and wire stays foul of the rigging, the *Ayacucho* presented a shorn appearance as she rounded up to the wind.

“Durn th’ crazy fools!” growled the skipper as he hove the wheel down. “They’ve hauled th’ sail off’n her in style.”

From out of the darkness for’ard a man yelled, “Bear away! Bear away, for Heaven’s sake!” And while Finnegan rolled the wheel over from hard down to hard up, the *Ayacucho* lurched into a ghostly shape and fetched up with a sudden, jar-ring crash.

“Berg, by Judas!” muttered Finnegan calmly. “Here ends Finnegan’s luck.”

As the men came running aft, he waited for them to speak.

“She’s all gone for’ard, skipper,” cried Timmins. “Better git th’ dory over——”

“What did she hit? Iceberg?” inquired the Captain, dully.

“No!” growled Timmins hoarsely. “Thar’s what she hit. Look to loo’ard.”

“A vessel!”

“A derelict vessel,” corrected the other.

Finnegan jumped.

“Over with th’ dory, boys!” he shouted. “Th’ *Coocho*’s no place for us now. Beat it for th’ derelict while th’ goin’s good!”

And they beat it.

V.



FLAGS were flying at half mast over the Anchorville public buildings, and the groups of loafing trawlers in the fishermen’s rendezvous were discussing the loss of the *Ayacucho* with sundry members of that vessel’s gang who were fortunate enough to have been elsewhere when the disaster happened.

Down in Clarence Dickey’s office two fishermen were giving the *Ayacucho*’s owner an account of their last sight of the vessel.

“Yes, Mr. Dickey, we made our last set on th’ Funks, an’ it commenced breezin’ up. I cal’late somethin’ parted on th’ vessel’s gear, for she got away down to loo’ard an’ couldn’t pick us up, so we went aboard th’ *Carrie Carson*, seven dories of us. Jack Timmins an’ Percy Wilson got aboard the *Coocho* alright, for we seed them that night when we run down an’ spoke her——”

“Was it blowing hard then?” queried the owner.

“Aye, ’twas breezin’ some. We was down to fores’l an’ jumbo on th’ *Carson*, but Finnegan had th’ four lowers still on her. It blowed awful hard that night.”

“What do you think happened to her?”

The fishermen shrugged their shoulders.

“Th’ Lord knows. Must ha’ hit somethin’, maybe, or sprung a leak. Finnegan was a very careful man, an’ he’d hev th’ sail off’n her pretty quick. They’re gone, anyway, an’ may God be good to ’em.”

Clarence Dickey turned to the bookkeeper.

“John,” he said quietly, “make out three checks for fifty dollars an’ one for a hundred an’ send ’em to these poor men’s families. Th’ hundred dollars’ll go to Mrs. Finnegan. ’Tis all I can do.”

The days passed. Judson Kemble mourned the loss of his command for a while, and went to sea in a newer and abler vessel. The *Ayacucho* and the four men lost upon her were listed upon the Government toll credited to the fisheries, and within a month the affair was practically forgotten by all but the wives and families of those bereaved.

Then, like a bolt from the blue, came a cablegram from Queenstown, Ireland, to Clarence Dickey, which read:

Finnegan, Timmins, Wilson, McGraw safe.

Inform relatives.

The yellow paper was pasted upon the office window. Crowds of fishermen and others came to view the terse intelligence and speculate on the manner of rescue.

“They’ve been picked up by some liner, I cal’late,” was the general assumption, and men swore in their pleasure. “Might ha’ known ye’ c’dn’t drown that darned Hard-Luck Finnegan. He’ll come back an’ put more vessels on th’ bum afore hē croaks, th’ ol’ dog!”

Yes, they all came back, but they came back in style and not in the manner of distressed seamen. Resplendent in English-cut clothes, with tan boots, boiled shirts, collars, and loud ties draped upon their bodies; the lost quartet fell off the Anchorville

train one September morning gloriously full of the juice of the barley. They hove their suit cases into Tom Hanlon's automobile, and, with a crowd of wondering friends, rolled down to Dickey's office and held a levee for a hilarious hour. Being a modest man, Finnegan's account would be anything but interesting to the reader, but the narrative of Mr. John Timmins, as given to the Anchorville *Echo* editor, and clipped of some of its luridity, will enlighten.



'YES, siree, when we hit that derelict a wollop th' *Coocho* jest opened up for'ard an' started to fill, so Skip an' me 'n' Wilson an' cook jest shoves that dory over th' rail an' beats it for th' nearest hold for shoe-leather—which happened to be that there derelict. When we gits aboard we finds out that she's a Norwegian iron bark loaded with deals, an' in one thunderin' mess. Her mizzen m'st was gone at th' deck, but th' main and fore lower m'sts were standin'. That was enough for Finnegan, an' when daylight come he turned us to riggin' up some kind o' jury sail.

"'God has taken pity on me fur me hard luck,' says he, 'an' he's thrown this here derelict acrost my bows. We'll hang to her an' work her into a port an' collar th' salvage.'

"I was 'most coopered up with pumpin' that ol' *Coocho*, but salvage looked good to me, so I jest took a bracer on myself an' th' four of us worked like hell to get her straightened up. First, we rigged her fore-an'-aft fashion with stays'ls, but after we got 'em h'isted we found she wouldn't go to wind'ard w'uth a cuss. We worked her on courses for Newf'n'land an' for Cape Breton, but with th' blame' wind allus ahead she jest drifted

to loo'ard like a trawl kag. We was th' best part o' three days monkeyin' with her. Then Finnegan says:

“ ‘Boys, this here wind's only fair for runnin' this logy barge. Rouse that squaresail up on th' fore-m'st, an' we'll let her run fur Yurrup!’ ”

“Waal, sir, that kinder took th' ginger outer me. I ain't stuck on gittin' too fur off soundin's, an' arter me an' th' skipper hed a little argyment with our hands I gave my reluctant assent, and I kin tell you we worked some hard gittin' a big foreyard an' sail up on that mast. Th' wind was westerly, so we jest put her afore it, an' splashin' along like a hog in a crick, that Scowegian bark simply romped acrost th' Western Ocean.

“Thar was a power o' water in her hold, but when we put her afore th' wind we managed to keep her fairly dry. I cal'late she worked heavy in goin' to wind'ard when she had her spars and sails on her, an' leaked so much that she frightened her crowd into abandonin' her. She might ha' had a bad list, but when we got aboard o' her her deckload had broke adrift an' was 'most gone an' she was practically on an even keel.

“Waal, sir, that trip acrost th' Big Drink was a howlin' terror. It blowed a breeze o' wind from th' west'ard th' whole time, an' steerin' that iron barge 'ud make ye sweat drops o' blood. Thar was allus two of us to her wheel, an' that was th' way we worked it. Two steerin' an' two sleepin', eatin', or pumpin'. Three times me 'n' th' skipper hed a fight about keepin' it up, an' three times Finnegan trimmed me.

“ ‘Abandon her ye sha'n't,’ says he, an' th' beggar actually cut th' dory adrift so's we couldn't leave her ef we wanted to.

“After we’d been a couple o’ weeks aboard, a passin’ steamer reported us by wireless, an’ one mornin’ a tug heaves in sight an’ lugs us inter Queenstown. That’s all there was to it. Th’ bark was badly damaged an’ with a big dent in her side whar th’ *Coocho* hit her, but she kin be repaired, an’ th’ cargo o’ deals below decks was all right.

“What did we do when we landed? Lord, mister, I can’t tell ye, for I was gloriously corned th’ whole time I was in Queenstown. Them Irish are a great people for entertainin’ a man.

“Yes, we’re gittin’ a pot o’ money out o’ th’ business for salvagin’ th’ bark. The insurance people treated us pretty nice an’ give us our passages home in a bloomin’ mail boat. Th’ skipper’s cal’latin’ to knock off fishin’ with th’ wad he’s gittin’, and’ believe me, sir, he deserves every dollar.

“Now, sir, ye’ll be puttin’ all this yarn in your paper, but, for th’ benefit o’ a certain crowd I hev in mind, I’ll ask ye to mention a little thing what has bin on my conscience. When ye’re writin’ about Cap Finnegan, ye’ll please say that John Timmins—that’s me, see—John Timmins takes off his hat to Mike Finnegan as the only skipper what ever was able to scare him in carryin’ sail. Ye’ll say that Mike Finnegan is th’ roughest, toughest, nerviest, an’ th’ hardest dog of a driver what ever twirled th’ wheel of a vessel. Yet kin say that he kin put Judson Kemble hull down for sail draggin’, an’ any man what says he has a yaller streak in him kin say it to John Timmins, an’ th’ said Timmins’ll take pleasure in bashin’ the ugly head off th’ swab what says so. See? Put that in big print an’ I’ll pay ye for it, for I’m th’ man what knows.”



MICHAEL FINNEGAN, the unfortunate, had taken the tide which occurs in the affairs of men. Going out with the flood, he had made a competence, and what was just as important, he had gained for himself an undying fame among those hardly, reckless seafarers who love to defy the vagaries of the element upon which they toil.

Winter Fishing



WINSLOW glared under sullen brows at the lowering sky and turned aggressively to Jimmy Thomas, who was hanging on his dory-painter at the main rigging.

“I kin see it’s dirty-looking, but I’ll make a day of it in spite of th’ weather——”

“Waal, Fred Hanson has his dories all aboard, Harry,” answered the old fisherman, “an’ ye can’t take chances with th’ weather on Brown’s in th’ month o’ January. Th’ glass has been a-tumblin’ all day——”

“I don’t care ef it has or not,” growled the skipper. “I’ve got the chance to git a deck o’ fish to-day an’ I’m a-goin’ t’ git it. We’ve been lyin’-to for nigh six days now, an’ ’tis about time we got a trip——”

“Ef ye’ll take my advice, ye’ll make this th’ last set,” persisted Thomas. “There’s a southeaster a-makin’ up an’ it’ll come on quick an’ sudden.”

Winslow was in an ill humor. He considered that the elements were thwarting him in his efforts to make a successful trip, and Jimmy Thomas’s advice was unfavorably received.

“I’ll be hanged ef I ever knew sich an old croaker as you, Jimmy. ’Tis a regular Foul Weather Jack you’re becomin’, an’ I wish ye’d mind yer own business. I’ll look after th’ weather — you look after th’ fishin’.”

Thomas looked at the skipper sharply. “Don’t talk like a fool, Harry,” he said bluntly. “Ye know what has happened in th’ past by fellows riskin’ th’ weather an’ runnin’ chances. If *you* don’t, I do;

an' ye don't want t' listen to anythin' I say, it seems——”

This was too much for Winslow's pride and he resented the old fisherman's manner of speaking.

“You've got too dam' much t' say aroun' here, an' I don't want your advice. Keep on fishin' until I tell ye t' knock off or else stay aboard. When I want yer advice I'll ask ye for it; so git yer bait an' clear out.”

Thomas's dorymate, Will Jackson, clambered out of the hold with a bucket of bait, as the skipper strode angrily away to the wheel, and he placed the bucket down and stared calmly at the rising swell and ragged stormy sky.

It was becoming dark already and the sunless January day was drawing to a close. The gulls, those ever-present trailers of the Bank fishermen in winter, had mysteriously disappeared, and Jimmy Thomas glanced apprehensively to leeward, while the skipper, at the wheel, glared at him resentfully.

“What'll we do Jimmy?” queried Will Jackson, ignoring the skipper's savage glances.

“Git th' torches an' jump in,” answered the old man. “We'll make th' set.”

Shipping the oars, they pulled away into the gathering darkness.



FIVE tubs had been set and hauled by each dory that day and, in the light of the torches, the crews ranged alongside the schooner and pitched out their fish in a swell which called for unusual dexterity on the part of the dory-mates.

Winslow was happy. He had wrested a huge fare from the waters of the Bank and there was a glad-some light in his eyes as he took in the overflowing pens and fish-littered decks.

“Great work, boys,” he said, as the last dory came up on the tackles. “Git yer suppers now an’ start in dressing down. There’s dirty weather ahead of us an’ a thunderin’ lot o’ work t’ do. All dories aboard?”

“All but Will Jackson an’ Jimmy Thomas,” answered a man.

Winslow started.

“By th’ Great Trawl Hook! I clean forgot him. What tub is he on? Fifth?”

“No, skipper. He’s settin’ his sixth now. Jest went down as we was a-comin’ in.”

“Sixth?” ejaculated the skipper. “Why I thought he was only on his fifth! What in th’ hell did that ol’ fool want t’ make another set for?”

“You told him, skipper,” remarked a man pitching fish in the after-pen.

“Yes, I know I did,” replied Winslow petulantly. “I was kinder riled this afternoon. Logan! Lay aloft an’ see ef ye kin locate him. I cal’late he’s somewhere t’ wind’ard. Thunderation! It’s gittin’ thick to th’ s’uth’ard. D’ye see anything?”

“Nawthin’ but another vessel dressing down!”

Jumping below into the cabin, the skipper pulled a pair of binoculars from under his bunk mattress and threw a hasty glance at the barometer. The sight caused him to pause and scrutinize the instrument with evident perturbation.

“Twenty-nine two!” he muttered. “Holy Sailor! She’s tumbling—an’ one dory still out. —!”

There was a half-breathed prayer on his lips as he jumped for the companion and scoured the darkening sea. Far to leeward the glare of torches marked a vessel cleaning her catch, but not a sign could he see of the lone torch-flare betokening a dory engaged in making a night-set.

“Sight anything?” he bawled to Logan at the masthead.

“Nawthin’,” came the answer from the darkness aloft.

“Stand by for about! Git th’ horn goin’ some one! Knock off now, everybody, an’ keep alook-out for that dory. Th’ fish? Dam’ th’ fish! Thomas an’ Jackson are out there somewheres an’ it’s a-goin’ t’ blow like hell soon!”



WINSLOW'S voice almost rose to a shriek as he uttered the final words. The storm was coming. He could sense it in the rising lift of the sea, in the clammy chilliness of the breeze coming out of the southeast; and the young skipper's heart was encircled with the cold grip of fear.

It's not a nice thing to get men astray on the Banks in Winter, and his imagination pictured the stubborn old fisherman and his dorymate out there in the darkness, tossing and heaving on the rising sea. And he, in his thoughtlessness, had sent them out! Sent them out in the wintry darkness with a southeaster close aboard, and all because he was too ill-natured to take advice from an old and true shipmate. As he tugged at the wheel of the reeling schooner, his heart was being flayed by the whip-lash of conscience.

A damp puff of air smote him in the face and, in the light which streamed from the binnacle and cabin-skylight, he could see that snow was commencing to fall. The sea and sky to leeward appeared as one solid wall, dense, opaque and heavy with ominous portent. Some one shouted, and the light of the vessels to leeward disappeared as though a mighty hand had snuffed them out.

Down came the squall. Logan's hail of its ad-

vance was dashed back in his teeth and the schooner, under three whole lowers, rolled down to the blast, while the air was filled with flying sleet and the whirring drone of the wind.

The fish piling the decks slithered like an oily wave over the lee rail and the crew staggered, slipped and tripped in the slimy mass as they jumped for rigging and weather-rail.

Winslow, with his mind brought back to present exigencies, ground the wheel over with a superhuman effort until the vessel came to the wind and amid the thunderous rattle and bang of gear, his voice was heard in a steady, iron-lunged roar.

“Down with th’ mains’l! All hands aft here!”

The huge seventy-five-foot boom was fetching up on the slackened tackles with nerve-rending shocks, and in the inky blackness the men raced aft to subdue the demon with fists, profanity and rude remarks. The heavy main-sheet blocks swayed and thumped to the jerks of the thrashing boom, and aloft in the awe-inspiring gloom the huge mainsail flapped in thunderous reports.

“Main-sheet!” roared Winslow above the din. “Bring her aboard! Git th’ crotch shipped. Ready with your tackles! Slack up your boom-lift! Lower away easy! Steady on th’ downhaul! Tie her up! All fast? Take th’ wheel, Henderson. Heave her to on th’ starb’d tack—— I’m going below.”

With a sympathetic “All right, Harry,” the fisherman grasped the spokes. He knew what the young skipper’s thoughts were, and Winslow, as he lay in his bunk, oblivious to the low whispers of the men coming below and the howl of the gale outside, passed through the hell of conscience for a bitter hour.

They were gone! two of the men who had followed him trip after trip since he started as skipper. One

of them had been his dorymate in the old days; and now he had repaid their devotion by sending them to their death on the chill, dark waters of the Bank.

II



WHEN he left the vessel after his tiff with the skipper, Jimmy Thomas and his dorymate pulled silently to windward. In silence they hove out the sling-ding and prepared to set the baited trawl.

Jackson was the first to speak.

“Th’ skipper’s beginnin’ t’ git like all th’ rest of them. After they git a vessel an’ make a few high-line trips, they know everythin’ an’ ye can’t tell ’em nawthin’. He’ll be as big a swab as Fred Hanson afore he’s a year older.”

Old Jimmy finished heaving out the trawl and, making the buoy-line fast to the dory, pulled out his pipe and lit up.

“You’re wrong, Bill,” said the old man calmly. “Harry Winslow ’ll never be a man of th’ Fred Hanson type, for he’s a good lad an’ allus will be. He was a bit hasty in his talk maybe, but he’s young an’ anxious t’ make a trip after sich a poor Winter. He’s a young man to go as skipper, an’ skippers hev a lot o’ worries we common ornery trawl-haulers ain’t got. So ye’ll hev t’ excuse th’ lad his little bit o’ jaw.”

Jackson was an easy-going man with a childlike faith in his older dorymate and like a child he coincided readily with a stronger mind.

“I cal’late your’re right, Jimmy,” he said. Let’s haul now an’ git aboard. ’Tis dirty-lookin’ to th’ s’uth’ard thar’.”

With a torch flaring on the dory-gunwale the two proceeded to haul the gear. A few fathoms had scarce

come in over the roller when the dory side-wiped a sharp, short comber which extinguished the torch, and, while Jackson was endeavoring to relight it again, the squall hit in. The trawl-line, which, for the time being, had been hitched around the heaving-stick stuck into a thole, parted as the dory rose on a sea, and they were adrift in the howling darkness.

As quick as thought, Thomas hove the dory anchor over and paid out the roding to the bitter end.

“Five shot o’ new gear gone,” he cried to his dory-mate, who was plying the oars and nursing the rearing dory over the hissing combers. “I cal’late we’ll hang on till this blows past. Whew ain’t it a blinder? Blowin’ an’ snowin’ an’ black as the inside o’ a jack-boot. See any sign o’ th’ vessel, Bill?”

“I kin see nawthin’,” panted Jackson.

Both men were aware of their danger, though neither voiced his fears.

Astray on the Bank with a gale of wind blowing, on a dark midwinter night, is a situation few fishermen ever care to be in, or even think about, and an eighteen-foot dory is a pitifully frail craft to brave the rage of a North Atlantic Winter on open water. Trusting to the slender twenty-four-pound line to hold them to their position, the two fishermen laid-to their oars and manoeuvred the dory among the huge seas that were now rising to the lash of the wind.

“We’ll hang on here as long as the anchor will. Winslow ’ll beat up to us an’t it’s better t’ keep yer position than t’ let go an’ wander all over th’ Bank a-lookin’ for th’ vessel. Let th’ vessel look for us. Can’t git that torch alight, ye say? Wet, is it? That’s bad. It’ll give Winslow no chance t’ make out where we are—— Thunder an’ blazes! Th’ blame anchor’s parted! Head her up to it or we’ll be over!”



SHYING and cavorting like an untamed broncho, the dory started to whirl down to leeward and, though it was snowing heavily and bitterly cold, the two men perspired with their exertions as they tugged with short strokes at the oars. Thomas punctuated his efforts with occasional bursts of lurid profanity, with a reckless disregard to the probability of his precipitation into Eternity at a moment's notice, and his dorymate worried over the fact that he was hungry.

"Ain't no sign o' th' vessel, Will. I cal'late we're a-goin' t' spend th' whole blank night out here, an' that ain't what I'm hankerin' after."

Jackson grunted assent. "Gee!" he said "Wouldn't I jest like t' be muggin'-up now, Jimmy. An' th' cook was a-makin' doughnuts an' lemon pies fur supper!" Jackson's mouth watered at the thought. "Say, Jimmy," he added, "that squall ain't easin' off any. There's th' very hell of a sea runnin' now an' it's snowin' thicker'n ever."

"Aye," answered the other. "She's black an' dirty to-night, fo' sure. Give us a chew, Will."

Hour after hour went by and still they reeled and whirled about on the wind-harried waters. Moments there were when a creaming crest threatened to overwhelm them, but a skilful lunge of the oars sent the little boat mounting the menace without shipping a bucketful of water. It was hard, nerve-straining work — a veritable game with Death — and, as the minutes went by and no sign of a vessel, both men knew that their chances of living out the night in such a blow was becoming slim.

In the unequal fight, the hungry sea was bound to win, and a momentary relaxation of their vigilance would see them overturned by a snarling crest. Then, it would be all up with them.

“What d’ye think of our chances for bein’ picked up?” queried Jackson.

Thomas made no bones about his reply.

“Purty dam’ small, Will. This blow ’ll have sent all th’ fishermen hereabouts a-swingin’ off for shelter. This flurry is only commencin’, an’ afore long it’ll stiffen inter a rare ol’ southeaster an’ blow for days, maybe. I cal’late th’ best we kin do is t’ put th’ dory before it an’ take th’ land. Seal Island lays ’bout fifty or sixty miles off ——”

“A long run, Jimmy, in a sea like this.”

“Aye, ’tis a long run, but better t’ take th’ chanst than blow aroun’ out here.”

“Any water in th’ jar?”

“No, Will.”

“Any grub in yer pockets?”

“Nawthin’.”

Jackson bit off a quid and remarked phlegmatically, “Hell of a nice fix we’re in, Jimmy. Shall I h’ist th’ dory-sail an’ let her run?”

“Aye, reef it an’ set it. I’ll steer.”

For two long hours, under the small rag of sail, the little craft surged and swooped over the foam-laced seas in the Stygian darkness, and her two occupants communed with their thoughts. Both were married men with children and, as they drove through the night, a white sleet-covered phantom, their minds were full of the fancies which come to men facing death.

“This Winter fishin’s no life for a man,” remarked Jackson, after a lengthy interval.

“ ’Tis no life for any one that ain’t a man,” corrected Thomas. “It’s takin’ big chances an’, Billy boy, it takes men with plenty o’ nerve t’ do it. D’ye see anythin’ ahead thar’, Bill? My eyes are waterin’

with starin' so long in th' dark, but I thought I saw a light t' loo'ard.'

Jackson peered into the wall of blackness ahead and endeavored to pierce the opaque veil.

"Can't see a blame thing. It's black as the inside o' Tophet," he shouted.

Then the dory climbed over the shoulder of a cresting grayback and a red light flickered almost overhead.

"Round her up — an' quick!" yelled Jackson. "We're slammin' dead into a vessel, by th' Lord Harry——"



CRASH! Into the port-broadside of a large schooner went the careering dory and, as she struck the hull, both men made a mighty leap for the vessel's rail and tumbled inboard upon a slush-covered deck.

"Waal, ef that ain't a hell of a way t' come aboard a vessel!" cried a man standing aft on the schooner's quarter. "Who's that anyway?"

"We're from th' *Winslow*," said Thomas when he had recovered his breath. "Made a night-set an' got adrift."

"Why, blast me, 'tis Jimmy Thomas," said a voice. "Say, you ol' scut, what kind of a night is this t' be makin' night-sets? Gittin' tired o' life? An' what d'ye mean by slappin' inter us like ye did? By th' Great Hook Block! I thought we were rammed by a blame' steamboat——"

"Keep a-joggin', shipmate," answered the other. "What vessel's this anyway?"

"What vessel sh'd it be but th' *Camisoto*—th' newest an' best out of Anchorville. Come for'ard, you two, an' git interjuced. Oh, skipper! Here's a couple *Winslow* fellers blowed aboard. Didn't like their

own craft so jest flew aboard here an', by th' same token, dam' near sinkin' us as they came alongside."

And after entering the foc'sle, they were greeted with rough courtesy by the *Camisoto's* skipper, Jim Costello, a huge, redheaded Gloucester Irishman.

"Draw to, boys, an' mug-up. 'Tis a bitter night t' be adrift, an' 'I cal'late ye're lucky, ay, darn lucky, yet hit us th' way ye did, even ef ye came at us bows-on an' hell-fur-leather."

As the big skipper lurched past them on his way to the ladder, Thomas was distinctly aware of the odor of liquor and, when seated at the foc'sle table, it needed no great powers of observation to perceive that several of the gang lolling around were decidedly the worse of drink.

"Oho," muttered Jimmy to himself. "Fishin' must be high-line when there's a kag o' rum floatin' around. Not but what it's a good thing to have aboard a vessel Winter fishin'—though I don't like t' see *too* much of it on a vessel at sea. Especially with th' gangs Jim Costello ships."

And Jimmy gave an ominous shake of the head.

III



AFTER a mug-up of hot beans, ginger-cake and coffee, the two dorymates were indulging in a soul-satisfying smoke when the skipper sent for them to come aft. Entering the cabin, they found the place crowded with men smoking and playing cards on the lockers and having, to all appearances, a good time. Thomas noted the hour, one o'clock, and mentally disapproved of the two stone jugs to which the uproarious gang were applying themselves.

“Come an’ have a nip, boys!” bawled Costello, and his voice boomed above the chatter of the carousers and the roar of wind and sea. “ ’Tis a little health we’re drinkin’ to th’ vessel an’ her luck. What d’ye think o’ her, fellers? She’s a fine able craft, hey? I cal’late neither th’ *Winslow* nor Fred Hanson’s sharp-hulled pedler c’n show th’ *Camisoto* a stern-wake. She kin trim anythin’ aroun’ these coasts, sailin’ or fishin’, so she kin. Four days on t’ grounds an’ a hunder’ an’ forty thousan’ below. Kin ye beat that, you *Winslow* men? Come on! Toss her off an’ give th’ ship a good name!”

Passing the stone jug over, Captain Costello commenced a boastful dithyrambic upon the virtues of his new vessel, turning every now and again for confirmation from one or other of the hard-looking crowd lolling upon the lockers.

They *were* a hard crowd, to say the least, for a tough skipper like Jim Costello always has a daredevil, fearless gang of men trailing after him. They worked hard, lived hard and incidentally drank hard, and their reputations when ashore were unsavory. Bartenders on Atlantic Avenue, Boston, knew Costello’s gang and telephoned for the police when they entered their saloons, while the rumsellers and “blind pig” proprietors in the baiting-ports of the North Shore and Treaty Coasts nerved themselves for trouble when they landed on their beaches.

As the two stone jars circulated, the crowd became argumentative and quarrelsome and, with no desire to become involved in a drunken argument, Thomas and Jackson discreetly retired to the lockers aft of the companion-steps.

“George Morrissey must ha’ bin a fool t’ let Jim Costello take this fine vessel,” remarked the old man. “Talked him inter it, I cal’late, with his tales o’ high-

line trips made by him an' his hard-drivin' gang o' Cape Bretoners an' six-foot Judique men. Eh, eh, Will, but I'm tired. 'Twas a hard day we had. Why, th' lad's asleep already."

Knocking the ashes out of his pipe, old Jimmy kicked his boots off, and threw himself down on the locker.



THOUGH he essayed slumber many times, his mind persisted in remaining wakefully alert, and for over an hour he hung on the hardwood seat listening to the drunken roisterers aft and the whining roar of the wind overhead. The skipper had been silent for some little time, but at two in the morning he came out of his berth and lurched on deck. A few minutes later, he came below.

"Boys," he said, and old Jimmy listened in nervous apprehension to his words, "I cal'late we'd be doin' well ef we swung her off for home now. We've a full trip an' a high market t' run for, so when ye git a fair wind for home, take it, says I. Maybe we'll git a blasted no'wester t'-morrow that'll head us off in th' Bay an' keep us beatin' around for a week, so I cal'late we'll make a runnin'-trip outer this little southerly breeze an' swing off. Up on deck now, fellers, an' h'ist th' mains'l!"

Old Jimmy gave Jackson a prod with his foot.

"Will," he whispered, "d'ye hear what them crazy galoots are a-goin' t' do?"

"Naw!" growled Jackson sleepily.

"They're h'istin' th' mains'l to swing off! Can't ye hear them on deck thar'? Whole mains'l th' drunken swab is givin' her, in a blow like this, an' all hands as drunk as a fiddler's cat! He don't care a hoot for anythin'. Listen to him."

Down the open companion came Costello's hoarse voice:

"Jig her up, boys! Now give her th' jumbo. All ready! Swing her off, Danny! Start yer main-sheet, an' jibe yer fores'l!"

Crash! The foresail had been jibed without tackles, and the shock almost started the decks.

"That's th' style," continued Costello. "Her gear's new an' she'll stand it! No'th by west, Danny, an' drive her, you!"

Jackson was fully awake now. As the vessel swung off the wind, she rolled down and set the dorymates sliding to leeward.

"Holy Sailor!" cried Jackson. "I'm thinkin' we'd better off in th' dory, after all. This feller 'll run her under or whip th' sticks over the side. Hark to th' wind."

"Ay, it's blowin' some, Will. An' we've got a kag o' rum pacin' th' quarter an' a kag o' rum to th' wheel. What was it that Gran' Manan lad used t' sing:

"A vessel goes under th' devil's thumb,
When th' skipper takes sights through a kag o'
rum."

Costello clattered down into the cabin, the snowflakes melting on his beard and shoulders. Hey, you *Winslow* fellers," he cried, with a hoarse laugh. "We'll give ye a chanst t' meet yer skipper a-comin' inter Anchorville wharf with his flags half-mast in yer honor!"

"Maybe," interrupted Thomas slowly, "but Cap'n Costello, I'd think more o' yer judgment ef ye'd ha' kept yer vessel lyin' to til daylight. On a night like this ye're runnin' a chanst o' half-mastin' more flags than the *Isabel Winslow's*—"

“Back to yer bunk, you ol’ croaker!” cried Costello, sarcastically. “I kin run a vessel blind, drunk or sober. I cal’late ye think I’m drunk an’ don’t know what I’m a-doin’?”

He straightened up to his full six feet and laughed.

“Ha! ha! I reckon ye’re gitten’ scared. This ain’t the *Isabel Winslow*, with her kid skipper an’ her long-shore crowd o’ farmers, an’ don’t forget it, me bully. You ain’t a-sayin’, ‘Harry, me boy, I wouldn’t do this!’ or ‘Skipper, dear, ’tis a reef in our mains’l we sh’d be takin’!’ You don’t know me, old son. I’m th’ rough, tough Jimmy Costello, see? An’ me an’ my ways are known from Eastern P’int to th’ Treaty Shore, an’ ef I kain’t drive a vessel in any durn’ breeze o’ wind aroun’ these coasts, I dunno who kin.”

Almost unshipping the stovepipes as he lurched drunkenly against them, he reeled into his berth and tumbled, all standing, into his bunk.

“Call me ef it moderates,” he cried, with a hoarse laugh at this old fisherman’s joke.

IV



WITH two Cape Breton Scotchmen to the wheel, the *Camisoto* was driving into the darkness with the speed of an express-train. It was terrifying, the manner in which the vessel stormed and swooped over the wind-hounded sea. With her great white main-sail full as a balloon with the pressure of the gale, the seventy-five-foot boom bending like a bow and the main-sheet-ropes as taut as bar-iron, the schooner tore through the cresting surges, and the foam caused by her onslaught roared by on either quarter in great, gleaming, effervescent

streaks, which dimly illuminated the red, perspiring faces of the helmsmen.

Swash! With a hair-raising swoop, the overdriven vessel rammed her bowsprit into the back of a solid green comber and drove her bows under, clean to the foremast. Up she came again, steaming and spurning water from every scupper-hole and then, with half her keel out of water, squatted down on a racing, roaring grayback until she overtook another and drove bowsprit, anchors, windlass and cable out of sight. The gang had retired to their bunks fore and aft, and the foc'sle crowd, with the scuttle drawn tight, were too drunk to pay any attention to the thundering seas which crashed overhead.

Thomas and Jackson squatted in the pen between house and kid and, to their sober eyes, the pace seemed fearful.

"Costello kin carry sail all right," Jimmy shouted in his dorymate's ears, "but I don't like his drivin' in for th' land on a night like this. I don't believe he took a sound afore he swung her off, an' he's put th' log over 'thout the fan on it. Look out!"

The vessel swung around to the push of a gigantic sea and the huge main-boom commenced topping up.

"She's a-goin' t' jibe!"

The two helmsmen managed by superhuman efforts to heave the wheel over as the sail gave a thunderous flap, but the task of keeping the wild yawing vessel steady, in such a wind and sea, was beginning to have a sobering effect upon them. Three times they were within an ace of jibing, and a jibe then would have whipped the masts out of her and, when the strong kicking of the wheel wrenched their muscles and the wheel threatened to become unshipped from

the patent gearing, the two Cape Bretoners had enough.

“Oh, there, skipper!” they bawled. “She’s takin’ charge of us! We can’t hold her. Better git th’ mains’l in——”

Costello came swearing to the deck.

“Take in nawthin’,” he growled. “She’s travelin’ nicely. Below thar’, come up an’ relieve wheel! How far’s she run? What’s th’ log read, Joe? Ain’t no fans on it, ye say? Huh! T’ blazes with it—they ain’t no dam’ good nohow!”

He jerked the instrument out of the becket and hove it over the side.



IT WAS blowing hard by now, so hard that the new helmsmen were frightened, drunk and all as they were, and it did not take them long to sober up with the exertion of steering in the bitter snow-filled air. Will Jackson, unafraid in the dory a few hours before, was becoming nervous and Jimmy Thomas’s words betrayed the fear in his heart.

“He’s crazy, Will. Even ef they wanted to, they couldn’t take that mains’l in, now. It’s blowin’ a whole gale now, an’ her drivin’ for th’ land!”

“Let’s go an’ make him haul her up,” cried the other.

“’Tis no use, lad. He’s so chuck full of rum an’ pride that he’d never listen to us an’, ef I mistake not, a good deal o’ this crackin’-on is fur our special benefit. He thinks we’ll talk when we git t’ home about his rough, bold ways, an’ give him a devil of a name among the Anchorville folks. He’s been a-sportin’ aroun’ with that Molly Letourneau, an’ a yarn like this would make him th’ very deuce o’ a boy with th’ brazen——”

Crash! The vessel shipped a solid sea which came careering aft, flooding the decks to the rail, and the helmsmen yelled in their fright.

“Hey thar, skipper, we kain’t hold her!”

“No, blast ye, ye can’t. Send McTavish an’ Jock Neale up, some one! Rouse ’em out! They’ll sail her, by thunder, ef any one can!”

When two rough-looking characters came on deck and grasped the spokes, the former helmsmen came forward to Thomas and Jackson.

“Skipper’s gone crazy,” they yelled. “Never knew him do this afore. Useter carry on some, but he’s been drinkin’ all th’ time he’s been on th’ Bank.”

The new helmsmen held her fairly steady, but the gait the vessel was making was proving too much for them. The wild swoops and yaws which she made instilled fear into their drink-obscured brains and, as they sobered up with the exertion of straining at the spokes, they began to realize the awful risk they were running.

Glancing down at the cabin-clock, Thomas saw it was five in the morning, and for three hours the schooner had been running on her north-by-west course. It was still dark, and blowing as hard as ever, and the snow shut out all sight within a hundred feet of the vessel. There was no watch forward; all hands except the skipper, the two at the wheel, the two just relieved and Thomas and Jackson, were below, and the schooner was driving in for the land at a sixteen-knot gait.

Costello, standing in the companion, leered tipsilly at the little group seated on the house and turned to his henchmen at the wheel.

“She kin sail, this vessel!” he roared. “Give it to her! Drive her! She’s a new vessel an’ her gear ’ll stand!”

And he started to shout a ribald chorus.

“Don’t you reckon it’s time t’ haul up, skipper?” cried one of the relieved helmsmen. “She’s been hit-tin’ up an awful clip sence we swung off, an’ I cal’late we were well to th’ no’t’h’ard of the Bank when we put th’ mains’l on her.”

“Oh, is that so, Donald? An’ when hev ye taken upon yerself t’ keep track o’ this vessel’s courses? Who’s sailin’ her — you or me?”

“Naw!” yelled the man. “You’re not sailin’ her. ’Tis th’ rotgut in yer skin that’s crackin’-on, ye cursed drunken sweep!”

Whipping out a bait-knife from a cleat, he hove it with all his strength at the leering Costello.

The weapon caught the skipper on the shoulder and drove through the oilskin coat. With a roar like a maddened bull Costello plucked the knife out, and leaping upon the house made for his assailant.

“I’ll cut ye, my son,” he screamed. “I’ll make bait out o’ yer hide, my bully!”

As he rushed for the man cowering behind the mainmast, old Jimmy threw himself upon the drink-crazed skipper and both rolled to the deck, snarling and cursing. Though Costello was a strong man, yet the old fisherman was as tough as an ox in spite of his fifty-odd years, and it did not take him five seconds to whisk the knife out of the skipper’s hand.

“Stand up, now, you murderin’ thief!” bawled Jimmy. “I’ll trim you on yer own deck an’ take charge——”

For an almost unnoticeable space, he paused and then shouted harshly at the man rising to his feet.

“D’ ye hear them, you scum? You’ve put a fin-ish on things now, for, by God, ye’re in among th’ Ledges already!”

“Hard alee! Breakers ahead!” screamed a voice from forward, and the wind had scarce allowed the hail to reach the ears of the horrified listeners, when, surging madly forward on the back of a seething, roaring wall of black water, the vessel fetched up in her career with a fearful, staggering crash.

V



WINSLOW swung his vessel off for home at midnight. The glass was ominously low and he had no heart for further fishing, after losing his two men. About five in the morning, after a wild night in which they furled the mainsail and drove for the land under a reefed foresail, he hauled to the wind and laid-to until daylight. The snow had ceased and it was just breaking dawn when the watch on deck called Winslow's attention to their dangerous proximity to the land.

“Ye kin see th' Cape from th' masthead, an' there's half a dozen o' them blame' ledges under our lee.”

“How's th' Cape bearin'?”

“No'th by east, or thereabouts.”

“Git th' ridin'-sail out an' bend it. Up on yer jumbo! We'll run for th' Bay by the inside passage. It'll be a clear run an' smoother water.”

It was still blowing hard and a heavy, breaking sea was running, but daylight had robbed the storm of most of its terrors. Under the triangular riding-sail, the reefed foresail and jumbo, the *Isabel Winslow* swung off with her bowsprit pointing north-west by west and, running in the lee of a number of the dangerous underwater ledges which encircle the southern coast of Nova Scotia, she made good weather of the blow and drove for home at a twelve-knot gait.

The Salvage Rock gas and whistling buoy had just been left astern when the lookout hailed from the windlass,

“Vessel ashore on Durkee’s Ledge!”

From foc’sle and cabin the gang came tumbling up, and Winslow, standing on the shearpole, scrutinized the vessel through his glasses.

“By th’ Lord Harry! ’Tis th’ *Camisoto*—Jim Costello’s craft—th’ new one. Come up a little, Wally! Steady! Port a little! We’ll run down to loo’ard an’ see what we kin do. God help them! I’m afraid it’s all over with her crowd!”

In a few minutes, the wrecked schooner was plainly visible from the *Isabel Winslow’s* decks. She was lying over on her side — it was low water then — and the spray was bursting over her in steam-like clouds.

“Any one aboard her, skipper?” queried a dozen anxious voices.

“Ye-e-s! Seems t’ me I see somethin’ in th’ main-riggin’. It may be a tangle o’ broken gear. No! It’s livin’ men all right! They’re wavin’! Let me think what I’d better do. I cal’late I’d better not risk heavin’-to around’ these ledges with th’ blame’ tides a-rippin’ around’ them. I might git ashore myself. Cal’late we’ll run up in th’ lee o’ th’ Ledge an’ anchor. Git a twenty-five fathom range over th’ windlass an’ see yer starb’d anchor all clear for lettin’ go. I’ll take th’ wheel, Wally. Sheet in, fellers!”

Lurching and pitching in the heavy rips running among the ledges, the schooner ran swiftly to leeward of the wreck and, coming to the wind, shot within a scant cable’s length of the wave-swept menace.

“All ready, for’ard? Down jumbo an’ fores’l! Let go your anchor!”

As the gang came aft, after seeing all snug, and the vessel riding easily in the lee of the ledge to her best anchor and one hundred and fifty feet of chain, Winslow addressed them:

“Thar’s a half a dozen men in th’ riggin’, as far as I kin see through th’ spray, an’ I cal’late th’ best way t’ git them is t’ sling a couple dories over an’ git them poor beggars t’ slide down some o’ th’ lee gear from th’ masthead. She’s canted over on her bilge far enough for them t’ do that ef they ain’t froze stiff. Use your own judgment, boys. Dories away!”

The words were hardly out of his mouth before a rush was made for the dory-tackles, and before Winslow could remonstrate, the gripes were off, and four dories were over the rail, while others were being hastily made ready.

“That’ll do, fellers! No need for all hands t’ go! Lord save us! Ye’d think ’twas a liner ashore, with th’ Government boat a thousand miles away!”



CROWDING the rail, the gang watched the work of the rescuers with anxious eyes. A running fire of comments and ejaculations told of the excitement possessing them:

“Good boy, Henderson! He’s got one feller! They’re comin’ down th’ lee riggin’ an’ jumpin’ for th’ dory. He’s fallen short — Burke’s grabbed him — gaffed him like a halibut, by Christopher! How many is there? Six? Seven, ye say? God ha’ mercy on th’ rest! Wonder ef th’ skipper is among them. Lucky thing th’ masts stood when she struck!”

“Stand by, now, fellers!” cried Winslow.

The four boats came surging down, impelled by the strong arms of the rowers, and it was evident

that only seven of the *Camisoto's* gang had been saved. Henderson's dory was in advance of the rest and he hailed Winslow from a distance.

"Hey, skipper!" he yelled. "Look who's here!"

As Winslow stared at the two heads appearing over the dory-gunwale, he made out the familiar features of his two lost men — Jimmy Thomas and Will Jackson!

With an exultant, boyish whoop, the young skipper grabbed old Jimmy as he came over the rail and, as the men afterward said, "A'most climbed all over ol' Jimmy's frame, an' cussed sinful!"

"Oh, you darned ol' tough! What d'ye mean by runnin' away from me on Brown's an' a'most scarin' me t' death? Dam' my eyes! I don't know whether I sh'd turn to an' lick th' two o' ye or—— But I might ha' known that no skipper c'd lose sich a pair o' ugly, ornery cusses—ye'd sure git picked up. Oh, Jimmy, but I spent a black night—aye, a bitter night! How'd it all happen — this wreck, I mean?"

The old man passed his hands over his eyes wearily. He too had spent a black night and it pressed upon him.

"Oh, Harry-boy, take an old man's advice an' never go shipmates with a kag o' rum. Aye! I don't like t' pass word upon dead men, but if Jim Costello had left his stone jars ashore he'd ha' been alive now —him an' eighteen men."

"How'd he come away in here? He was with us on Brown's last night."

"Drunk, Harry. Wanted t' show off. H'isted th' whole mains'l on her at two this mornin' an' drove her, aye, hove th' log away, took no sound-in's, but drove her slam-bang before it until an hour ago, when she fetched up on th' Ledge. When she struck, th' port-dories and th' cable came over

on th' foc'sle-hatch an' jammed th' gang below. Eighteen men died in that foc'sle—drowned like rats in a trap—for her bows were under until th' tide fell. Jim Costello was the last to go. Says t' me when he saw what happened,

“ ‘Waal, I cal'late I've done it now. Ef ye git clear, give my love t' Molly Letourneau an' tell George Morrissey that th' *Camisoto* was th' best vessel at runnin' that I ever knowed.’ ”

“That was all he said, an' with that he jumps over th' rail. He was a hard case, Harry—an awful hard case, an' may God have mercy on his soul, for he has many sins to answer for.”

“Amen to that!” ejaculated Winslow solemnly.

“I cal'late I'll go below. Sorry I lost th' dory, skipper——”

“Dam' th' dory! I'd sooner lose a thousand dories than lose you an' Jackson. Go below an' turn in. We'll look after them other poor fellers, an' 'tis in Anchorville we'll be to-night, thank th' Lord!”

VI.



THEY were not destined to make Anchorville that night. Things happen quickly at sea, and while the *Isabel Winslow* had been engaged in the work of rescue, the southeaster had suddenly shifted to the northwest. Instead of riding easily in the lee of Durkee's Ledge, the schooner was now swinging with the Ledge on her port-beam and her bowsprit pointing due west. Astern, some three miles away, lay the long line of breakers betokening the shoal-water of the dangerous Crescent Reef, while to starboard, the St. Paul's, Old Man, John Island and Eudora Ledges practically prohibited navigation among them in anything but a smooth sea and a favoring wind and tide.

Winslow noticed this; noted the direction of the wind; the barometer rising from the low pressure of twenty-nine and the falling thermometer.

"Huh! More dirt!" he muttered. "We'll git it good an' strong soon, an' us jammed down among them ledges. Ef I kin hang on her until th' wind comes more to th' no'th or till ebb-tide, I kin git out easily, but now we're jammed in a clinch. On deck thar! Give her more chain—ten fathom."

While the skipper studied the compass with visible concern, the wind came away in vicious squalls which caused the schooner to wrench at her chain and fetch up on the windlass with grinding jerks. It was rapidly becoming colder; the slushy sleet of the southeaster changed with the wind into stinging, hard-grained snow and the spray which swashed up over the bows froze on bowsprit-gear and windlass.

"Goin' t' be violent, skipper," remarked Jimmy Thomas, coming on deck. "Glass risin' quick after being low means dirty, sharp weather ahead—wind from th' no'th'ard most likely. Nasty place we're in!"

"I know it. I cal'late we'll give her more chain. She's fetchin' up hard now, an' I'm afraid she'll yank th' windlass outer her. Th' tide's settin' agin us mighty strong. All up, fellers! Bend on th' hawser to th' port anchor an' cockbill it all ready t' let go! Give her th' full scope of th' chain when ye've done that!"



IT WAS blowing hard now and no error. Squall after squall came whirling down, accompanied by skin-cutting hail and snow, and the schooner staggered to their onslaught. All around them, the ledges and reefs were creaming in acres

of white water, and the decks of the fishing schooner were rapidly filming with ice. The men, overhauling the cable, slipped and slithered around on the glazed planks and cursed the bitter cold, as with numb fingers they beat and hammered the frozen links out of the chain-box and wrestled with an eight-inch manila fishing-hawser almost solidly welded to the cable-rack.

Clank-clink-clank! went the heavy links as the men threw them over the barrel. *Crash!* And the anchor took up the slack. Out to the bitter end they paid it, then some one hove over one turn too much. *Cr-r-r-unch!* The vessel made a savage lurch and, before the men could stop it, the turns spun around the iron-shod barrel and in a sputter of sparks the chain slipped through the hawse-pipe.

“Chain’s gone!” yelled some one.

“Over with th’ port-anchor for th’ love o’ God!” roared Winslow, and Henderson cut the ring-stopper with the ax.

Shying down to leeward as the great yellow cable crawled over the side, the schooner swung around with a terrific jerk, as the hawser tautened and the anchor bit the bottom.

“Give her all th’ line ye’ve got!” cried Winslow, “an’ see that yer end is made fast.”

The hawser, six hundred feet of it, was all that was holding them now, and if that parted—well—

As he thought of the possibility, Winslow glanced over at the now dismasted hulk of the *Camisoto*, rapidly pounding to pieces.

“Lord grant that it holds,” he murmured, “or there’ll be many widows in Anchorville within the hour.”

Another squall whirled down and the reefs around them vanished in the gray-white of a snow storm. From the bows came the ominous hail,—

“She’s draggin’, skipper!”

Winslow ran forward.

“Draggin’ ye say? Are ye sure, John? Give me a dory-compass. Durkee’s Ledge was ’bout sou’-b’-west. How’s she bearin’ now? Sou’west ye say? Holy Sailor! She’s trailin’ that anchor like a piece o’ string.”

The wind was blowing heavier every minute and the flood-tide was swirling hard against them.

“We’re goin’ on th’ reef, skipper,” said old Jimmy. “Onless th’ wind shifts or eases up, we’re done for!”

The men had gathered aft now and were looking to the young skipper for orders. For an instant he gazed around the stolid, wind-bronzed faces, and his brain worked quickly.

“Where’s that Cobtown Harbor man?” he barked.

“Here, sir!”

“You know this locality?”

“Fished around here some in motor-boat.”

Winslow jumped below and brought up a chart. Laying it out upon the top of the house, he held a rapid consultation with the fisherman from Cobtown Harbor, and made up his mind.

“Waal, fellers,” he said calmly, “ye kin see how we’re fixed. I can’t beat out o’ here, ’cause o’ wind an’ tide, an’ ef we hang to anchor we’ll go ashore on th’ Crescent Reef astern thar. I’m agoin’ t’ take a chance—a fightin’ chance, an’ Lord help us! Up on th’ ridin’-sail! Is that kedge all ready? All right, now—give her fores’l an’ jumbo!”

The men jumped to obey orders, with a blind faith in the young skipper’s ability to pull them through, although they hadn’t the faintest idea of what he intended to do.



AS SOON as the riding-sail was hoisted, Winslow called the Cobtown man to the lee-wheel and both lashed themselves to the box.

“Cut yer cable for’ward!” roared the skipper and, as Thomas severed the great rope with two cuts of the ax, the jumbo bellied to the breeze and the schooner fell off, with her bowsprit pointing to the fuming reefs to starboard.

Was he going to try and weather the reefs? The gang wondered for an instant, but the next order dispelled the supposition.

“Slack away yer fore-sheet!”

The skipper and the Cobtown man rolled the wheel over.

“Now, thar’, fellers, git below, or lash yourselves to th’ riggin’. Draw all slides tight. The *Isabel Winslow* ’ll show her qualities this day afore we’re through. Over with th’ wheel!”

“My God, skipper!” yelled a man in amazement, “ye’re puttin’ her dead afore it an’ slammin’ for th’ reef!”

“Aye! I’m doin’ now on purpose what Jim Costello did in recklessness, but while he lost men, I’m tryin’ t’ save them. Steady th’ helm!”

Like a hound released from leash, the schooner caught the fury of a squall in her sails and bounded for the whirling chaos of maddened water which marked the long crescent-shaped ledge. Standing on the house and at the heel of the mainmast, the men, lashed to boom and fife-rail, stared in fascinated horror at the rapidly nearing breakers, and, speechless, mentally ticked off the seconds they had to live.

The vessel seemed to have become imbued with life. She rose steadily on the crest of a sea. With a trembling in every timber, she rushed down the seething declivity with a roar, defiant, like a charg-

er stamping into the fray. Flinging the water off her flooded decks, she stormed forward, irresistible in her onslaught. The two at the wheel braced themselves against their lashings; Winslow with puckered brows, staring calmly ahead, and his helper iron-jawed and desperate.

Crash! A huge sea toppled over the stern and the helmsman vanished under a foam-streaked cat-a-ract of bitter, wind-whipped water. Quickly it sluiced away, and the oil-skinned figures emerged, undismayed and still at their post.

The blue-black of the sea was changing to the emerald green of broken water. The roar of the surf was in the ears of the men hanging to the rail and boom. They were now in among the breakers, which toppled over the rail on either side, while a great, translucent wall of brilliant emerald rose astern and threatened to overwhelm them. It wavered for an instant, broke and careered by on either quarter. Up, up, up, went the schooner, her bowsprit pointing to the lowering sky, then sky, sea and vessel were blotted out as the men went under in a deluge of icy water.

Cr-r-unch! The schooner struck, staggered for an instant, and drove on.

Crash! Another fearful shock and a deluge of raging sea. Men gasped for breath, and, with bursting lungs, murmured choked farewells to the ones at home, while the maddened elements snatched at their numb, frozen bodies and tried to tear them away from their lashings.

For a brief instant they drew breath, listened to the thunder of the surf and gazed upon the fearsome hell of waters which raged around them. Another deluge, and each man felt he was being torn asunder. In their ears rang the sounds heard only by those pressed under by a sea; when lungs ex-

pand to breaking, when the breath escapes hissing through the clenched teeth, eyes see red and the mind calls to the tortured muscles to "Let go! Let go!"

At last she came up. It was strangely quiet.

"Was this death?" men asked, till the skipper's voice broke harshly upon the ear.

"All right, fellers! Down fores'l an' jumbo! Leggo yer kedje!"

They had driven clear across the reef!

"Aye! It was our only chance," Winslow was saying. "She couldn't weather any o' them ledges even cuttin' away th' sticks wouldn't ha' kept her from draggin'. I knew thar must be some place aroun' here whar' a vessel might scrape over an' when Tom Jenkins here tells me 'bout thar bein' two fathoms on th' southwest horn o' th' reef at high water, I jest slams her over it, trustin' that she'd strike easy. I cal'late she's ground her skag t' flinders. I c'n see pieces of it a-comin' up now
——"

With the reaction coming after such a strain, he started to laugh hysterically. "Ha! ha! She's done some poundin' this day. Poor Jim Costello—nineteen men gone t' hell for a jug o' rum! Oh! It's a cruel life—a dog's life!"

And he dropped in a heap upon the ice-covered deck.



THEY hung to the little kedje in the lee of the reef until the gale moderated, and next morning came into Anchorville Bay iced up to the foremast-head and with all the gang spelling at the pumps. She was leaking, but not as much as would be expected from a vessel which

had banged her way over a shoal-water reef in a Winter's gale.

It had been a wild week at sea and the flags on the Court-House and Post-Office were at half-mast for many of Anchorville's sons. The *Camisoto* was gone, with her skipper and eighteen men. The *Clara Willis* was strewing the rocks of Grand Manan with her wreckage, and two dories had failed to answer the muster when her survivors made the beach. Fred Hanson, in the *Minnehaha*, had lost two men reefing the mainsail on Brown's, while Bill McCall, in the *Senator Vincent*, had lost his mainmast off the Seal Island, and had to be towed into Yarmouth after a night when all had given themselves up for lost.

It was a week of gnawing anxiety to those who had husbands, sons, fathers, and brothers at sea, and, when the *Winslow* came in, battered and storm-worn, they breathed heartfelt thanks unto the Almighty for the safety of another vessel.



“AND what did you make out of it, Harry?” the skipper's pretty wife asked him two days later. All Anchorville knew the story of the *Winslow's* trip and Isabel Winslow had heard the tale from other than the reluctant lips of her husband.

“Waal, sweetheart,” answered the young skipper with a laugh, “fish prices are runnin' high these days an' I cal'late th' gang ain't growlin' over th' seventy dollars they drawed. I might ha' made a hundred, an' I cal'late 'twould be a good idea t' take a little holiday, you and I, while th' vessel on th' railway!”

“A hundred dollars!” cried his wife with a note in her voice that Winslow had never heard before. “And what is a paltry hundred dollars to the wives

and children of men who live such a life? What is a hundred dollars in the scale against the dead of the *Camisto* — nineteen men — and the poor Anchorville boys lost on the *Minnehaha* and the *Willis*? And the chance you took! Driving over that reef! What if you had struck? Did you ever think of that? Look at the risks you have been running those ten days at sea—and all for a hundred dollars! Oh, Harry, but it's cruel work, and I'm all the time afraid some one will come to my door and tell me my husband's gone——'

“Ha! ha!” laughed the young skipper, clasping his sobbing wife in his strong arms. “Don't think on it, dearie! Even though we did hev a more than ornery excitin' trip, yet a hundred dollars for ten days' work ain't t' be sneezed at. No siree!”

The Luck of the Annie Crosby



HE wasn't an old vessel, and there was nothing in her general appearance to suggest her being hoodooed or a Jonah, yet all the Anchorville trawlers were afraid of the *Annie Crosby*. Ten years ago the fishing schooner slid from the ways of Tom Flanagan's yard at Little Harbor, and at that time she was the last word in her particular class of design.

Flanagan was an old "rule of thumb" ship-builder. He dispensed with the blue-print designs of naval architects and built his vessels from small wooden models which he carved and whittled himself, and the graceful, easy lines and natural sea-kindliness of his miniatures were faithfully reproduced in the larger replicas.

Flanagan-built vessels were nothing out of the ordinary. They cut no swaths in fishing-vessel architecture like the first Burgess and McManus models, but still they had the name of being "able" boats. The *Annie Crosby* made her first "haddocking" trip with her owner, old Bill Crosby, as skipper, and for the year's fishing she was "high-liner" out of Anchorville. She could sail fairly well, steered easy, and was able to carry her kites in a breeze of wind without rolling half her lee deck under.

The foc'sle was dry and comfortable, and even with a full fare of one hundred and twenty thousand in the pens, she worked through the tide-rips off the Cape and in the Bay without burying herself in

green water like a half-tide rock. For five successive years she was a lucky vessel, and Winter and Summer made her "haddocking" and "hakeing" trips as regular as a clock, with good average fares, and hardly the loss of a draw-bucket to offset against her battles with Winter winds and seas.

Her ill luck seem to commence with the Crosby family. First of all, young Bill Crosby, the skipper's only son, was washed off the main-boom while reefing the mainsail and found a premature grave in the shoal water of the Seal Island. The old man was badly cut up by the death of his son and took such an aversion to the sea that he gave up the command of the *Annie Crosby* to Joe Thompson. From then on she acted "queer"—so much so that a hardened old trawler like Thompson refused to take her out and left her for a smaller and older vessel.

Her gang, nearly all of whom had sailed in her ever since she was launched, all deserted her and went in other vessels, and successive skippers and crews always gave her up after one trip. What was the matter with her? It's pretty hard to say exactly. Builders say she had developed some latent structural defect and talked of misplaced centers of effort and stability. Flanagan disowned her as he would an illegitimate child; while fishermen would shake their heads sagaciously and opine that she had hit a "hard-luck streak."

"Some one's put a wish on her," they said, "an' it's a bad one. Ever sence young Crosby went overboard she's carried it, an' we cal'late she'll carry it until she goes under, an' when she does she'll be dirty enough t' take th' gang with her!"

Men who had made trips on the hoodooed schooner swore with full-blooded emphasis that she had taken on every fault known to a fishing-vessel with the exception of leaking. She would not steer on occasions;

she developed a lee helm at times, and was painfully slow at coming about. She shipped green water and flooded foc'sle and cabin whether it was rough or calm. Her skippers seemed to make their sets in holes and could seldom strike fish. They were always getting their dories astray, and if there was any dirty weather or fog flying around, the *Annie Crosby* got it. The dog-fish and sharks played havoc with her crew's gear, while as for carrying sail, she'd roll down to her hatch-combings in a Summer squall until skippers became positively afraid to hoist anything above her four lowers.



JUDSON KEMBLE was her last skipper, and was of a type of fisherman who feared nothing. No one could carry sail longer, nor hang on to his gear like him, nor dare driving for the land in thick and boisterous weather. It was Jud Kemble and a rough and tough Anchorville gang who drove out from Portland in a Winter's gale with a bigger cargo of run inside their skins than ever came out of a prohibition town.

Kemble and Jimmy Thomas to the wheel, hilariously drunk with a long-neck of rum on the wheel box between them and driving out to sea in a blinding snow-storm and with Ram Island Ledge creaming in acres of whitewater almost under their bilge. However, that's another story, but it serves to illustrate the type of man who left the *Annie Crosby* scared white on his first trip. After that she lay to the wharf with sun and wind bleaching her decks and rigging, and her gaunt, weatherworn spars festooned with Irish pennants of ragged gear.

Skipper Crosby tried to sell her, but nobody would buy, and as the old man had no other source of income he worked around the smoke-houses and the fish flakes. He wouldn't go to sea again even when vessels

were offered him, and thus he could be seen, a tired, broken old man, possessed with haunting memories of the boy who went to his death in the swirling rips of the Fundy tides.

Misfortune seemed to pursue the old skipper ashore. His wife brooded over the boy's loss and it affected her mind. She would wander down to the wharves and question the crews of incoming vessels for news of her son.

"Young Willy Crosby, you know," she would say in plaintive tones. "They say he was lost at sea, but I know he'll come back some day. He's told me so in dreams many a time. 'I'll be back, mother,' he said. 'Come to the wharf an' meet me like you used to do, an' we'll walk up the hill together.' These were his very words, men, an' only a few nights ago I saw him a-comin' up the wharf a-shouldering the clothes-bag I made for him with my own hands. Have you any news of him, men? Young Willy Crosby, my boy that went fishin' in the *Annie Crosby* five years ago?"

Hardened fishermen would dodge behind sheds when they saw her coming. They hated to see the look on her face when they made the inevitable reply, and though they always answered with a hopeful. "He's not with us this trip, ma'am but maybe he'll come in on one o' the other vessels."

It made them gulp hard when they spoke. Men would swear hoarsely to hide their emotions when old Bill Crosby limped down the dock to take his wife away, and if any one of the Anchorville crowd could do anything to make the old couple happy, it would have been done long ago.

Then came a climax to Bill Crosby's hard luck. On a bitter night in Midwinter his house went on fire, and with his wife in his arms the old man stag-

gered into the snow and watched his home go up in flames. There was no insurance, and when he returned next day to view the blackened ruins, he held a few minutes' bitter communion with his thoughts. With grim determination upon his rugged features he went back to his wife.

"Annie", he said, "I'm goin' fishin' again."

At first she flashed him a look of fear, but her old delusion proving stronger, she crooned,

"Go out and find him, Will! I'll be to the wharf when you both come in from sea!"



THE schooner, having been Flanagan-built, had a hull like an old-time frigate, and five years alongside the wharf made but little difference to her stranch hardwood frame. Though to all appearance dilapidated and weatherworn, yet she was as tight and seaworthy as any of the Anchorville fleet, and a little scraping of masts and booms, a lick of paint, some calking and the reeving and setting up of new running-gear and standing rigging would make her ready for sea again.

Crosby had no money, but his credit was good, and Clarence Dickey, storekeeper and vessel owner, readily responded to Crosby's halting appeal for financial aid.

"Jest a little credit for some gear, Mr. Dickey. I'll try an' pay it back on th' first trip——"

Dickey interrupted him with a wave of his cigar.

"Go to th' store, Bill, an' git all ye want. Pay for it when ye can. I'm only too pleased t' help ye out, an' wish ye every kind o' good luck."

And after the old man stumbled out, murmuring his thanks, the vessel owner turned to his son-in-law, Harry Winslow, just in from a trip:

"Poor old Crosby's a-goin' t' try his luck again,"

he said with a shake of his head. "I'm afraid he's too old for fishin', an' with such a beast of a vessel, too. He's agoin' t' have trouble shippin' a gang, though to be sure he always had good trips when he sailed her, an' its possible th' boys 'll remember that an' ship with him."

"I doubt it," replied Winslow. "I'd like t' see him get a crowd, but she's made an awful name for herself. I know fellers as wouldn't take their gear out of her when they quit for fear th' hoodoo 'ud stick. Jimmy Thomas once lost three tubs with me, an' sooner'n go over to th' *Annie* 'an' git what he left in her, he worked night an' day riggin' new gear on th' run t' Brown's — he was that scared t' touch th' trawl he'd used in that craft. Even Judson Kemble left all his charts an' dunnage in his berth when he left her, an' her hold's half full o' his gang's gear. I was pretty desperate when I took your old *Valfrey* out, but I hadn't th' nerve t' tackle th' *Annie Crosby*."

With the assistance of several fishermen who were laying off waiting for Spring fishing and who volunteered to bear a hand, Crosby soon had the schooner fitted out, but when her old sails were brought out of the loft and bent on, men avoided Bill Crosby like the plague. Fishermen asked to ship on the *Annie* were either staying ashore or else bound to another vessel, and though the pool-rooms, the sailmaker's lofts and the Main Street were full of loafing trawlers, yet all were engaged when Crosby hove in sight.

He telephoned to all the Bay ports for men, but his vessel's reputation had preceded him and refusals met his appeals, and it was with a very heavy heart that he realized that his efforts to get a gang were fruitless. There was Jud Kemble to be interviewed yet and Jud had a name for dare-devil recklessness, but Jud had had a round turn with the *Annie's* va-

garies and Crosby recalled his lurid criticisms when he left her.

Still, if Jud Kemble could be induced to go, men might follow him. Kemble was boat fishing then, having completed some hair-raising trips in the schooner *West Wind* by piling her up on the Mud Harbor Ledges. Yes, Kemble was his last hope, so the old skipper hired a rig and drove out to see him.

The notorious Judson was combing trawls in front of his cottage when Crosby brought to an anchor alongside him. There was a questioning lift in his eyes when the old skipper approached and spoke.

“Ye hev’ th’ name o’ bein’ a pretty bold man, Kemble,” said Crosby. “Men say ye’ve scared more gangs at sea with yer carryin’ on ways than any other skipper out of Anchorville.”

“Aye, they say so,” answered Kemble, nonchalantly sending a stream of tobacco-juice into a bait-bucket.



CROSBY paused and his little blue eyes scanned the hard, leathery, lined features of the redoubtable “Hell-driving Jud Kemble” as if he were weighing in his mind what to say next.

“Ye’ve been afeard yerself tho’, Jud,” said the old skipper, after his scrutiny. “I’ve seen ye frightened—so frightened ye’d a’most sink inter yer jack-boots, an’ a good many men down Anchorville remember sein’ ye as white as yer vessel’s mains’l with pure scare——”

Kemble spat deliberately:

“Cap’n Crosby! Th’ men as *saw* me as white as my own mains’l, I cal’late, were a dam’ sight whiter’n me, an’ I kin tell ye that! On your own vessel it was, too, an’ I reckon th’ gang that was with me that time’ll never forgit th’ night she rolled down an’

came up with a dory a-hangin' on her forecross-trees. It would ha' scared many a better man."

"Aye, so ye say," continued the other, "but it was your own fault. Ye were crackin' on an' carryin' sail yhen ye sh'd ha' bin hove-to under fores'l an' jumbo 'stead o' travelin' with your four lowers an' stays'l flyin'. However, that's no matter, an' it ain't what I hired that one-hoss shay t' come an' see ye about. When I started a-comin' up here, I was told it warn't no use, as th' boys to Anchorville said ye warn't th' man you were. Ye've lost your nerve, they said——"

Judson jumped off the tub with a bull roar.

"Lost my nerve? Ain't th' man I were? Th' hell ye say! Man an' boy, I've bin sailin' for thirty year, an' I never seen th' man yet that 'ud drive where I wouldn't follow! I've swung my whole mains'l when other fellers were down to a reefed fores'l. I've had gangs lock me in th' cabin an' take sail off a vessel themselves 'cause they were afeard! D'ye hear? Scared so stiff that they'd quit cursin'. I've seen men on deck from th' time we swung off until we ran th' lines ashore to Anchorville wharf, an' all afeard t' go below. Th' best men in Anchorville, aye, an' from Nigger Cape t' Gloucester, a-swearin' at me an' showin' white faces! An' ye say I've lost my nerve? By th' Lord Harry, there are fellers I c'd name that lost all th' nerve they ever had when I hung th' *West Wind* on th' Ledge, an' whimperin' an' prayin' like a dam' lot o' sky-pilots when we came through th' rips in th' dories! Lost my nerve, eh? I'd like t' see th' man as'll give me a dare!"

Crosby listened to Kemble's tirade with an enigmatical smile.

"I'll take ye, Jud," he said quietly. "I'll dare ye."

"How?" queried the other with some heat.

“Ship with me for one trip in the *Annie Crosby* again!”

The valiant Kemble was fetched up all standing. His face betrayed a host of varying expressions, and he stammered a lame excuse.

“I—I—I ain’t cal’latin’ t’ go vessel fishin’ again. I hev my own motor-boat now an’ some lobsterin’ t’ look after.”

“For one trip only, Jud,” insisted Crosby. “I’m takin’ her out an’ I want a gang. If you go, others’ll follow.”

“No no,” answered Kemble. “I ain’t for shippin’ on that craft——”

“Not even ef I take her? Me that brought her all th’ luck she ever had?”

“No, sirree! Not even ef th’ Ring-Tailed Gabriel twirled her wheel!”

“Huh!” There was marked contempt on old Crosby’s face as he rose to his feet “Here’s Jud Kemble—th’ man that ain’t a-scared of anythin’ livin’ or dead, by his own sayin’—afeard t’ ship for a ten-day trip with an’ old, worn-out man like me. Ye take a dare from me—a man what never carried sail nor had th’ name of it. A man what always made good stocks. Waal, thar ain’t no doubt but what th’ boys were right. Jud Kemble’s lost his nerve, an’ he ain’t that ‘drive-her-an’-be-damned’ feller he use-ter be. Good day!”

And he strode across to the buggy and drove away.

That night Kemble came into town and with many oaths inquired for the whereabouts of Captain Crosby. When he found the old skipper in Jack Watson’s sail-loft his language could be heard all over the wharf:

“Afraid t’ ship on your old tub, am I?” he roared, with vivid accentuations. “Lost my nerve, have I? Waal, you let me know when you’re a-goin’ t’

sail an' ye'll find Jud Kemble on deck when it's 'h'ist t' mains'l!' Brown's Bank or Hell, I'll make a wake for th' rest t' steer by!

And while Crosby wrung the hand off his former skipper, Kemble's words went down in Anchorville chronicles as choice phrases for future quotations.

II



IT WAS Kemble who scraped a gang together. A harum-scarum crowd they were—**young fellows mostly**, with enough adventurous spirit in them to twist the devil's tail if dared to do so. The daring Judson's method of inducing men to ship was strangely similar to the manner in which he himself had been entrapped, and by playing on the latent "not to be outdone" natures of young, hardy men devoid of lively imaginations, he soon had a six-dory crowd aboard.

On a cold, dreary morning in early March the *Annie Crosby* put to sea, with poor Mrs. Crosby as the sole witness of her departure.

"You'll bring him back, Will?" she cried with plaintive appeal in her voice, and the old skipper waved his hand reassuringly.

"All right, mother. You run along home now. 'Tis a bitter mornin' to be standin' around. We'll be back soon."

And while the schooner was standing out to sea, the figure of the skipper's wife could be seen on the wharf-end watching them until they cleared the Heads.

"'Tis purty hard, that," murmured Kemble to his dory-mate, Tom Jenkins. "Poor ol' woman, she's allus expectin' t' see her lad again. Sink me! I get a shaky feelin' every time I see her askin' th' boys for news of her son, an' him dead an' gone these five years an' more. Wonder ef that grub-spilin' Portygee has breakfast ready yet?"

And after the manner of men who live hard, he polished off his sympathetic utterances with a string of fluent oaths.

So the ill-starred *Annie Crosby* sped down the Bay with a fair wind over the quarter and her bowsprit pointing south-half-east for Brown's. The light-house keeper at Anchorville Heads stared hard at her when she passed out and roused his assistant to view the sight of the hoodooed vessel standing down the Bay, while crews of incoming fishermen and coasters clambered aloft to have a better look at the *Annie Crosby* bound for the Banks again after years of idleness.

Watching her every moment with no little trepidation, her crowd managed to make the northern edge of Brown's without mishap, and after two days' good fishing on the forty-fifty fathom water, the redoubtable Judson Kemble had to stand for a dood deal of foc'sle chaff.

"An' this is th' vessel that scared you, Juddy?" a man would remark. "Cripes! It beats me how an ordinary pedler like Crosby kin take this ol' hooker an' put her thro' her paces 'thout any rollin' down or runnin' under. Why, when you had her she played th' devil an' all with ye. Sure, I can't see anythin' wrong with her. She steers all right an' hangs a-joggin' as well as Harry Winslow's slick vessel."

"You ain't finished this trip yet," growled Kemble in reply. "You'll get yer belly-full afore you're through fishin', unless her five years to th' wharf has killed her hard-luck streak. Wait an' see, my bucko, afore ye start shoutin'."

For three more days they fished on various berths, making good average sets for six dories. The weather was particularly fine for the month of March: light westerly winds and smooth seas, and a barometer standing steady on the "Set Fair." Kemble didn't like it. He was nerved for something to happen and

felt disappointed that nothing did happen. He became the butt of the rough foc'sle banter and watched weather and vessel with an anxious eye and forever croaked forebodings of the future.



WITH fifty thousand fine haddock and cod below, Crosby was in fine humor and calculated making another day on the berth and swinging off for home. Next day, however, the weather changed. The sun arose in a pinky mist to the east'ard, and both temperature and barometer started falling. Kemble, over the breakfast-table, chuckled over the forecast of bad weather to come, and regaled the gang with all the *Annie's* bad points in a breeze of wind.

"No fishin' t' day, I cal'late," he said. "I kin smell a roarin', rippin' southeaster a-makin' up, an' sleet an' snow'll be flyin' aplenty afore long. She'll start her capers soon, bullies, an' I'll bet some o' you'll wish th' Almighty hed struck ye stiff afore ye ever shipped on this hooker when she opens her bag o' dirty tricks—

"She would not steer, nor stay, nor wear.
 Leave her, Johnny, leave her!
 She shipped it green an' made us swear,
 An' it's time for us to leave her!"

And singing the old chanty in a cracked voice, Kemble rolled into his bunk.

By noon there was a rising lift to the gray-green surges and a Wintry spite in the wind, which came from the south'ard. A lead-colored sky pressed down from zenith to nadir, and the vessel staggered over the desolation of somber sea with jib triced up on the stay, jumbo tail-rope to windward, and fore and main sails set. The decks and rails began to

scale with thin ice, while the spray which swept up from the bows filmed the lower portions of the sails with a frigid glaze. The skipper paced the weather quarter muffled to the eyes in oilskins, and in comparison with the rest of the crowd he was the most unconcerned men aboard. The *Annie* had never played any tricks with him, and he was inclined to believe that her former skippers did not handle her properly.

After dinner an American schooner jogging to loo'ard started taking her mainsail in, and an instant later she was blotted out in a squall of whirling sleet and snow. The puff hit the *Annie Crosby* a regular knockdown blow, and for a moment she was hove down to her lee deadeyes in a wild boiling of hissing froth. From foc'sle and cabin the gang came tumbling up, and fear was written large on many faces. Kemble, cursing like a trooper, clawed his way aft to the skipper at the wheel, and his words resounded above the roar.

"Here she starts, bullies!" he bawled. "Th' lid o' Davy's locker is openin' for the *Annie* now! Stand by for the long set!"

While the gang hung on like bats to the weather dories or the main rigging, expecting every moment to see the vessel roll over, Crosby sung out,

"Draw away th' jumbo! Its knockin' her off!"

Before a man had a chance to execute the order, a wild blast came swooping along and the schooner reeled for an instant and went down to the combings of the main hatch. The lee dories and the light board in the lee fore rigging disappeared in white-water, till, with a crack like a gun, the tail-rope parted and gradually the vessel came up with her decks full to the rail with chilly Atlantic.

Crosby, as cool as the water which flooded her decks, set astride the wheel-box hanging on to the

spokes, and there was a smile on his face when he spoke to Kemble alongside him,

“She goes so far an’ no farther. Get th’ mains’l in. We’ll heave-to.”

It was a very frightened crowd of men who rolled the big sail up, and to their credit is a record time for furling sail. The boom was in the crotch, guyed with turnbuckles, heaver and chains, and the canvas stowed in less than ten minutes. Hove-to under foresail and jumbo, she rode out the rest of the day.



THE *Annie Crosby* was only beginning. She could do more hair-raising tricks than that, and Kemble, in the foc’sle, laughed sarcastically and gibed at the fears of the gang endeavoring to hang into their bunks.

“I know this brute!” he cried. “This little knock-down ain’t nawthin’ to what she kin do when she gits wound up. She’ll play hell with yer nerves yet afore she ties up in Anchorville again—ef she ever does.”

“But she’s stiff, too,” remarked a lower-bunk man. “She’ll allus come up, Juddy. Ye must give her credit for that.”

“Aye!” rumbled Kemble. “She’ll allus come up, but some o’ these nights she’ll take a wallop on th’ port tack an’ come up on th’ starboard, an’ where th’ blazes will we be when she does? She’s still carryin’ her bad luck. It commenced when the old man lost his son an’ she’ll carry it until she takes ol’ Crosby himself to th’ bottom.”

“How did that happen, Jud?” inquired the lower-bunk man. “You were aboard her then, an’ I’ve h’ard it said that you were on th’ foot-ropes when th’ lad went. D’ye reckon thar’ was anythin’ onnatural about th’ boy?”

“Onnatural?” cried the other with a hoarse laugh.

“Why, you’re as superstitious as an ol’ woman! What are ye tryin’ t’ nose out now?”

“Waal, I h’ard that th’ skipper was kinder hard on th’ boy an’ sent him out t’ th’ reef earrin’ when he didn’t wanter go. He was a kinder scared lad in a breeze o’ wind, they say.”

“Aye, he was. Just about as scared as some o’ you were this afternoon. He had a trick o’ loafin’ below when th’ skipper sung out, an’ when reefin’ he was allus to be found as far for’ard as th’ gurry-kid—as far from th’ boom end as he c’d git. The ol’ man use-ter notice it an’ it made him kinder riled t’ think that his son sh’d be a quitter. He found him sojerin’ by th’ heel o’ th’ mast that night off’n th’ Seal Island an’ ordered him out on th’ boom. Th’ boy was scared, but he went, an’ jest as him and I were haulin’ out, she rammed th’ boom inter a big ’un an’ he was gone. That’s all there was to it, an’ many a fine lad’s gone th’ same way.”

“Waal, Jud,” continued the other after hearing Kemble’s explanations. “There’s plenty good fishermen that’s nervous when it comes t’ reefin’ down in a breeze. I kin remember th’ first time I went on th’ boom. I was purty well scared hangin’ out thar’ an’ t’ seas lickin’ up an’ th’ boom——”

“Shucks!” interrupted Kemble with a sarcastic laugh. “’Tis drivin’ an ox-team in Anchorville ye sh’d be, Dan. It’s safer than drivin’ a vessel or fishin’. Heave me over a doughnut, cook! It’s my watch in a few minutes, an’ ef I stop here much longer, these fellers’ll make *me* nervous.”

When Kemble and his dory-mate oiled up and clambered on deck, the weather settled down to a fine, old-fashioned March blizzard. Working around to the nor’west, the wind and seas increased in fury and size and the vessel lurched, staggered and pitched around on the harried combers. Alternate squalls of hail and

snow whirled out of the blackness, and below decks the gang listened to the howl of the wind and lay awake an expectant apprehension. They were not afraid of the weather—fishermen are used to gales at sea—but they were deadly afraid of the vessel, and while some cursed their foolishness in shipping upon the *Annie Crosby*, the fundamental reasons for her uncanny behaviour were discussed from both the constructive and occult points of view.

“She’s developed some fault in her hull,” was the opinion of one who scoffed at the theory of “bein’ ha’nted,” and for some time there were attacks and counter attacks by the orators of the foc’sle parliament. Fishermen’s arguments consist, for the most part, of all hands talking and nobody listening, and it ended with both parties leaving the question to the Portuguese cook for decision.

“What’s your opinion, Manuel? What d’ye think’s th’ matter with this ol’ peddler?”

Manuel, sparing of speech and gamboge of complexion, hove a tin of ginger-cake into the shack locker before replying. Men were afraid of Manuel. He had an uncanny way about him which inspired fear and respect and they awaited his verdict.

“De boy was th’ ol’ man’s luck. Lose de boy, lose de luck. Get de boy back, get de luck back.”

“How in blazes kin ye do that, Manyule? How kin ye git young Crosby back when he’s drowned years ago?”

“No sabe. Get de boy back, get de luck back. Ol’ man make lose de boy. Ol’ man make lose de luck. Same t’ing happen in Horta boat my home. Dat’s all I say.”

And with his enigmatical answer he rolled into his bunk.



THE gang had hardly essayed sleep when a loud cry was heard from the deck and the foc'sle slide was closed with a bang. There was an eerie silence for a few seconds as men arose on their elbows in affright and then the vessel seemed to have been smashed with the Hammer of Thor. The mournful howling of the wind merged into a wild shriek, to be drowned an instant later by the thunderous, staggering crash of a terrific sea.

Men in the weather bunks were catapulted out of them and sent hurling down on those to leeward. The lamps flared up and went out, leaving the foc'sle in black darkness, and a hellish pandemonium reigned. Everything not bolted fetched adrift; the stove-spilled red-hot embers into the gloom as covers and pots clattered away; crockery jumped out of the racks and smashed against the lee lockers, and supplies burst open the locker doors and joined the débris to leeward.

Men shrieked, cursed and called on the Almighty while they fought and trampled upon one another as they attempted to rise to their feet. Terror held sway in the Stygian darkness, and above the awful roar of the gale outside could be heard the crashing and splintering of wood, the shouts and cries of frightened, maddened men, and the hissing of water pouring down on the stove through the ventilator. The air was foul with steam and bilge and the odors of panting, wrestling humanity.

“Mother of God! She's going!” cried a hoarse voice, and they fought to reach the ladder. Better to die in the open than like a rat in a trap, and while prayers mingled with oaths, the men slithered and swayed with the lurching of the vessel upon the slanting, flooded floor. Then slowly, very slowly it seemed, the schooner righted, while the imprisoned fisher-

men pounded on the closed hatch and yelled to be released.

It was Kemble's face which peered down on them when the hatch was slid back, and in his eyes was the light of joyous vindication.

"What th' hell are ye yellin' about?" he bawled above the noise. "By Godfrey, ye'd think th' devil himself was a-grippin' ye all by th' nape o' th' neck like he did th' haddie by th' row ye're makin'! Ye had an awful time, ye say? Waal, I cal'late ye didn't hev th' time me'n Tom Jenkins had in scramblin' up t' th' masthead. Cripes, she a'most filled my boots when I was astride o' th' mainspreaders, an' a fine job, we had climbin' with half th' rattlin's gone!"

And the reaction coming with the sound of his sarcastic, fearless voice, men were heard to laugh hysterically.

After the squall which hove her down, the wind eased off, and the gang turned to clearing up the battered decks. The dories were gone from the chocks and the foresail and foreboom were ripped and broken where the weather nest of dories had been hurled against them. Part of the port rail had been carried away as well as the booby hatch, and the gear coiled upon the pins was streaming in loose ends over the side. The skipper surveyed the wreckage silently and spoke to the undaunted Kemble in a strangely weak voice,

"Get th' fores'l reefed above that rip. Fish th' boom, ef ye can, or else cut it away an' shackle th' sheet to th' clew. Keep her hove-to till daylight, then we'll swing off an' get home. I'm an old man, Judson, an' my luck's agin me."

Passing his hand over his eyes, he staggered aft to his berth—a man with his spirit broken.

III



THE skipper stayed in his berth until daylight and some of the after gang said they heard him praying. There was no levity in their remarks then, for with the exception of the hard-shelled Kemble, all were genuinely scared. They were all ready for immediate precipitation into Eternity, and when Manuel fished out a string of beads, he was solemnly instructed to say a good word for the rest of the crowd, whether they were Anglicans, Methodists, Presbyterians or Baptists.

It was Kemble who got the damage fixed up and the vessel heading north for Anchorville again, and if his shipmates had become extremely virtuous in their language and conversation, he made up the deficiency by the lurid nathemas he employed in discussing the faults of the *Annie Crosby*. The skipper said nothing, but spent the time moodily pacing the quarter. He spoke to nobody and ate his meals in silence. He had aged perceptibly. His shoulders stooped and there was a feebleness in his gait which came more from a depression of spirit than from the weakness of age, and his eyes reflected the soul of a man who is beaten, subjected, down and out.

His ill luck had driven him to the wall, and there was no fight left in him. He was a ruined man, doomed to spend a miserable existence with the poor woman who forever cried for the son he had driven to his death. These were his thoughts as he paced the deck and the men spoke but little in his presence. They sympathized with him, but all prayed for the moment when they could jump to the cap log of the Anchorville Wharf.

Clawing in to the nor'wester under riding-sail, foresail single-reefed, and jumbo, they hauled off the Bank and stood up for the Bay, and when night fell,

squally and as thick as mud, with alternate sleet and snow, they snatched a glimpse of Blonde Rock buoy light between the storms. Kemble was alone in the cabin reading, when the skipper came below from his pacing and sat on the locker beside him. There was a wistful, childish light in his eyes as he spoke for the first time.

“Judson,” he said slowly, “you were on this vessel when my lad went over th’ side. D’ye think I did wrong that night?”

“Wrong?” grunted Kemble, throwing down the magazine. “What d’ye mean, Cap?”

“Why, in sendin’ th’ lad out on the boom-end. He was a nervous lad, ye’ll remember, an’ maybe I was rather rough with him.”

“Shucks!” cried the other indignantly. “That warn’t anythin’ wrong on your part. He was a husky lad an’ jest as able as anyone aboard. It was jest his luck, an’ plenty better men hev gone th’ same way.”

Crosby nodded his head and cut a fill of tobacco. With the unlighted pipe in his mouth he looked up and spoke again,

“That was a funy thing th’ cook was a-sayin’ last night?”

Kemble started.

“What? An’ how do you know what th’ yallerbelly said?”

“I was jest a-goin’ down for a mug-up when I h’ard them all talkin’.”

“Aye”, growled Kemble. “Fishermen’s jaw. Any blame’ thing that comes to the end o’ their tongues. When they ain’t got their mouths full o’ grub, it’s full o’ niggerhead; an’ when it ain’t that, it’s full o’ bazoo an’ rum notions. Don’t take any stock in th’ guff of a passel of scared kids.

And while the skipper relapsed into silence, Kemble proceeded to read "The Amours of Madame du Barry."

When Kemble finished its edifying reading it was to find the skipper asleep upon the locker and to hear a hail from the lookout on deck:

"Red light on th' lee bow!"



THE man at the wheel was young Tony Anderson and the lookout was his dory-mate, Jim Lachance. Both had extremely crude notions regarding the rule of the road, and the extent of their knowledge was summarized by the regulations that vessels close-hauled had the right of way over vessels running free, and that a vessel close-hauled on the starboard tack had the right of way over a vessel close-hauled on the port tack. Anderson at the wheel stared at the light ahead and to lee-ward, and puzzled his brains for the manoeuvre to execute in such a case.

"What'll I do, Jim?" he cried to his dory-mate pacing the waist. "I stand on, don't I? We're close-hauled port tack, but he must be freeing."

Jim's voice could be heard next.

"Holy Sailor! He's haulin' close, Tony. I'm thinkin' he's close-hauled starb'd tack an' a square-rigger an' intendin' t' stand on! I cal'late ye better luff or bear away. I leave it t' you."

Kemble waited to hear no more. With one spring he was up the companion and, glancing at the red port light close aboard to leeward, he roared,

"Hard up, you mud-brained gawk, an' let him git clear! Port yer helm!"

In his flurry, the wheelman jammed the wheel hard down and the vessel came up to the wind as the long flying jib-boom of a lumber-laden barkentine poked

through the *Annie Crosby's* triced-up jib. With a crash the blunt forefoot smacked the schooner on the starboard bow by the fore-rigging and for a few breathless seconds the two vessels rolled and slammed each other amidst the pandemonium of thundering canvas and thrashing blocks. The force of the barkentine's blow drove the fishing schooner's bow to port, and as her sails filled on the starboard tack she fetched clear.

"What vessel's that?" came from the foc'sle head of the barkentine seesawing with her foreyards aback and her head sails a-shiver.

"*Prickly Heat* of Boston, Captain Scratch!" bawled Kemble with a laugh as they stood away, and appreciatively he listened to the curses of the watch officer as he yelled for a lantern. To the skipper he said, "I don't think thar's much damage. He came up when he saw we warn't agoin' t' clear, an' his foretops'ls jammed off his way. He only give us a lick."

"Yaas! fine leeck," growled Manuel. "Jess 'noff to drive de fore chain-plate bolts t'roo into ma bunk. *Caramba!* I not know heet me!"

"Bring torches, some o' you!" cried the skipper. "Is she makin' any water below?"

"Nawthin' as we kin see," replied a man. Condemning their eyes for shipping in such an unfortunate vessel, the gang examined the damage. The jib stay and jib had been carried away; starboard anchor stock was broken, and the rail and chain plates in the wake of the starboard fore rigging were driven in. Below the waterline she was unharmed.

"She's all right," said the skipper wearily. "Get that jib in, boys, an' set up a preventer stay aft here. We'll get her back on th' port tack after I make a cast. I cal'late we hev th' Seal Island on th' starb'd bow thar'. Keep a lookout for th' light, an' git a

man to th' wheel that kin keep clear of other vessels."

Staggering aft he prepared to take a sounding.

"Let her come up," he said to Jenkins, who had relieved the discomfited Anderson at the wheel. Hauling in the lead-line, he felt the knots.

"Twenty-eight fathom," he muttered. "Six years to-night since th' boy went an' on this same spot. I'm plumbin' his grave, poor lad, an' 'twas me that sent him to it. Oh, Willy-boy, 'twas a sad hour for me when I told your mother!"

"*'Twas a close call, Dad!*"

The voice came out of the darkness and the skipper dropped the lead to the deck.

"Lord save me! Who was that?" he cried in a fearsome voice.

"It's me, Dad, an' a close shave I had. No more fishin' for me. Oh, but th' water's cold—so cold—I'm freezin'——"

Crosby was conscious of a form approaching him along the weather side of the gurry-kid. For a tense moment he stared at the staggering shape, then his nerve failed and with a hoarse, choking cry he toppled and fell to the deck, while the figure stooped down and tried to lift the inert form.

"Aft here, fellers! Th' ol' man's petered out!"

"Holy Moses! who th' blazes is singin' out?" And Kemble and Lachance came aft on the run. "What's th' matter? Who's this?"

He made a grab at the arm of the man stooping over the skipper.

"Its me, Juddy. I've clum' aboard again, an' th' ol' man's fainted."

"Young Bill Crosby, by th' 'ternal flames!" yelled Kemble, and knocking Lachance over in his fright, he ran for the focs'le and landed among the gang feet first. "He's aboard again! He's aboard again!"

he cried and the sight of his pallid face struck terror into the hearts of the assembled men.

“Who?” “What’s the racket?” “What in God’s name has happened?” they cried as they crowded around him.

“Crosby—young Bill Crosby drowned off’n here six year ago—come aboard—standin’ aft over th’ ol’ man! Vessel’s ha’nted, an’ we’re dead men — ay, dead men!”



CLATTERING down the foc’sle steps came Jenkins from the wheel, and his eyes almost lay out on his cheeks with fright.

“Young Crosby’s aboard!” he cried. “Came an’ hollered t’ me t’ give him a hand in gittin’ th’ skipper below! When I saw who it was, I jams th’ wheel down an’ beat it. She ha’nted! Dam’ the hour, Jud Kemble, when I listened to yer jaw an’ came dory mates with ye on this cursed craft! She’s hoodooed an’ ha’nted, an’ devil a one of us’ll see Anchorville again!”

“Below thar’, fellers!” came a voice. “Up on deck some o’ you! What’s th’ matter? I ain’t a ghost!”

“That’s young Crosby’s voice!” cried Kemble, recovering a little from his momentary scare.

The others backed away into the darkest corners of the foc’sle.

“Is Jud Kemble down thar’?”

“It’s your call, Jud,” cried Jenkins. “You were on th’ boom with him an’ he wants you. You an’ th’ skipper he’s come for.”

The look of fear in Kemble’s eyes changed to one of contempt as he gazed around at the frightened fishermen.

“Huh!” he said with a toss of his head. “Jud

Kemble has to go, has he? Waal, I cal'late he's got more guts in him than any o' you, so he'll go!"

And while the terror enthralled men watched him with apprehensive eyes, he hitched up his belt and clambered up the ladder.

"Is that you, Kemble?"

"Ay! It's me," replied the other in a none too steady voice. "What d'ye want o' me, Billy?"

"Why, nawthin' more'n a change o' clothes an' a mug-up. Th' water's precious cold. What's th' matter with th' ol' man an' th' gang? They seem scared t' see me back."

"I sh'd think they were," answered Kemble bravely. "When a man's bin at th' bottom o' th' sea for six year, I cal'late most folks 'ud be scared!"

"What are ye talkin' about, Jud? Hev ye gone crazy. Sure, 'twas only five minutes ago when I dropped off'n th' boom. Say! Hev I gone bug too? I never saw that feller at th' wheel afore an' th' ol' man seems aged up awful in five minutes. An' tell me, Jud. How is it we're carryin' th' ridin'-sail when a few minutes ago 'twas th' mains'l we were reefin'?"

"I—I—I don't know," stuttered Kemble. "Hadn't ye better be goin' back?"

"Back where, you ol' fool?"

"Back whar' ye come from. It ain't right t' be scarin' folks like this. Hev ye got anythin' agin us?"

"Jud Kemble," replied the ghost, "ye must be drunk again! Clear th' way, I'm for havin' a mug-up."

As the reincarnation of William Crosby junior pushed Kemble aside and stepped into the foc'sle gangway, the crowd in the foc'sle were thrown into consternation. Manuel jumped into the oilskin locker

with his beads and muttered aves and credos to St. Anthony, while several of the gang crawled up into the peak or hid behind foremast and pawl-post, from which places they peeped curiously at the man coming down the ladder.

He was a husky, well-built fellow, clad in faded blue dungaree and half-leg boots. His face was partially covered by a thick black beard and mustache, and he was bleeding from a cut on top of the head.

“It’s Bill Crosby, all right!” cried a quavering voice, “but he’s grown a beard sence I saw him last.”

“Who th’ devil are you?” cried the man in the dungarees, gazing hard at his identifier.

“Me?” faltered the other, crowding behind the foremast, “I’m only a poor fisherman. I never done you any harm, did I, Bill Crosby? Hanley’s my name—Joe Hanley.”

“Joe Hanley?” cried the bearded man. “How in Jupiter did you git aboard here? Sure, you were fish-in’ with Fred Hanson in th’ *Minenhaha* when I knew you last.”

“Ay, but that war six year ago!”

The man calling himself William Crosby passed his hand across his eyes and flopped down on a locker.

“Seems t’ me thar’s somethin’ wrong. How did I git them limejuicer’s rags? How did them strangers git aboard here? Whar’s th’ oilskins I was dressed in when I went over th’ side? I cal’late I must be dream-in’ or else this clip on th’ head has druv me silly _____”

Kemble’s voice interrupted the ominous silence:

“He’s down here, skipper.” And he came down the ladder, with old Crosby following at his heels.



THE crowd watched the skipper with spell-bound gaze as he stepped unsteadily up to the man in the dungaree. The silence of the foc'sle was broken only by the heavy breathing of the assembled men, the mutterings of Manuel, the slatting of the jumbo sheet overhead, and the swash of the seas outside. The bearded man was the first to speak. Passing his hand over his eyes again as if to clear away a foggy vision, he looked up at his father with a weary, tired expression in his face.

“What’s the matter, Dad? Don’t you know me? What has happened?”

The skipper started at the sound of the man’s voice and he placed his hands upon his shoulders hesitatingly as if he were afraid the stranger would vanish at the touch. With the feel of solid flesh the old man’s eyes reflected the light of a new-found joy.

“It’s my boy, sure!” he said with a gladsome note in his voice. “Th’ Lord has answered our prayers! He hath taken, but He hath given back! Billy-boy, your mother’s waitin’ for ye; waitin’ for ye back home!”

And men swore in their amazement as father and son embraced in an ecstasy of rediscovered happiness.

IV



THE reappearance of William Crosby junior was a subject which caused a furore around Anchorville County, and for a long time men believed he was a visitor from the spirit world, while the *Annie Crosby* outshone the mythical *Flying Dutchman*. Crosby junior was alive, very much alive, but on being questioned as to his whereabouts during the period of his supposed death, he

was unable to elucidate the mystery. Clarence Dickey, Lloyd's agent and vessel owner, took up the case and supplied much of the missing information, and to him we are indebted for the further facts.

All that Crosby could remember was clambering out on the boom foot-ropes with Kemble and being washed off by a sea. For some twenty minutes he was whirled around in the rips and carried down by wind and tide in the direction of a large bark which was lying hove-to down to leeward of the *Annie Crosby*. He remembered shouting before a sea hove him smash against the bark's side. When he gained consciousness again, he found himself lying across the foot-ropes of the *Annie Crosby's* bowsprit. That was all he could recollect.

Six years of his life was a complete blank. Medical men heard of his case and came many miles to examine him. Their diagnosis were mostly of the same character. The blow on the head which he had received on striking the side of the bark had caused a pressure of the skull on a section of the brain, inducing a species of mental aphasia, or complete loss of memory. Dickey proved that he was picked up by the Italian bark *Maria Dunan*, bound from Yarmouth to Buenos Ayres. In Buenos Ayres he left her and shipped around the Horn to Chile in a Swedish ship. After that trace of him is lost, as he deserted in Antofagasta.

Without knowledge of his home, name or past life, he had drifted around for nearly six years, and a paragraph in a shipping journal seems to be the only clue as to his strange reappearance. It stated that John Smith, able seaman, was reported as lost from the jibboom of the barkentine *Daydream* while in collision with an unknown vessel off the Seal Island. The barkentine was lumber-laden and bound from An-

napolis to Cienfuegos in Cuba, and there is not the least doubt but what this was the vessel which collided with the *Annie Crosby*.

It is thought that Smith or Crosby was out on the jibboom tying up the inner jib when the vessels came together, and he was swept off the spar by the fisherman's jibstay. In falling he must have struck the schooner's bowsprit with his head, and fell unconscious into the foot-ropes below. The blow caused him to regain his memory, but with a complete blank of the intervening six years. Such cases are by no means uncommon, but there are men who swear that young Crosby is a spirit, albeit a very live one.



WHEN the *Annie Crosby* hauled into the wharf after her exciting trip, her crowd, with the exception of Kemble, the skipper and his son, jumped for the cap log and ran. They wouldn't even draw their shares of the catch, telling the skipper to keep the money, and for many days each man held an enthralled audience in the various fishermen's rendez-vous around town. Thus ended a strange chain of coincidences.

Mrs. Crosby had her son back, and as her delusion was confirmed, she regained her proper mind and was happy. The local parson said it was the workings of Providence, and compared Skipper Crosby to the biblical Job in his Sunday sermon. The Anchorville fishermen shook their heads and swore it was "queer", while Kemble, the tough and hard-shelled, and in command again, said it was, "jest sheer bull luck!"

And the *Annie Crosby*? If you wish to see her after reading of these things, just step along the long wharf until you come to the careenage. Stand along on the starboard hand for a spell until you come to the building with a dozen or so brand-new banker's

dories outside. The signboard above the door reads "Crosby & Son, Boatbuilders." But at their little wharf you will see a bank schooner, sun-bleached and weatherworn, and spending the balance of her days resting on the red tidal mud of the Anchorville beach. Her luck might have changed with the Crosbys, but Old Man Crosby doesn't believe in tempting Providence too much.

Clearing a Snarl



LARENCE DICKEY, fish merchant and vessel owner, shook the snow off his overcoat and thrust back the roller-top of his desk. As he overhauled the pile of letters and telegrams on the blotter, the corrugations of worry on his forehead seemed to advance until they reached the scanty patch of iron-gray hair at the back of his head.

“John,” he said to the clerk checking up a tally-sheet in the back office. “Jest take a shoot down th’ wharf an’ bring Cap’en Winslow up here. Hurry, now!”

When his son-in-law, oilskin-clad and rubbed-booted, swung into the office in the wake of the clerk, Dickey greeted him with ill-concealed anxiety in his voice.

“Well, Harry, are you goin’ to get away this afternoon?”

“I’ve jest been up to the Telegraph-Office now,” answered the other, throwing his oil-skin hat on the floor and flopping into a chair. “Bulletin ain’t promisin’ much for t’morrow. Heavy no’west winds an’ snow. Glass down to twenty-nine three. No fishn’ weather, Mr. Dickey.”

The old gentleman stamped in vexation and scanned the correspondence on the desk.

“Good land, Harry!” he almost shouted. “This’ll never do! Here’s jest a bare week to Lent an’ not a pound of fish have I in th’ whole place. Look at these orders! Look at these telegrams! An’ all howlin’ for fish.”

“Here’s a four-thousand-pound order from Cassidy—says if I don’t fill his orders he’ll take all his business away from me. Here’s a wire from Collins an’ Hazen wantin’ t’ know right away if I kin fill their bill.

“Four o’ them telegrams are from Zigler Fish Company—our best customers—wantin’ t’ know when I’m shippin’ their stuff. I wouldn’t want t’ lose their custom; but what kin I do? There ain’t been a vessel in with a trip for a week now an’ none o’ th’ boat-fishermen hev made a set for a fortnight——”

“We don’t make th’ weather, Mr. Dickey,” interrupted Winslow calmly.

“I know that,” fumed the merchant peultantly. “But if I don’t fill these orders, I might as well shut up shop, for all this business’ll go to the Bay Shore Fish Company.”

The fishing skipper regarded a large office calendar thoughtfully.

“I wouldn’t worry about that, Mr. Dickey,” he said, after a pause. “Th’ Bay Shore Comp’ny ain’t any better off. They can’t git any fish themselves ——”

“Oh, can’t they?” interposed Dickey. “Well, Harry, that’s jest where you’re makin’ a mistake, for I happen t’ know that they’re getting a vessel in very soon——”

“Who’s th’ man?” ejaculated the other in surprise.

“Fred Hanson in the *Minnehaha*, answered the merchant with a sigh. “I happened t’ be up in th’ telegraph office when Hanson wired in from Cobtown to th’ Company, and I managed t’ get a glimpse o’ th’ wire. Says he has fifty thousand o’ fish aboard an’ he’s offerin’ it to them at three cents. They’ll give it to him, an’ be glad to get his trip.”

Winslow whistled.

“Oho! So he’s got fifty thousand, has he? An’ he’s a-goin’ t’ break his contract with you for th’ sake of an extra quarter of a cent. Nice kind of a swab he is!”



DICKEY nodded.

“That’s the way of the world,” he said. “Hanson’s been selling to me all Winter—I made a contract with him—an’ now he gives me th’ go-by when I need his fish th’ most.”

Swinging around in his chair, he laid his hand upon the skipper’s oil-coated shoulder.

“Harry!” he said slowly. “These people are out to break me. They’ve been after Hanson all Winter, an’ he’s gone to them at last. Contracts ain’t worth a cuss unless they’re made by a man that kin keep his word.

“I’m in a fix—a bad fix. I didn’t cal’late we’d git sich a run o’ bad weather, an’ I promised all these people that I’d fill their orders for Lent. I want to extend my business, an’ I had a chance o’ makin’ a big thing, for all these Western dealers promised t’ give me their orders.

“If Hanson hadn’t gone back on me, I c’d ha’ filled th’ most o’ these bills, but as things are now, I’m afraid I’m goin’ t’ be hard hit, an’ th’ Bay Shore Company’ll jest step in an’ capture all th’ trade I’ve bin years a-buildin’ up.”

Winslow pursed his lips and when he spoke there was a steely ring in his voice.

“What price kin you offer my gang for a trip?”

“Harry, ef ye’ll risk makin’ a trip for me, ye kin sell me all ye kin bring in for three an’ a half cents a pound—haddock, cod, hake, cusk, an’ all — steak or

scrod—I'll make no cull. You'll get that, an' not a cent less."

The skipper nodded and the merchant waited on tenter-hooks for his answer. It was blowing a gale outside,—spualls and snow-storms—and the weather had been bad for almost two weeks. All the Anchorville fleet were in port or at anchor in shelter-harbors waiting for the weather to moderate. In consequence, with the great fish demand for Lenten season, prices were high and dealers desperate. Fishing in such weather was risky work, and Dickey knew that he was asking his son-in-law to take a big chance.

Winslow thought it over, too; thought of his wife and baby; thought of his men and their wives and families. Winslow knew exactly what he would be up against as soon as he hauled outside Anchorville Heads, while the fish merchant did not.

"What do ye say, Harry?" queried the other hesitatingly. "Will you take a chance? I—I—I'll look after Isabel an' th' boy ef anything should happen —"

He paused awkwardly.

"'Tain't them so much," replied Winslow slowly. "It's th' men. You know what'll happen ef I lose any o' them in th' dories? You know what it is t' have a man's wife an' kids a comin' to you an' sayin' ye threw their father's life away? An' all for to fill a dealer's order! Cuss them an' their telegrams! But—I'll go!"

Dickey wrung the young skipper's hand silently.



THE snow lay deep on the *Isabel Winslow's* decks when the skipper jumped aboard of her. In the rigging the nor'west gale howled a mournful note. Below, in cabin and forecastle, the gang were loafing or overhauling gear. When the

skipper swung down the cabin gangway. Jimmy Thomas looked up from the pile of gangings he was hitching, and inquired,

“What’s th’ bulletin, skipper?”

“Nawthin’ promisin’,” replied Winslow. “Same old thing—more snow, more blow.”

“Cal’late we won’t go out to-day then,” remarked a man, hooking up a tub of trawl.

“You’re cal’latin’ wrong,” answered Winslow with a smile. “Th’ sooner we git out, th’ more money we’ll make. I’ve th’ promise o’ three an’ a half cents a pound ef we git in before February fifth. To-day’s th’ twenty-fifth o’ January, an’ ef we’re goin’ t’ draw them share-checks, we’d better be movin’.”

“Dirty weather, skipper,” said a man, shaking his head ominously.

“Aye, it’s dirty enough, I won’t deny.” returned the skipper. “But th’ fish are on Brown’s Bank, an’ Brown’s is jest a good hundred an’ fifty miles from where we are now. I cal’late we’d better git a bit nearer them.

“We’ll h’ist away at four o’clock, so thar’s plenty o’ time t’ take yer dunnage ashore. I won’t get sore on any man that wants t’ quit, but Fred Hanson’s lyin’ into Cobtown Harbor with fifty thousand an’ he’s leavin’ Clarence Dickey in th’ lurch by breakin’ his contract an’ sellin’ to th’ Bay Shore concern. Dickey has always treated us pretty white an’ I cal’late th’ least we kin do is t’ help him out now.”

II



WINSLOW kicked the snow out off his boots and stepped quietly into the bedroom.

“Is he asleep?” he whispered.

Mrs. Winslow drew aside the curtains of the cradle and gazed into the downy blankets where

the first and only scion of the Winslow house lay with his eyes screwed tight in the slumber of babyhood.

“Yes, he’s knockin’ out a reg’lar lay-off calk, Isabel,” said the skipper softly, as he bent over the basket-bed. “Lord, but he’s a hound, ain’t he, sweetheart? Listen to th’ snore of him! Jest like an’ ol’ trawler after a straight night an’ day set. Oh, but he’s a boy, an’ a half, dear, an’ I’m sure sorry to leave you both.”

As he stooped over the cradle, a drop of chilly water fell from his oilskins on to the little chubby arm which lay over the blanket. There was a movement in the woolly nest, and a pair of blue eyes opened slowly and blinked at the light.

“Lordy, Isabel, I’ve woke him up!”

And Harry smiled quizzically at his wife.

“Yes, you’ve woke him up,” returned Mrs. Winslow with a laugh. “Come in here and drown the poor dear with all the drippings of those fishy oil-clothes of yours.”

She stooped down and lifted the baby out.

“Look, dearie! Papa’s going away. Say good-by!”

The youngster stretched out a chubby fist and crowed. The blue eyes wandered all over the great yellow-clad figure before him. Under the sou’wester he recognized a familiar face.

“Oo!”

The tiny pink fingers closed on his father’s uplifted hand.

“See him, Isabel!” cried he delightedly. “He’s shakin’ hands. Feel th’ grip of him! He’s closin’ on my finger like a squid. A grip like a trawl-hauler he has, by gosh! Ain’t he th’ deuce an’ all, Isabel? Good-by, sonny!”

And he whipped the oilskin hat from his head and kissed the little squirming, chuckling bundle nestling in his mother's arms.

The baby restored to the cradle again, crowing delightedly, Winslow turned away with a queer feeling in his throat. Through the window he could see the whirling snow and a vista of bleak water beyond. Cold, harsh, cruel it seemed; bitter, bleak, sere. He felt the thick carpet under his heavily booted feet; felt the comforting warmth of his home, and sniffed at the perfumed air of the apartment. Then he turned to go with a sigh, while his pretty wife followed him to the door.

Heedless of his streaming clothes, she threw her arms around his neck, and her voice choked with sobs.

"Oh, Harry, must you go? Can't you give up this trip? Never mind father! What is his business compared to the wives and children of the men who toil for him?"

The young skipper placed his hands upon her shoulders and smiled.

"Sweetheart!" he said. "If all fishermen were to think thataway—there'd be no fishin'. Pshaw! what's a little weather, anyhow? Lordy, sweetheart, we'll go out in this an' be as snug as a bug in a rug. Good warm bunks, plenty to eat, an' an able vessel what kin stand anythin'. Gosh! Fishin' ain't as bad as you women think it is——"

"But look what some of the vessels have gone through lately."

"Fishermen's yarns," answered her husband assuringly. "Biggest liars on earth is fishermen. They tell them yarns so's t' git bigger prices an' t' keep down competiton. Don't want everybody goin' a-fishin', so they make out it's a hard life. Well, good-by,

dearie. Take good care o' th' boy. Lordy, I wouldn't lose him for all th' fish in th' sea!"

And squaring his shoulders, he stepped out into the whirling snow. Butting his head into the storm, he plowed along the road.

"What a dog's life we live," he murmured. "Yes, a dog's life! Leave a home like that—clean, cozy, warm an' comfortable, to herd in a vessel's dirty cabin with gurry-stinks an' bilge.

"Well, th' whole of us is in th' same boat. They've all got nice homes themselves, an' wives an' children—wives that love them. An' yet they've got t' leave them same as me. Whew, ain't she breezin' some!"

He swung down the wharf murmuring. "Aye, a good wife is a sailor's sheet-anchor."

III



THE *Isabel Winslow's* gang had discussed the situation from all points of view while their skipper was uptown, and all had made their decisions. Winslow stepped into the office for a moment to fix up a little business, and then jumped aboard the vessel.

Shoving back the foc'sle slide, he sung out: "All up below! Get under way!"

Having passed the word, he went down aft and repeated the command to the cabin gang.

The men were still there. Silently they pulled on boots, mittens and oilskins, while the skipper sat smoking on the locker, wondering who had gone ashore.

"All ready, skipper!" cried Jimmy Thomas from the deck.

Winslow jumped up the companion and glanced over the gang stamping around the snow-laden decks.

"Who went ashore?" he inquired.

The men stared at each other in wonder.

"Nobody's gone," answered old Jimmy. "All th' gang's here."

Winslow was pleased.

"Bully boys!" he cried. "Now trice up your jib. Loose fores'l an' jumbo, an' pass some extra stops around th' mains'l here. Get th' boom inboard an' put th' crotch tayckles on it. It ain't blowin' a zepher outside so get your ridin'-sail out an' bent on. We'll need some after-sail t' carry us out past th' Heads."

The gang went cheerfully about the work of getting ready for sea. They wrestled the frozen canvas out of the stops with mittened fists, cursefully declaiming the weather with lurid oaths. There was no one on the dock to see them go; in the dark of a Winter's evening they hoisted foresail, jumbo and riding-sail to the spite of the nor'wester, and streaked across the harbor, with Winslow at the wheel.

As they shot clear of the wharves, he turned for a brief instant to gaze up at the windows of his home. There was a light in the bedroom, and the young skipper knew that all he held most dear were together in the apartment.

"God keep them both," he murmured, and there was an iron ring in his voice as he sung out to the gang:

"Stand by your jumbo tail-rope! Lay aft, some of you, to th' ridin'-sail. Now then! Ha-a-rd alee!"

The schooner tacked out of the harbor in the darkness and whirling snow.

The cook's whistle shrilled out for the "first half" when the occulting flash of Lower Anchorville Head came abeam, but Winslow stopped the men as they were about to troop below for supper.

"Not yet, fellers," he said. "Stand by till we get out in the bay."

It was as well they did so, for as soon as they shot from out the lee of the land, the nor'wester hit in and the vessel rolled down until the lee rail went under.

The skipper eased her up.

"Lord, what a breeze!" he said, and he let her fall off again until the lower dead-eyes of the rigging tore through the creaming water. It was wild driving, and when an extra hard puff hit her she rolled down until sheer-poles and half the deck disappeared from sight. The men hung to the windward rail and rigging, while the cook, dismayed at the smashing up of all the table-gear spread for supper, clambered up the ladder and cursed sinfully.

"Holy sailor!" bawled Jimmy Thomas, standing lee wheel with the skipper. "There's some heft to this."

Winslow nodded, but there was no easing up of the iron grip which kept the wheel over.



SPRAY slashed over them in stinging sheets. The snow, driving before the gale, blinded all eyes which peered to windward and outlined the plunging schooner in ghostly whiteness. A terrible cresting sea was running. The roar of it mingled with the shriek of the wind and drowned all other sounds.

As the vessel hauled off the land, she started scooping the seas aboard and the men hung to the weather rigging and between the dories. It was no joke now. The wild manner in which the gallant schooner was plunging and driving, began to frighten a few of the more timid fishermen. It was unnatural, this leaping, storming swing, and every timber in the vessel seemed to twist with the shock of the combers striking on the bow.

Winslow leaned over and shouted in Thomas's ear:

“Leave t’ wheel. Get th’ gang—aft. Take—ridin’—sail—in.”

And as old Jimmy clawed his way along the weather side of the house, the skipper eased the helm down. With canvas cracking and flapping in the wind, and the spray flying through the air like hail, the able vessel curtsied to the foam-topped surges, while a troop of streaming, oiled-up figures scrambled aft.

“Come along there!” roared Winslow as he watched the riding-sail flapping with thunderous reports. “Get her down! Some o’ you to th’ sheet here—Ah! Watch out! Blazes, she’s adrift!”

With the tremendous slatting of the sail, the mousing came off the hook of the lower sheet-block and it slipped out of the ring-bolt in the deck. Whirling the heavy blocks around, the riding-sail gave another cannon-like snap and, parting the tack-rope, stripped the hoops and streamed overhead, held only by the throat halyards.

“Get her in!” bawled Winslow. “Grab th’ sheet, some o’ you! Torment! Th’ mast’ll go. Jump for’ard an’ slack th’ foresheet! Quick! I’ll run her off!”

Henderson and Burk jumped to do his bidding. The others watched the jerking masthead with fascinated eyes, while above them the ribboning riding-sail flapped and snapped like a flag.

“Sheet’s started!” yelled a voice from for’ard.

Winslow swung the helm up.

“Stand by to grab that sail when it comes down!” he ordered.

And as the schooner swung up before the gale, the fractious canvas swooped into the sea alongside, while the gang snatched at it with biting oaths and hauled it aboard.

“All flapped t’ ribbons, I cal’late?”

“Aye, skipper, she’s purty well tattered, an’ all th’ hoops hev gone over th’ side.”

Winslow laughed.

“Well, fellers, get th’ jumbo down an’ tied up. We’ll run under the fores’l—she’ll make better weather o’ this breeze now. I had t’ git her well clear o’ th’ land afore I swung her off. Whose wheel is it?”

“Mine, I cal’late,” answered a man.

“Here you are, then. Sou’west by west. Now, you first-table crowd, let’s go an’ see what th’ cook has for us. I cal’late he’ll be for raisin’ trouble with me for givin’ her that little roll-down a while ago.”

The cook was profane in his comments when the first-table gang piled down the ladder, but being cook on a fisherman, he was pretty well used to the consequences of sail-carrying in a breeze. The vessel, now running before the wind and sea, was practically on an even keel, though she did some awful fore-and-aft swooping as she topped the big Fundy seas, while the forecastle resounded with the roar of the bow-wave and the creaking of straining timbers.

The men, oblivious to everything but their supper, gulped down mugs of steaming tea and dived into the great enamel pots of stew with hearty gusto, gossiping as they ate. Idle talk is peculiar to fishermen and, as a rule, not much credit is given it; but Winslow, seated at the after end of the table, paused for a moment to listen to the shouting conversation of two or three men sitting by the pawl-post.



“AYE,” one man was saying. “Fred Hanson is a proper swab. I know him, and ef I was Jim Roxton I’d cut th’ heart out of him with a shack-knife. Any man what hangs around a married woman is no man at all, an’ thar’s what Hanson is doin’ all th’ time.”

“But Jim Roxton’s woman was allus a flighty one,” interposed another. “I wouldn’t trust her th’ length o’ a gangin’. Jim warn’t married to her but three months afore she was sparkin’ aroun’ with other men when he was to sea, an’ all Cobtown knows it.”

“D’ye think Roxton knows it?”

“It’s hard t’ say. He’s fishin’ out o’ Gloucester with that knockabout o’ his an’ he don’t come home very often. An awful quiet, decent feller is Jim—”

“Who’s that you fellers are a scandalizin’ of?” cried Winslow, laying down his mug.

A black-whiskered trawler replied:

“Dexter here was tellin’ about Fred Hanson’s goin’s-on with Mrs. Roxton. Hanson’s forever shootin’ in to Cobtown t’ see her when Roxton is away an’ th’ hull town is talkin’ about it——”

“D’ye mean th’ Roxton what is skipper o’ th’ *Georgie Graham*—a Gloucester knockabout?”

“Yep! that’s th’ feller. Married one o’ them Ellis girls from Green Cove. She’s a good looker, they say, but I allus h’ard she wasn’t t’ be trusted.”

Winslow gave a grunt and his lips curled in contempt.

“Fred Hanson, eh?” he muttered grimly, and he thought of the days when he, too, had a round turn with Hanson. “Huh! th’ more I hear o’ that feller th’ more I’m convinced that he’s a blackguard. His word ain’t worth a cuss an’ he’s chasin’ after married men’s wives. Th’ swab! He’ll get all that’s comin’ to him some fine day.”

And he buttoned on his oil jacket and hat and swung up on deck.

The man at the wheel greeted him anxiously.

“Skipper,” said he, and in the light from the binnacle his face was worried, “she’s takin’ charge o’ me. I can’t steer her in this sea an’ I’m scart I’ll jibe her.”

“Let your dory-mate take th’ wheel, then.”

“Not on your life!” came from the watch-mate standing lookout on top of the house. “I had her for about five minutes an’ she’s got *my* goat.”

Winslow laughed.

“Hand her over, Anson. I’ll relieve you. Go down for’ard an’ git your supper.”

Under the foresail the schooner stormed through the night while the wind howled in the halyards and rigging of the canvas-denuded mainmast, and spray and snow made the deluged decks an inferno of wintry spite. The wind seemed to be increasing. With the turn of the tide at midnight there would be a raging inferno on the waters—the whirling maelstrom of wind-and-tide-whipped sea peculiar to the Bay of Fundy.

Winslow knew it, but as he strained at the wheel of the plunging schooner he allowed his thoughts to wander to the neat little cottage overlooking Anchorville Bay.

“Her an’ th’ boy’ll be asleep now, I cal’late. Lord Harry, but he’s a boy! Th’ wee blue eyes of him—clear as a Summer sky! An’ th’ strength of him! Gosh, I kin feel th’ grip o’ them little fists o’ his aroun’ my finger yet. An’ t’ see him sleepin’ curled up in them woolly blankets! ’Tis jest a picture—yes! Jest like what ye see in them ladies’ magazines th’ wife gets.”

The vessel drove her bowsprit into a comber and the windlass disappeared. Winslow spoked the wheel over as the sea roared aft and creamed around his boot-tops.

“Aha!” he muttered. “Tide’s turnin’.”

And continuing his previous thoughts he crooned a song and thought of home, of the joy and peacefulness of it all. When his mind wandered to Hanson

and Roxton's wife, he gripped the spokes as if he were gripping the throat of the man who was wrecking probably just such a home as his.

IV



BOTH gangs, fore and aft, were lounging below, oiled up and ready for a call. The *Isabel Winslow* was bucking the tide-rips. Overhead the decks resounded with the thunder of boarding seas, while through the ventilator, skylight and half-opened slides poured streams of chilly brine. Winslow was steering, lashed to the wheel, while on the house the two dory-mates whose watch it was clung with arms passed through the stops of the furled mainsail.

“Wa-a-tch out!” yelled one of the men.

The vessel poised on a crest, then dived into a black wall of roaring surge which buried her clean to the tops of the nested dories. Thundering aft it came, and the skipper clung to the spokes while the sea plucked at his body and tried to drag him over the taffrail.

“Scott!” he cried when the water sluiced off. “That one was a brute. Get the gang up, Dexter, and reef that fores'l. She's down by th' head.”

The men turned out, nerved for action. Winslow roared his commands.

“Ye'll have t' reef her runnin'. I ain't a goin' t' risk bringin' her to, an' I doubt ef she'd come anyway. Slack away on your halyards until ye get th' reef-band well down an' some o' you tail on to that gaff-downhaul. Look out she don't jibe, but I'll watch her all I can.”

He remained aft at the wheel, easing the vessel by every trick of steering he knew. Anxiously straining his eyes into the darkness ahead, he tried to make out

what the gang were doing. Another sea came aboard. The foresail gave a thunderous flap and fetched up with a shock on the jibing gear; and when the water streamed over the quarter, Winslow listened with his heart in his mouth for the ominous hail of "Man overboard!"

It did not come, however. As to his ears there came snatches of lurid Bank cursing, he knew that all was well. Swearing helped a lot that night. In spite of the fact that all of the panting, perspiring men struggling with the reef-ear-ring of a sheet-iron double-ought foresail full of wind, were in immediate danger of instant precipitation before their Maker, their language abated not a whit in vigor and intensity.

"Up she goes!" came the chorus from for'ard, and sluiced in spray, the gang swayed up throat, peak and jigs.

Jimmy Thomas clawed his way aft.

"All serene-o skipper!" he bawled.

Winslow nodded.

"Take th' wheel, Jimmy. I'm a goin' t' shoot her in through th' Gull Island Passage an' git out o' this howlin' drink."

Hoisting himself on the main sheer-pole he scanned the blackness to port.

"H'm," he muttered as the vessel rose on a sea. "One, two, three, four—one, two, three, four, five. Four flashes and an interval of five seconds. That's Gull Island." Scrambling aft he shouted:

"Stand by to jibe your fores'l. Git th' tackle on an' let her go easy! Ready? Let her come, Jimmy!"

Crash! the short boom went over, and the vessel swung in for the land.

In twenty minutes they had stormed through the passage and were gliding along in comparatively smooth water. It was two in the morning, but none

of the men had turned in. They were in the act of casting off their oilskins, when the skipper roused them out again. Anathematizing the luck that sent a man Winter-fishing, they climbed on deck.

“Reef th’ mains’l an’ set it. Give her th’ jumbo when you’re ready.”

When the extra sail had been hoisted, they stood up and down the bay in the lee of the land.



ABOUT four o’clock the snow ceased and the sky cleared. Overhead the stars blinked with the frosty shine of a Winter’s night. When Winslow came on deck after a short nap, the lookout pointed with a mittened hand to the port light of a vessel on their weather quarter.

“That feller hez bin splittin’ tacks with us fur th’ last hour’n a half.”

“Who is he?” inquired the skipper with a show of interest. “Ain’t Hanson’s *Minnehaha*, is it?”

“No,” answered the man. “It ain’t any of our fleet—neither Anchorville or Cobtown. She’s a lump of a vessel—knock-about, I think.”

“Hum.”

The skipper bestowed a casual glance upon the vessel to windward.

“Some o’ them Maine haddockers from Sou’west Harbor or Vinal Haven, I cal’late. Huggin’ th’ land for shelter.” He whistled a music-hall ditty as he glanced at the sky.

“Clearin’ up,” he remarked. “Get a good shoot down to Brown’s if th’ wind don’t chop aroun’—Why, that joker’s an auxiliary! What’s he got his engine a-goin’ for?”

The putt-putt of a gasoline engine came stuttering over the water from the knock-about, and as they watched her, the two sidelights showed.

“Where’s he a-goin’?” queried the helmsman, “He’s bearin’ down on our quarter.”

“Want’s t’ speak us, maybe. Hold her as she is.”

They watched the other vessel looming nearer; watched her come within a cable’s length, and then the side-lights vanished.

“Well, what d’ye make o’ that?” cried the lookout. “He’s doused his lights——”

“By th’ Lord Harry!” cried the skipper in astonishment. “He’s comin’ right slap for us—— Hi-i-o! you crazy loon! Sheer off or you’ll ram us.”

The staccato exhaust of the motor was plainer now. The mystified watchers on the *Isabel Winslow* could see the ghostly loom of the other craft’s sails close aboard. There was no doubt of the intention, unless the crowd on the knockabout were playing some foolish practical joke.

“Up with th’ helm,” yelled Winslow as he jumped to the main-sheet.

The booms swept over and fetched up on the jibing gear with a terrific crash—it was still blowing hard—as the other vessel surged past their stern.

“You crazy swab!” roared Winslow, shaking his fist at the lonely figure at the knockabout’s wheel. “I’ll knock the stuffin’ out of you if you try that stunt again.”

Round swept the knockabout with the crash and shock of jibing booms, and with engine going she came for the *Winslow* again.

“Well, what d’ye know about that?” ejaculated the skipper. “That feller’s gone crazy, an’ means t’ sink us! Call th’ gang——”

But there was no need to call them. The shock of the jibing booms had fetched them out all standing. They piled on deck with a rush, gasping in astonishment.

“Douse all the lights!” cried Winslow “Gimme th’ wheel, you!”

He grasped the spokes and watched the other vessel bearing down on them again.

“To th’ main- an’ fore-sheets there. Stand by your jumbo.”

While the gang scattered to stations, he watched the auxiliary with fascinated eyes. Both vessels were rushing through the water at a fair clip, but the knockabout with her engine going could sail two feet to the *Isabel Winslow’s* one, besides being able to maneuver quickly independent of the wind. Down she stormed with the white water creaming from under her bows and driving ahead to strike the fleeing schooner dead amidships.

The perspiration poured from Winslow’s face as he saw the pursuer relentlessly swooping down.

“Main-sheet!” he roared as he ground the helm up. “Slack away fore and aft!”

Crash! the main-boom flew across the deck. As it fetched up on the sheet, the mainmast wavered for an instant and thundered down, splintered the rail into matchwood and, thumping and grinding alongside, threatened to stave in the whole quarter.

The knockabout had swashed past and was rounding up to leeward, while the *Winslow’s* gang screamed incoherent curses at her and waited for the next move. Winslow was taken completely aback. He expected to wake up and find it all a disagreeable dream. For a vessel deliberately to try to ram another! Pah! It was unheard of! He rubbed his eyes to see if he were awake.

The mainmast with the mainsail and booms was still over the side grinding and banging in the seaway, while the knockabout came up under their lee quarter.

"Hey there, Hanson!" came a voice across the heaving surge. "I ain't through with ye yet——"

"Hanson? Hanson?" ejaculated Winslow dully. "Can that be——"

"By th' ol' flamin' blazes!" cried Jimmy Thomas. "That's Jim Roxton an' th' *Georgie Graham!*"

The knockabout was returning to the charge. As it sped past the *Winslow's* stern to deliver a drive from windward, the men yelled:

"Hey, Jim Roxton! This ain't Hanson—*Isabel—Winslow!*"



AS THEY shouted the name, the other craft came into the wind and lay rolling in the swell with engine stopped. The figure at her wheel shoved back the cabin slide. Men poured forth on her decks.

"Hi-i!" roared a voice. "Skipper's gone crazy!"

"Stand by us till daylight!" cried Winslow, and an affirmative chorus came back from the other vessel.

Heaving the vessel to the wind under foresail, they got torches alight, and in the glare of them cut the wreckage clear of the side. The mainsail and gaff were hauled aboard. The boom and the remains of the mainmast were made fast to a stout rope and veered out astern.

"Th' spring-stay must ha' been strained when th' ridin'-sail went last night," said the skipper when the work was done. "Th' stick 'ud never ha' jumped otherwise. Now, launch a dory, some of you, an' pull me over to that cussed tub t' wind'ard."

A big red-faced man met them as they tumbled over the knockabout's lee rail.

"Cap'en Winslow, eh? Too bad about this night's work. Cal'late our skipper's gone loony. Comes on deck last night after startin' up the engine, an' he

locks th' hull gang of us in th' cabin an' foc'sle. We c'd hear him swearin' away at ye, thinkin' ye was this feller Hanson what has been monkeyin' aroun' with his wife—— Yes, he h'ard about it in Sou'west Harbor——”

“Why didn't ye stop the engine?” inquired Winslow.

“So we did,” hastily replied the man, “but we didn't think about that at first. D'ye want t' see th' skipper? He's in his berth——”

“Yes, I'll go an' see him,” growled the other. “I'd like t' wring his infernal neck for th' time he's given me with his goings-on.”

Winslow's rage vanished when he entered the cabin, and through the open door of the stateroom saw the haggard face of Roxton. He was sitting on his sea-chest with his elbows on his knees and his hands clasping his head. The men loafing around in the cabin respectfully drew away when Winslow entered.

“I suppose you've come over to have it out with me?” said Roxton harshly. “I don't blame you, but it was a mistake—a mistake, and I'm sorry.”

The young skipper stepped into the berth and laid his hand upon the other man's shoulder.

“No, old man, I ain't a goin' t' say a word, for I take it ye didn't know what ye were doin'. Cheer up; things ain't so bad when daylight comes an' th' sun is shinin'.”

Roxton looked up.

“You know—— of course you know! Everbody knows. Th' swine! I'll kill him an' her too!” He gritted his teeth.

“I made a mistake,” he continued more calmly. “I was up to th' signal station on Gull Island thar an' th' keeper told me that Fred Hanson had come up through th' Passage last night, but th' no'wester

druv him back. I didn't cal'late that there'd be any other vessel but his aroun' here in sich weather, so when I met you standin' up an' down th' Bay, I took you for Hanson's semi-knockabout—ye're both of a build—an' I was out t' git him. I'm sorry for what I've done, but if that feller was out thar now I'd chase him clean t' Georges for th' pleasure o' drivin' my vessel's bows into his! I'll cut him down to his bootstraps——”

“Sh!” cautioned Winslow. “Brace up, man! I want ye t' give me a tow into Cobtown, an' we'll say nawthin' about this day's work. Ye shouldn't fret about things. Come on—get under way an' I'll pass ye a line. 'Tis only a forty-mile pluck.”

Captain Roxton shook Winslow's hand. Getting a grip upon his feelings, he took command again.

Back on the *Isabel Winslow* they roused the fishing-hawser over the bows, and the *Georgie Graham*, with engine chugging and sails full to the wintry breeze, dragged the partly dismasted fisherman along the coast.

Winslow paced the quarter thinking of many things. Fishing was not to be thought of with a new mainmast to get. He pictured Clarence Dickey's chagrin when he heard the news of the accident. It was hard—very hard—but whose fault was it? As he turned the problem over in his mind, he came to the root of things.

“Humph!” he muttered grimly. “I think I kin chalk this up to Hanson's account.”

V



IT WAS a hard drag into Cobtown, but at nightfall they lurched in past the lighthouse and into the harbor. There were a number of fishermen lying to anchor off the channel—storm-bound, waiting for a chance to shoot outside for a

day's fishing. The *Georgie Graham* dragged her charge well into the harbor before both came to an anchor.

Winslow had just gone below to change his clothes for going ashore, when the skipper of the knockabout clattered down the companion. There was a tense look on his face as he picked his way among the trawlers lounging around the stove over to Winslow's stateroom.

"Slide th' door, Ca'pen," he said, and Winslow, wondering, acceded.

"He's in here," rasped Roxton. "Lyin' above us."

"Who? Hanson?"

"Aye, Hanson!"

His face reflected the intensity of his emotions as he mentioned the hated name.

"What are ye goin' t' do?" whispered Winslow.

"Keep a grip on yerself an' don't do anything rash."

The other smiled grimly.

"Don't worry, Winslow," he said. "I've thought it all over. I'll keep *her* well under my lee in future, but I'm goin' t' dress *him* down afore we're much older. D'ye suppose he's aboard his vessel?"

"I can't say."

The other nodded.

"Well, I'll take a chance, but I want ye t' come over with me. I want ye t' stand by. Will ye come?"

Winslow hesitated. He did not care to mix into an affair like this, but as he thought it over his scruples vanished. Yes, he would go.

A few minutes later, both skippers leaped over the *Minnehaha's* rail. There was a light in the cabin. Roxton peered under the companion.

"He's there," he muttered grimly. Down the ladder both men clattered.

Hanson was in the act of shaving when they entered. At the sight of Roxton's grim face appearing in

the cabin mirror, he dropped the razor to the floor. There were three other men in the cabin. On recognizing the visitors they discreetly went on deck.

"Draw th' slide, boys," said Roxton as they climbed the ladder. He turned and faced the man before him.

"Well, Hanson," rasped the *Georgie Graham's* skipper, as stern-eyed and grim, he surveyed the fat, swarthy face of the man he was addressing. "Sprucin' up, eh? Goin' ashore t' see her, eh? Havin' a deuce of a time when I'm to sea?"

The other's dark face flushed. In his trepidation he wiped the lather off his half-shaven chin.

"I—I—don't know what you're a-drivin' at," he stuttered, avoiding Roxton's steely gaze and fingering the soap-brush nervously.

Roxton laughed. It was not a nice laugh to listen to. Winslow stood by the gangway inwardly wishing he were anywhere else.

"You don't know!" sneered Roxton after an awkward pause. "Well, I cal'late I know, an' you an' me'll have it out afore we leave this cabin. *You* don't know! Why every trawler aroun' th' coast hez bin makin' foc'sle-talk o' your name an' hers. Pretty thing for a man t' hear all Glo'ster a scandalizin' his wife. Eh? You sweep!"

Hanson fidgeted uneasily but said nothing while the other continued:

"Now, my bucko, you're agoin' t' have it out with Mary Roxton's husband. Stand out, you skunk!"

Stepping forward he fetched Hanson a blow in the face with his shut fist.

"You struck me!" sputtered Hanson, leaping at his assailant, his black eyes burning with rage.

"Yes!" hissed Roxton, "an' I'll strike ye a good many times afore I'm through!"

Smack! His left caught Hanson on the jaw and knocked him against the bulkhead.



THE details are brutal. Even Winslow, calmly looking on, shuddered at the primitive savagery which seemed to possess the wronged fisherman. He was relentless and powerful; after he had broken down Hanson's fistic opposition, he smashed the other with unmerciful hands. Outside, all was silent. In the cabin the two men panted and fought in the feeble light from the binnacle-lamp. Around and around the stove they went; Hanson whining and retiring, and Roxton advancing, savage and vengeful. He never allowed his victim a breathing-moment, but drove and smashed until Hanson's face streamed blood and the very fat seemed to ooze out on his skin.

"You dog! You swab! You squirmin' rat!" Every invective meant a blow.

Hanson's breath was coming in hoarse gasps. He staggered around the room. Two or three times he cast around for a means of escape, but Winslow barred the only exit. Realizing that he was trapped he collapsed, breathing heavily, upon a locker, while Roxton stood over him with a saturnine smile.

"Think I'm through with ye?" drawled the other with hideous irony in his voice. "Think I'll let ye alone? No! I'll make ye lick th' gurry off'n my boots afore I leave ye! Get down an' do it, you bloody-eyed fly-by-night! Down an' lick my boots, you whinin' dog!"

He smashed Hanson in the face again.

"Are ye goin' t' beg my pardon? No?"

Another sickening blow.

"Beg my pardon!"

The voice was as harsh as the grate of a file. The fist was drawn back for another drive at the niddered, whimpering heap of humanity cowering on the locker. Smack! the fist shot out. Hanson fell back knocked out.

"I'll fetch him around," growled Roxton.

He reached for a dory-jar and emptied the contents over his victim's bruised and bloody face.

"Hadn't ye better let him be?" cried Winslow. "Ye've given him enough——"

The other showed his teeth in a fierce smile.

"Oh, I won't kill him, Cap'en, but I ain't through with him yet. This is the only joy Ive known for days—aye, weeks—an' I c'd set to now an' beat that face o' his-n to a pulp. He's comin' 'round."

Hanson raised himself slowly, while the other drew back his fist and repeated the insistent demand.

"Beg my pardon!"

"I beg your pardon!" muttered the panting heap squatting on the seat.

"Down on your knees an' say it!"

The *Minnehaha's* skipper hesitated. Roxton's fist smashed him again.

"Down on your knees!"

Crying like a child, the swarthy, cock-sure, debonair Fred Hanson—devil of a fellow and all as he was—flopped to his knees and repeated the apology under the most degrading of all conditions.

"Now, then," said Roxton after his opponent had thrown himself on the locker. "That's you scored off my list. I'll cut a good stick on my way home an' settle up with the other one. She'll be a good, honest woman after I've done with her. Come on, Winslow let's leave this spineless dog. He couldn't carry guts to a bear."



WINSLOW turned to leave with a sigh of relief, when Hanson called them back. His features were swollen and streaked with blood. His shirt was hanging in rags on his shoulders.

"I've been punished," he said humbly. "I've paid for all I ever done, but I'll ask ye one favor—just one little favor——"

"What is it?" snarled Roxton.

“Don’t say anythin’ about this thing——”

“Huh!” snapped the other. “I’ll tell everybody I meet what a son of a dog you are an’ how I beat ol’ blazes out of ye——”

Hanson stretched out his hands.

“Winslow!” he said. “You ain’t got nawthin’ against me. Take my part an’ keep this thing quiet—I’ve never harmed you!”

The young skipper drew back.

“Th’ deuce you haven’t!” he cried. “Why, consarn, ye, I wouldn’t be here now ef it warn’t for you. Lord save me! I feel like hammerin’ ye myself for th’ scurvy trick you played Clarence Dickey.

“I had t’ leave for sea in a gale o’ wind an’ lost my mainm’st ’count o’ you—you an’ yer dodgin’, oily ways. How about th’ contract ye signed with Clarence for yer fish? Breakin’ it, ain’t ye? Selling to th’ Bay Shore people for a quarter-cent more, an’ turnin’ down a man what has always treated you square! I tell you what I’ll do——”

Hanson looked up hopefully.

“What?”

“You jest get your hook up with th’ next tide for Anchorville an’ run that fish to Clarence Dickey an’ we’ll say nawthin’ about this night’s work; but refuse an’ I’ll make it my business to queer you with every fisherman that ever hauled trawls on the Western Banks. I’ll tell ’em that ye ain’t th’ sand of a man, ner th’ soul of a man, an’ I’ll git Cap’en Roxton t’ back me up. What are ye goin’ t’ do?”

“I’ll stand out with th’ next tide for Anchorville, an’ Dickey’ll get my trip.”

They left him with a mutual feeling of relief.



CLARENCE DICKEY does not know, even to this day, how he got the *Minnehaha's* trip of fish. Nevertheless he was overjoyed to get it, especially when he heard that the *Isabel Winslow* had lost her mainmast in a gale and had to be towed into Cobtown to procure a new one. It must have been a season of violent weather on the water, for the *Minnehaha's* skipper came in with his face bruised through being knocked down by a sea. Fishermen spun queer yarns about a Captain Roxton and a fight, but fishermen's gossip is taken with a grain of salt.

Harry Winslow, skipper of the *Isabel Winslow*, jogging to dories on a fine Winter's day on Brown's, could have said many things. But he had broken into a domestic tragedy and preferred keeping what he knew to himself.

"It was savage," he would murmur as he twirled the wheel, "but I really believe—yes, I am certain—I would ha' done th' same myself. I wonder how Roxton and his wife are gettin' along?"

Stray Sheep



LICK JIMMY HAYNES, the Bayport shipping-master, was having a hard time with the crew of the Anchorville bark *Pole Star*. He had picked them up indiscriminately from the various boarding-houses in the large seaport town, and as the all-nation gang had cashed their advance notes, they had already absorbed a skinful of the liquid "rotgut" brewed for the non-critical consumption of sailormen outward bound.

Newly signed crews are notoriously hard subjects to handle. They regard the coming voyage as a sort of semi-voluntary imprisonment or slavery, and, with the few dollars they have and the short hours between signing on and going aboard their ship, they endeavor to drown sorrow in potent spirits. Though diplomatic in herding unruly crews for outward-bounders, Haynes could not stop them from having their last spree on the beach, and when a sailorman is half-seas-over he regards shipping-masters with an unfavorable eye.

Crossing the Bay of Fundy with his charges, en route to Anchorville where the bark was lying, the shipping-master had his feelings hurt in various ways. The *Pole Star's* crew, with studied insolence, designated him as a "sailor robber" and a "skipper lick-er," while others, in drunken confidences, pointed him out to awed passengers as the "biggest crimp on the coast."

His refusal to drink some of the arsenicated alcohols which the gang proffered him caused them to pass loud-voiced comments upon his general make-up and

that of his ancestors for a hundred years back. Though Slick Jimmy was annoyed, he found solace in the thought that the crowd were bound for the River Plate with Captain "Cleg" Kennedy—a "bully" skipper who could be relied upon to entertain his crew warmly on the passage to the south'ard.

"Yes," he murmured as he watched the dungaree and 'dog's wool' clad shellbacks who sprawled lazily over the steamer's forehatch, "they will git all that's comin' to them, th' sassy flatfeet. They won't have so much jaw an' guff when they git Cap Kennedy a-fannin' their thick skulls with a belayin' pin. He'll set 'em up good an' taut afore they sight the English Bank Lightship!"

While he was musing upon the gullibility of seafaring men in general, a hard-bitten rascal with one ear detached himself from the lounging mob and lurched over in his direction.

"Say!" he growled thickly. "Wot d'yer say th' name o' that bark was we've signed in? Y'know we ain't agoin' ter be bulldozed inter shippin' on some bloody nigger-drivin' Bluenose by any dam' sailor-snatcher that thinks we're a crowd of easy mugs. Now tell us again; wot d'yer say her name was?"

When Haynes had opened the articles, he was very particular not to let the crew know the name of the ship. He had reasons, good reasons, and when interrogated by One Ear, he smiled cynically and replied diplomatically:

"Why, my bully, I said her name was th' *Stella Polaris*—got that? *Stella Polaris* is her name an' British is her nation."

The sailor gave a drunken nod.

"Humph!" he grunted. "Dam' funny name for a limejuicer. Sounds ter me like a Dagoman, *St'lar P'laris!* I never h'ard o' her afore. Who's skipper?"

Slapping the man upon the back, Haynes answered breezily:

“Cap’n Cleghorn—as fine a man as ever trod a ship’s deck. Youse fellers’ll have a reg’lar picnic with him. He’s as easy with crews as a baby. Arternoon watch below; no nigger-driven’ an’ lots o’ grub. Ye’ll never wanter leave her, an’ when ye git back ye’ll be thankin’ me for shippin’ ye inter sich a snug, easy berth. Yes, siree! Ye’ll have th’ time o’ yer life on that bark!”

And with an enigmatical smile, the shipping-master turned away.



ARRIVING in Anchorville, he corralled his charges, and shouldering their bags they lurched down the gangplank and on to the wharf, singing maudlin chanteys.

“Follow me, bullies,” cried Haynes, “an’ I’ll soon put ye aboard o’ yer ocean palace.”

Leading the way down to the boat landing, he hailed a large motor-launch and ordered the sailors to pile in. The *Pole Star*, loaded to her to’gallant rail with a million feet of deals, rode to her anchor out in the Bay, and the sight of her caused the one-eared sailor to stiffen involuntarily.

“Slick” Jimmy noticed the man’s hesitation and with forced heartiness bade him tumble into the launch. The man still riveted his drunken gaze on the bark; a light of comprehension seemed to dawn on his face, and he turned on the shipping-master with a snarl.

“Wot d’yer say that craft’s uame was?” he growled pointing to the bark.

“Th’ *Stella Polaris*, my bully,” answered Haynes with evident perturbation. “Tumble in m’lad, an’ don’t keep th’ la’neh waitin’.”

With another glance at the *Stella Polaris*, the

sailor swung around on the shipping-master with an oath. "Ye're a liar!" he roared. "Blast me! that's th' *Pole Star*—a Novey Scoshey hell-ship, an' well I know her an' her bully skipper! Didn't I jest sling my hook from her in th' Boca v'yege afore last—from her an' her bully skipper? That's yer *St'lar P'laris* is it? Well, smell my fist, yuh swivel-eyed land-shark!"

With a terrific punch, One Ear smashed Haynes under the jaw and toppled him over the cap log into the dock, and with another glance at the bark, grabbed his bag and hoofed it up the wharf. In the excitement that followed, another man in the launch who had learned the name of the vessel quickly grabbed his dunnage and followed suit, while Haynes was being hauled, sputtering and cursing, out of the water.

Fortunately for the shipping-master, the others were too drunk to comprehend what had happened, and when Haynes rolled over the launch's rail, he yelled to the boatman to shove off and get out to the vessel as quickly as possible.

A few minutes later, a leathery-faced mate at the bark's starboard gangway tallied the thirteen non-descripts as they lurched aboard, while the saturnine, heavy browed Captain Kennedy listened to the shipping-master's oath-besprinkled account of the desertion of two members of his foremost gang.

"Waal, Mister Haynes," drawled the skipper when the aggrieved one finished his narration, "it's up to you to git them back or git a couple more hands by night. I've waited for a crew long enough and I mean to git out with the tide to-morrow morning or know the reason why. Git them back or git two others. I've paid you for them, so git them back or you and I will fall out!"

II.



YOUNG HARRY WINSLOW, skipper of the Anchorville fishing-schooner *Isabel Winslow*, had just run in from the Cape Shore and La Have with a fare of ninety thousand "shack." Unloading his catch, he had fresh ice under hatches and fresh grub in the booby hatch ready for the return trip. Jack Henderson and Wally Burke, members of the *Winslow's* crew, had spent a hard day in the hold pitching fish and stowing ice, and when the day's work was over they donned their shore toggery and decided to spend a quiet but happy evening ashore. Both had drawn their shares, and with a matter of fifty dollars apiece in their jeans they were feeling positively plutocratic.

"We'll jest drop inter th' picture show, Wally," said Henderson, "then we'll have a couple o' drinks with the boys up to Morrison's an' maybe a rack or two o' pool. We'll be gitting out in th' mornin', skipper says, so as long as we git aboard by twelve we'll git a four-hour snooze afore we h'ist th' mains'l."

Struggling with his collar, Burke nodded a dumb assent, and a few minutes later the two fishermen, smartly dressed in the latest cut suits, tan shoes and derbies, sallied ashore in search of a quiet evening's enjoyment.

The work in the hold had been hard, and the salt fish they had for supper had engendered a thirst, so the two dorymates could hardly be censured for fetching up and making their first berth at Jack's Saloon.

"It cert'nly beats hell what a thirst a man c'n raise on salt herrin'!" remarked Henderson as he tossed off a stiff caulker of whisky. "It shore does give a man a pow'ful thirst. I cal'late I'll have another, Wally."

Burke's sentiments were in accord, and together they absorbed some five thirst-quenchers when Skipper Winslow swung in.

"Hullo, fellers!" he greeted them. "I was jest lookin' for you. See'n don't git full up, boys. I'm goin' out with th' tide to-morrow mornin' at four an' ef you don't turn up, I won't wait."

"Come an' have one, Harry," cried Henderson, but Winslow declined with a laugh.

"Can't do it, boys," he said. "I'm a married man now, an' I've got to take the wife to the moving-pictures to-night. See'n git aboard early, fellers."

And the young skipper nodded to the loungers present and passed into the street.

"He's a great lad is Winslow," remarked Burke gravely. "As fine a skipper as ever swung a wheel, but ye don't want ter git him riled. He's th' devil an' all whin he's mad. Let's have another drink afore we go to th' show."

After a supper of salt herring, it was particularly unfortunate that a moving-picture film depicting the agonies of a prospector dying of thirst in Death Valley should have been thrown on the screen. The very sight of such a scene tended to fill Henderson's mouth with imaginary grit, while Burke declared with emphasis that he was expectorating cotton wool.

The agonies of the prospector were undergone in reality by the two fishermen, and when the hero of the picture play rode off to the rescue with a huge water-skin and a long-necked bottle in his saddle holsters, the strain was too much. Hoarsely excusing themselves, the two worthies arose at the end, and with but one thought in common, tacked back to Jack's Saloon.

Here a convivial crowd were regaled by Henderson's recital of the prospector's sufferings, and as the big fisherman acted all the writhings and squirmings

in order to impress his audience, the urgent need of a thirst-quencher became intolerable and Jack was kept busy "setting 'em up."

The more Henderson drank, the more eloquent he became upon the subject. Sailors' yarns of thirst at sea were raked up until the reminiscences became positively tantalizing. Blackened lips and swollen tongues, rasping breath and gnawing stomachs sprinkled these descriptive discourses, until the baked, dry harshness of a throat unmoistened by liquor of any sort seemed to have fallen like an epidemic upon the crowd in the bar-room.

Drink after drink poured down the two fishermen's throats until the demon seemed insatiable, and it did not take long for Henderson and Burke to attain the condition known to sailormen as being "in the sun."



IT IS not definitely known whether the proprietor of the saloon was in league with the film company, but when he overhauled his cash at midnight he had to admit that it was the best night's work he had done for many a day. In the rush of business he had managed to dispense a good gallon or more of the alcoholic stimulant which is brewed out of fusel-oil and other brain-benumbing ingredients in quiet woodland spots, and which the revenue officers never test for proof.

This "squirrel" whisky is handed out to drinkers whose discrimination, by reason of their libations, has weakened, and it has a tendency to make the absorber talk "nutty" and evince a desire to climb trees. When Burke and Henderson insisted on carrying away a bottle of this particular brand, the bartender made a mental note of the work the town policeman would have in a few hours with two drunken fishermen.

Arm in arm the two worthies staggered down the wharves to their vessel.

“Le’s have a song, Wally, m’son,” hiccupped Henderson. “Here goes!

Thar’s a vessel alayin, down to Yankee Harbor,
An, for me she’s waitin’ thar’,
An’ I mus’ go aboard of me bark,
For th’ winds they do blow fair——

“Dam’ it, I’ve broke th’ long-neck, an’ th’ juice is all over me glad rags!”

Henderson stopped and sat down on a near-by pile of lumber, while Burke picked the pieces of broken glass out of his pocket and endeavored to brush his dorymate down.

It so happened that “Slick” Jimmy Haynes was coming down the wharf after a fruitless search around town for the missing men, and, hearing Henderson’s singing, hurried to investigate. As he stepped up to the carousers, he muttered,

“Here’s my meat!”

“Hullo, boys!” he greeted them. “What’s th’ row, bullies?”

“I had a durn long-neck o’ rum in me pocket,” answered Henderson, “an’ th’ blame thing’s broke an’ gone.”

“Never mind, ol’ pal,” said Haynes whipping a flask out of *his* coat. “Have one on me. It’s th’ real Mackay.”

By the time the flask had gone the rounds, all three were friends for life.

“That’s better than yer saloon bug-juice, eh?” remarked Haynes. “But, say, boys,” he added, “come out to my vessel an’ I’ll give ye a drink o’ stuff that ye’d leave yer happy home for. Come along!”

Nothing loath, Burke and Henderson took the shipping-master’s arm, and tumbling into a dory tied to the wharf, Haynes laid to the oars and pulled them

out to the *Pole Star*. Rounding up to the Jacob's-ladder, the three climbed aboard and entered the bark's cabin.

Captain Kennedy was seated at the saloon table overhauling his papers and on the noisy entrance of the shipping-master and his companions, he arose and stared with a questioning eye at Haynes. "Two friends o' mine," said "Slick" Jimmy with a wink. "We've bin havin' a bit of a drink together. Th' saloons are all closed ashore, but maybe ye kin give us a drink aboard here. Me an' my friends hev a powerful thirst."

The skipper knew that Haynes had something in the wind, and going into his room he produced a bottle and four glasses.

"Who th' devil are these fellows?" he inquired softly as he passed the shipping-master.

"Your two foremast hands," hissed the other. "I couldn't find th' guys that skipped so I've lifted these boobies. Leave them t' me. I'll fix it shipshape an' proper."

Drawing the cork, the wily Haynes filled the glasses, but before passing them over, he looked at Burke and Henderson, who were swaying, vacuous-eyed and flush-faced, by the table.

"Boys," he said, "it's after twelve o'clock an' th' skipper here darsen't sarve a drink without we all sign a paper. For the Custom-h'se officer, y' know, boys."

Henderson nodded gravely.

"All ri'," he mumbled. "We'll sign zhee paper. Git her out—hic—we wantsh th' drink, ol' feller."

Producing pens, ink and a formidable legal-booking document, Haynes gabbled.

"This is to certify that we opened a bottle of whisky aboard this ship for medical purposes only, and sign herewith according to law, *ad valorem* and *pro bono publico*."

After this rigmarole, all four signed their names. Henderson glanced hazily at the sheet.

“You got a hang of a —*hic*—lot of names thar’, ol’ man. I cal’late you mus’ ha’ sarved a good many drinks.”

With a breezy laugh, Haynes swept the document away.

“Now, boys,” he said with the heartiness of a man who has landed a pair of suckers, “drink hearty an’ give th’ ship a good name. Here’s how!”

When the two fishermen, overcome by the liquor they had consumed, dropped in a drunken stupor upon the cabin lockers, the shipping-master mopped his forehead and looked across at the skipper.

“*Ad valorem, pro bono publico,*” he repeated with a chuckle. “Oh, it was too easy. Signin’ th’ ship’s articles for a few drinks. Shove th’ scum for’ard when ye like, Cap’en, an’ don’t wake ’em up too soon. They’re fishermen an’ ef they sh’d come on deck while ye’re inside th’ Heads there ’ud be th’ devil to pay an’ no pitch hot. Good-by, Cap’en, an’ a pleasant voyage to you!”

III.



SKIPPER WINSLOW was angry. Two of his best men, Burke and Henderson, had failed to turn up, and as the young skipper paced the quarter of his vessel, he anathematized the missing fishermen in language which would have caused their hair to curl had they heard it. It was early morning; the others of the crew were aboard and overhauling their gear or casting the stops off the sails, and Winslow cast an eye every now and again up the wharf.

“Darn them!” he growled. “Why don’t they come? I’ve a good mind ter leave them ashore, but I’ll wait an hour longer.”

An hour went by, during which time the crew of the schooner were highly edified by the stentorian shouts and curses which came from the direction of the bark *Pole Star* just towing out.

“There goes a hot packet,” remarked old Jimmy Thomas. “I cal’late her crowd’ll have a session afore they arrive down in Bunoz Ayres. They say Old Man Kennedy niver kept the same crew a single voyage. He knocks ’em about so much that they skip out as soon as she makes a port an’ he saves their wages. Listen to th’ yells of her bucko mates, fellers!”

The bark passed within a hundred feet of the fishing vessel and upon her foc-sle-head the mate was busily engaged in “straightening out” some of the hands who had become recalcitrant. The able way in which he laid them out with a capstan-bar caused the fishermen to emit sundry grunts of disapproval, and Winslow himself knocked off cursing the missing Burke and Henderson to watch the bark’s mate getting his crew in line.

Captain Kennedy’s thunderous voice could be heard ordering the yards to be peaked and the listening fishermen were much impresed by his Olympian air. As the lumber-laden windjammer passed out of sight in early morning haze, Winslow called to Jimmy Thomas:

“Jimmy,” he said, “I don’t like leavin’ these two jokers, though I feel like kickin’ seventy-seven different kinds of blazes outer them, but I have a guess that they’re full up with rum somewheres. They were in Jack’s Saloon last night an’ were pretty well lit then. Let’s go ashore an’ have a look for them. We’ve missed this tide, I cal’late, but I’ll swing out in the afternoon whether they turn up or not.”

Walking ashore, Winslow and Thomas made for the saloon and questioned the bartender.

“Have I seen Burke an’ Henderson?” The dispenser of drinks wiped the bar down and made a bluff at recollection. “Let me see—yes, they were here last night up till closing time. Were they drunk? Oh, no! I don’t stand for that in this bar. They were pretty well on, I’ll admit, but they weren’t what ye’d call ‘pickled.’ Henderson was givin’ th’ boys a great yarn about some movin’ picture he’d seen at the show. ‘Dyin’ o’ thirst’ I think he called it——”

“That’s enough for me,” interrupted Winslow. “I saw that picture and I know how Henderson was feelin’ when he talked that way. I cal’late he was as full as a tick when he left here an’ what Henderson does Burke’ll do. Jimmy, you go up to their boarding-house, an’ I’ll take a run down to the lock-up.”

A search in both places failed to reveal any traces of the missing men. The pool-rooms, the tonsorial parlors, the saloons and fishermen’s rendezvous denied having seen them, and after questioning everybody they met on the main street, both the skipper and Thomas began to fear that the two dorymates had fallen over the wharf.

The news soon flew around the town that Burke and Henderson were missing, and it was not long before the whole population were discussing the advisability of dragging the harbor, while the temperance and local option advocates grew eloquent upon the necessity of driving the “cursed drink” from the fair fame of Anchorville.



AT NOON, the old night-watchman at the lumber-wharf crawled out of his bed, and, when he heard the intelligence, he scurried off to look for Skipper Winslow.

“Rackon I might be able tew tell yew whar’ yore two men are, skipper,” he said when he located Winslow.

“Give us yer story, Uncle Ned,” replied Winslow, “an’ ef it’s good I’ll give ye th’ price of a drink.”

The old watchman nodded.

“Yes,” he said, “I was in my office at th’ wharf last night when yore two men went along drunker’n a fiddler’s cat. They had th’ shippin’-master feller from Bayport along with them, an’ I sees them git inter a dory an’ pull ’cross th’ harbor somewheres. I don’t know whar’ they went, but I rackon yew kin git th’ feller that was with them ef yew skin along to th’ Bay steamer wharf. He brought th’ *Pole Star’s* crew over yestiddy an’ he’ll most likely be agoin’ back to-day.”

Hastily flicking the watchman a quarter for his information, Winslow ran down to the steamer wharf, closely followed by half the *Isabel Winslow’s* crew, “Slick” Jimmy was stopped just as he was preparing to step aboard the steamer, and taking the fat cigar out of his mouth, he gazed in consternation at the red-faced crowd of fishermen who surrounded him.

“Excuse me, mister,” said Winslow, “but I want some information about two of my crew. The watchman at Morrell’s wharf said that you an’ them pulled across the harbor in a dory last night. Where are they now?”

With a look of well-simulated surprise on his face, the shipping-master replied:

“Me pulled across th’ harbor with two of your men? An’ what in thunder sh’d I be doin’ with two fishermen across th’ harbor last night?”

“Well, I don’t know,” answered the young skipper, “but you’re th’ guinny they were with, so give us th’ true bill.”

“You’re mistaken, my man,” replied Haynes. “I don’t hang around with yer gurry-stinkin’ friends.”

Winslow's young face showed a perceptible hardening of its lines and the old familiar look of determination lurked in eyes and mouth. Gripping the shipping-master's arm, he spoke with a harsh ring in his voice.

"Come now—no bluff! I know who you are, Mister Slick Haynes. You're th' man that fly-flapped Tom Watson inter shippin' on th' barkentine *Annie Higgins* last Fall an' sent him down to Demerara on th' tub. I cal'late ye've bin tryin' some o' yer monkey games on with Jack Henderson an' Wally Burke. Out with it! Where are they?"

Haynes wriggled in the skipper's grip and protested his ignorance of the whole affair. Realizing that he was in dangerous hands, he cried to the officers of the Bayport steamer for assistance, but those gentlemen seemed to be absorbed in their own affairs and turned a deaf ear to his entreaties. They were all Anchorville men, anyway, and had little love for the shipping-master.

"Come on now!" rasped Winslow savagely, gripping the flabby arm of "Slick" Jimmy in a grasp which made him wince. "What hev ye done with them? I can't stand here all day. Ef ye don't give me a true bill of last night's doin's, I swear by th' Great Trawl Hook that I'll give ye in charge for murderin' my two men! Ye'll come along with me now to Judge Curwen an' tell yer story there."

This possibility had not struck the shipping-master. It would be decidedly awkward for him if he had to explain things before a magistrate, so realizing that a partly true confession would be the best way out of the difficulty, he cast a glance at the gangway and said:

"Waal, now, I'll tell ye. Two men, by the name ye mention, stopped me last night an' asked me ef

I'd sign them on in a vessel, so I took them out to a craft an' they signed the articles——'

"You shanghai'd them, yuh swab!" roared Winslow. "What vessel was it?"

The steamer whistled; her sailors commenced hauling the gangplanks aboard, and Haynes wriggled in Winslow's grasp.

"Let me go!" he yelled. "I've got ter take that boat!"

"What vessel was it?" insisted the young skipper.

"Th' *Pole Star*——"

"What?" thundered Winslow. "Well, you're a pretty swab!"

And twisting Haynes around he planted a terrific kick on his stern quarter which sent him sprawling into the mud of the wharf. Cuffed and kicked by the angry fishermen, the unfortunate shipping-master was rescued by the steamer's men and hauled aboard, bruised and torn.

"Dam' you!" he roared, when a safe distance intervened between the steamer and the wharf. "I'd like ter put th' whole scrivy lot o' youse aboard th' *Pole Star*! Anyhow, yer gurry-lickin' pals'll have th' time o' their lives——"

And cursing the fishermen upon the wharf, Jimmy Haynes the "slick" passed from the sight of Anchorville.

IV.



THE towboat had been tied up to her wharf again in Anchorville by the time Burke and Henderson gained partial possession of their faculties in the bark's foc'sle. The vessel was rolling steadily to the sharp chop of the Bay and this motion, more than anything else, caused Henderson to recover his wits. It wasn't the quick, jerky roll and pitch peculiar to a fishing-schooner at sea, whereby

a man has to cultivate limpet-like qualities in order to remain in his bunk, but the motion was slow and gradual—a lopy careening and lethargic rising and falling which betokened a long, heavily laden vessel under sail.

While Henderson lay in his bunk collecting his scattered thoughts from the chaos of a brain befuddled with too much alcohol, he listened in stupid wonder to the discordant shouts of the crew laying their weight on a halliard or brace, and the sharp strident tones of an officer as he bullied his watch. Something must have happened aloft, for a voice sang out in answer to a hail.

“Ay, sir! ‘Upper foretops’l brace pendant carried away!’” Then came a period of silence, until a harsh voice thundered from aft. “Hands to th’ main-brace! Sweat her in! Get a pull on them lower mainstops’l sheets—th’ clues are a fathom away from th’ sheaves! Trim your rags, Mister Mate, a dam’ sight better than this!”

Henderson understood, and it did not take him long to enlighten the befuddled Burke as to what had happened.

“We’re shangaied, Wally!” he said. “We’ve on a blasted square-rigger! Rouse yourself, for th’ Lord’s sake’ an’ we’ll see what we kin do!”

Burke sobered up marvelously.

“On a square-rigger?” he yelled. “Holy Saint Patrick! let’s get outer this!”

Stepping outside the foc’sle they caught a glimpse of the Nor’west Shoal Lightship on the quarter and the hills of Anchorville in the blue distance far astern. A fresh breeze was blowing, and the bark, with top-gallants’ls set, was sliding along over a sunlit sea with a roll to leeward which buried her scruppers when she felt the puffs in the canvas aloft. On the windward side of the deal-laden deck, the crew were work-

ing, while pacing the quarter-deck—monarch of all he surveyed—was Captain Cleghorn Kennedy.

With aching heads and sick stomachs the two fishermen followed the course adopted by all shanghaied persons and lurched aft to have it out with the skipper. The latter gentleman, smoking a cigar, received them at the break of the poop with eyes that glittered ominously and a face which was cast-iron in its lineaments.

“Waal!” he said in a voice like the grate of a file. “What d’ye want? Put ye ashore, I suppose?”

“Ay!” grunted Henderson with a surly growl. “Ye’ve hit it right away. We’ve bin shanghaied aboard o’ this vessel, Cap’en, an’ I cal’late we don’t wanter stay.”

“Ye don’t, eh?” rasped the skipper with a sarcastic smile. “Waal, we’ll see about that. You’ll go ashore in Buenos Ayres, I reckon, but not before. So, slide away out o’ this an’ turn to, or I’ll help ye!”

“Hold fast, thar’, ol’ man!” cried the fisherman unabashed. “Ye can’t come that talk over us. We’re Anchorville fishermen belongin’ to an Anchorville vessel, an’ as far as I kin recollect, we were brought aboard here while under th’ influence o’ liquor. Ye can’t detain us with any bull-dozin’, so cut it out! You try an’ keep us aboard here an’ you’ll be sorry in more ways than one, an’ I’ll lay a dollar ye’d never need show yer face in Anchorville again!”

Captain Kennedy listened with an ever increasing scowl on his saturnine visage, and finally threw his cigar away with an impatient gesture. Buttoning up his coat, he squared his great shoulders and prepared himself for the effort of booting the two complainants off the poop. A thought seemed to deter him, however, and he altered his belligerent attitude for the nonce.

“See here, you men,” he growled, “step below a

minute." And leading the way down into the cabin, he produced the ship's articles. "Now, you scum," he snarled, holding out the papers, "afore ye go any further with yer jaw, I'll show you somethin'. Dye see those names—Wallace Burke an' James Henderson—signed on here as substitute able seamen before me an' shippin'-master Haynes last night? That's where ye stand——"

"But we never signed no articles," protested Henderson, while Burke scratched his head in an effort to comprehend what it was all about.

"Your fr'en got me'n Burke ter sign a paper for a few drinks last night, but we cert'nly——"

"That'll do now!" roared the skipper menacingly. "None o' yer slack lip! Th' both o' ye signed th' articles legally. There's bin no infraction o' th' law, so get away t' hell outer this or I'll show ye th' way!"



THE quick-witted Henderson sized up matters at a glance. The Captain meant to hold them whether they liked it or not. Well, they wouldn't give in without a struggle. Henderson and Burke were no poor devils of deep-water sailors with the spirits beaten out of them by the iron hand of nautical authority, and Captain Kennedy, bully, hazer and all as he was, inspired no fear in the hearts of the hardy trawl-haulers. They failed to cloak the aggressive master mariner with the awe and respect due to an autocrat of blue water. Giving Burke a nudge, Henderson put himself on the defensive.

"Oh," he jeered, "you're agoin' ter try some o' yer square-rig shines are you? Waal, ye kin come ahead an' try! Line up, Wally, ol' son, an' we'll make hay in this timber droghin' peddler's cabin an' show him what's what!"

And before the furious skipper could put up his

hands the fisherman smashed him between the eyes with a crack that made him see star sights till further orders.

“Holy Sailor!” he roared. “I’ll fix you for that, you — — swab!”

And the three men mixed it up in a battle royal. Crash! The china on the cabin table went flying in all directions. Down came the flower-pot rack under the skylight, and the South American parrot added his shrieks to the general pandemonium. Pummeled by the enraged fishermen, Captain Kennedy bawled for the mates, and in a moment the two of them came flying down into the cabin. With a wild Irish yell, Burke went for the second mate, who came at him like a West India hurricane, and the fisherman stopped him in his tracks with a spring like a wildcat, and both men went to the floor.

Henderson was in hand grips with the mate, while the skipper was recovering his breath, and for a few minutes the *Pole Star’s* cabin rivaled a gang battle in a Bowery dance-hall. Cursing horribly, the skipper grabbed a heavy glass water-bottle from the swinging tray and hove it with all his strength at poor Burke, who was trying to gouge the second mate’s eyes out. The missile caught the fisherman a glancing blow on the head and dropped him, limp and gasping, over the body of his opponent.

Nothing the success of his long-distance work with the water-bottle, the skipper made a fly at Henderson with a heavy pewter dish, but unfortunately it caught the mate at the base of his skull and caused him to relax his grip on Henderson’s throat, and the latter deftly grabbed the revolver from the mate’s hand as he fell. With a hoarse shout, the fisherman backed into a corner and promptly stuck the skipper and the mates up against the bulkhead with hands clawing for an imaginary overhead support.

"I've got ye!" panted Henderson. "Move an inch, an' I'll plug ye deader'n herrin'-bait, consarn ye!"

Burke, looking very sick, staggered to his feet and stood stupidly looking on until his comrade spoke.

"Come on, Wally, ol' son, let's clear out o' this!" And covering the three men with the gun, the fishermen darted out on the main deck through the lower door.

"What'll we do?" cried Burke, as they ran past the wondering seamen gathered around the break of the poop.

"I cal'late we'd better git up aloft somewheres for a spell till I git a chanst ter think. We may be able ter hail some fishin' vessel or a dory as we git down th' Bay."

Scrambling up the weather fore rigging, they reached the foretop as Captain Kennedy and the mate emerged from the cabin.

"Man, but that was a beautiful scrap, Wally!" said Henderson when they had gained the top. "Gee! but I landed that bully skipper a proper snifter on his jib, though that mate nearly had me. I got his gun, anyway."

Burke said nothing, but rubbed a lump on the back of his head and ruminated.

The skipper and mate appeared on the deck below them.

"Come down out o' that!" thundered Kennedy.

"Go 'way, you naughty man!" jeered Henderson, poking the revolver in the skipper's direction. "Any guy that wants a bullet in his gizzard kin git it by tryin' ter come up here. Run away! ye make me sick!" After saying something to the mate about "starve 'em out," the skipper made his way aft again, and for the rest of the day they were not molested.

When evening came, the pangs of hunger and thirst

were beginning to tell upon the two mutineers, but Henderson had a plan.

“Wally,” he said to his companion in misfortune, “got a bit o’ line on ye?”

“Naw!” grunted the other.

“Waal, git out yer knife an’ cut the sarving on the eye o’ that stay thar’. Unlay it an’ git me a bit o’ line ’bout forty feet.”

Laying over the edge of the top, Henderson hailed some of the crew seated below.

“Hey, bullies!” he called softly, “send up up some grub an’ water. Here’s a line ter make it fast to.”

One of the men nodded sympathetically and entered the foc-sle. They had no love for the afterguard, and winked and smiled in admiration at the two worthies aloft.

In a few minutes, a piece of canvas containing some ship’s biscuit and a hunk of salt beef was bent to the line and hauled up, as well as a can of water from the fore-deck scuttle-butt. After a hearty meal and a smoke, Henderson and Burke settled themselves for an all-night vigil on the top.

V.



WINSLOW wasted no time. As soon as he heard of the whereabouts of his two men, he made up his mind quickly and with characteristic determination.

“Back to the vessel, fellers!” he cried. “We’ll see what we can do!”

Never in all the annals of Anchorville seamanship did a vessel get under way so quickly as the *Isabel Winslow*. The men piled aboard and worked with feverish energy, while the original Isabel Winslow, as pretty as a picture, leaned on the arm of Mr. Dickey

and watched her husband getting his vessel ready for sea.

"Be careful, Harry," she cried half fearfully. "Don't get drowned while going after those men. It's blowing hard outside."

Harry turned around with a laugh.

"No fear o' that, sweetheart," he cried. "We've a splendid craft here."

Strong arms were hauling upon the mainsail hal-yards and the big sail climbed the mast in record time.

"High enough th' throat! Haul away on yer peak!" cried the skipper. "High enough yer peak! Throat jig, now, fellers!" Amidst the shouts of the men, Winslow's voice could be heard calmly directing operations, and his wife felt strangely proud of her manly young husband. "Give her th' jumbo! Stand by to haul on yer foresail!" Willing hands cast off the shore lines, and with Winslow to the wheel, the men fairly flew around decks to his commands. "Up on th' foresail, boys! Hands aft to th' main sheet! Trim her down! Steady as ye go!"

Waving good-by to his wife, Winslow swung the wheel over, and under her three lowers, the beautiful 120-ton semi-knock-about schooner glided into the Bay with a hundred eyes watching her. The jib was soon hauled up, and, careening to the breeze, the vessel forged for the open waters of the Bay of Fundy.

It was blowing a moderate gale outside and when Winslow had tested the strength of the breeze, he passed the word for the flying kites.

"It's goin' ter be wet, fellers," he said, "but we've got t' overhaul that bark in jig time. Jes' fancy what a time poor Henderson an' Burke'll be havin' with them mates. Give her th' balloon an' stays'l, boys, an' watch her go!"

Oh, you lovers of salt water, a rip-roaring breeze and an able vessel! Could you have been on the *Isabel Winslow* then, your hearts would have been full of ecstasy and the glory of the sea. The sea! With a day of sunshine and clouds, and a breeze which sped the long combers like race-horses, and caused their emerald tops to burst in crests of snowy foam! Whiffs of refreshing ozone flew athwart the wind with the lick of the brine-laden spray which sparkled in miniature rainbows and swept over the gallant vessel in steam-like clouds and kept the decks sluicing with water.

With canvas hard as iron, full with the wind and rounded in alabaster curves, the beautiful schooner curtsied to the Fundy rollers and sheared through them like a plow through soft loam. Up on the dizzy heights of the foremast-head a man hung to the top mast stays and swung athwart the blue of the sky as he searched the horizon ahead for the object of their chase; while astride the wheel-box Winslow steered automatically, and with deft turns of the spokes coaxed the vessel along her trail. Easing up a little when the puffs caused the big stays'l to strain at the sheet, the young skipper kept her with the lee rail in a deluge of white water, while the lower dead-eyes of the lee rigging remained invisible in the hissing froth.



EVENING came and the sun went down in a blaze of glory, and through the star-bestrewn darkness the schooner tore along, while oilskin-clad, the men lounged around decks and cabin ready for a call to handle sail. As he steered Winslow had memories of his weary vigil in the old *Valfreyja* when he raced for a wife and risked the lives of himself and the men who were with him now—ay, and the two rascals aboard the bark somewhere ahead.

When he thought of them, somehow he jammed the wheel down a spoke and sent the gallant craft with a wild lurch to star-board which hove the men off the port lockers. Well, they had stood by him when he was a green skipper trying to pick up a crew, and he would do the same for them in their trouble. It was the freemasonry of the fishing fleets, where a call to "stand by" is never refused, and where men have hearts as big as their bodies, and hide under a rough exterior the sterling qualities of the bravest and best.

It was just breaking daylight, when Jimmy Thomas from the foremast-head gave the hail.

"Bark dead ahead!"

"How far off?" cried Winslow.

"'Bout six or eight miles, I cal'late!" came the answer, and the skipper steered with brows corrugated in thought. "How am I agoin' git them two mugs?" he inquired of Thomas when that worthy came down.

"Run her alongside, an' th' hull gang ov us'll board th' win'jammer! We'll darn soon git th' boys back!"

Winslow smiled and shook his head.

"We darsn't do that. We'd git inter no end o' trouble ef we tried that stunt. I cal'late I'd better go aboard th' bark an' have a palaver with her skipper——"

"Aye! an' have him boot ye over th' side!" interrupted Bill Jackson. "I know th' joker, an' a bigger bully never stepped a win'jammer's quarter. He'll never give yer men up, an' ef we were t' try Jimmy's scheme we'd git plugged by th' guns o' his bucko mates."

"Well, anyway," replied Winslow, "we'll run alongside to loo'ard an' see what th' two dubs aboard-

-ll do. Maybe when they see us they'll jump an' swim for us."

"Huh!" laughed Thomas, "neither o' them kin swim a stroke. Ye'll hev ter think out somethin' better nor that. I reckon my scheme is th' best. We'll risk th' law an' their guns. The devil himself would-n't stop me from boardin' her!"

Within an hour the big bark was broad on the weather bow, and Winslow edged in under her lee. The breeze still held and was strong enough to careen the big windjammer down to lee scuppers awash, and her lumber-piled deck was fully visible to the watchers on the schooner. As they hauled in closer, it was evident that there was something doing aboard the bark.

Two disheveled figures were laying out on the bark's foretop and seemingly holding an animated conversation with a mob on the deck below. An officer paced the quarter-deck, while at the windward rail Captain Kennedy and his chief officer were doing some tall swearing at the figures aloft.

"What's th' racket aboard thar'?" queried Winslow. "Is that our beauties up at th' foremast-head thar'?"

"It is, by th' Lord Harry!" cried Thomas excitedly. "Thar's Henderson with a pistol in his mitt and Burke jest alongside him! I kin spot th' black-whiskered mug o' Cleg Kennedy at th' wind'ard rail. King Dogfish! ye kin hear them cursin' from here. Out with th' dories, skipper, an' we'll board him!"

Winslow hauled in until the sails of the schooner began to shiver in the bark's lee, and Henderson on the foretop yelled:

"Oh, Harry! Stand by!"

Both craft forged along, side by side—the fishermen watching the scene on the bark with puzzled eyes and wondering what they were going to do. Hender-

son and Burke were evidently masters of the situation for the present, but it would only be a temporary advantage at the best, and the combined attack of the bark's officers would compel them to submit at some time or other. So Winslow reasoned, and relinquishing the wheel to Jimmy Thomas, he hailed the bark.

"Henderson! Tell th' skipper I want ter have a talk with him!"

The other heard and made a negative gesture with the gun.

"It ain't no use, Harry! He says he'll keep us here till Blazes freezes over, an' he's some mad, I kin tell ye! Me'n Burke mauled him pretty bad yestiddy an' he ain't got over it yet. He's bin cussin' aroun' somethin' sinful jest now, an' he can't git th' crew ter bring us down!"

As the fisherman bawled this intelligence at the top of his pipes, Captain Kennedy heard and it spurred him to action. Leaving the deck, he ran down into his cabin and in a few minutes emerged with an old-fashioned muzzle-loading shotgun.

"Look out!" yelled the watching fishermen, "th' skipper's got a gun!"

Henderson nodded, and while Captain Kennedy ascended the main rigging to windward, the *Winslow's* crew fathomed his intention and warned their comrades on the bark.

"He's climbin' inter th' maintop ter pot ye!" they roared. "Hoof it to th' deck an' jump. We'll pick ye up!"

The master of the bark quickly gained the top, and while Burke and Henderson were clambering down the lee fore-rigging, he opened fire. Luckily for them, the *Pole Star* gave a lurch at the time and the shot went wide, but it hastened their descent considerably.

With a howl of deep-water oaths, the fishermen on

the schooner ran to the dories, while Winslow roared.

“Over with th’ dories, boy! Board her, by Godfrey, an’ git these men!”

As soon as he spoke, Number One dory rose from the nest and splashed into the sea with her crew vaulting the rail into her!

Henderson and Burke had reached the top of the deck-load, and as the mates made a rush for them, they each lifted a loose twelve-foot plank and leaped into the sea. Up into the wind went the *Isabel Winslow* with canvas thundering and banging, while dory after dory went up on the tackles and outboard. With crews yelling and shouting and tumbling pell-mell into them, eight boats went driving for the men hanging to the planks, and in a brace of shakes they were hauled aboard, dripping and chilled, but none the worse.



IN THE meantime, the *Pole Star* was brought to the wind with her maintopsail aback, and a clumsy effort was being made by her crew to launch the lee quarter-boat. By the time it was swung out, the runaways were climbing over the *Isabel Winslow's* rail, and the dories were being nested again by a crowd of excited, panting fishermen who laughed and jeered at the quarter-boat which was pulling toward them. Captain Kennedy was in the stern-sheets and shouted to Winslow to hold on a minute.

“All right,” cried the young fishing skipper as the furious windjammer master swung alongside. “What d’ye want?”

“I want those men!” bawled Kennedy. “They’re on my articles and I’ve paid for them. I mean t’ have them!”

“Oh, ye do?” replied Winslow sarcastically. “Well, sir, you jest come aboard an’ take them. Ye

have my permission an' I won't stop ye. Maybe ef ye ask them politely they'll go back with ye, but I cal'late they won't. Come ahead an' take them, Cap'en!"

"Ay!" roared twenty shackers, divesting themselves of their oilskin coats, "jest come over th' rail, Cap, an' take 'em with you! They'll go easy, won't ye, boys?"

Smiling calmly, Henderson and Burke flourished ugly looking bait-knives and lolled on the rail.

"Jest come aboard, ol' hairy face," said Henderson facetiously, "an' I'll take a lot o' pleasure in cuttin' ye up for trawl bait! We're an easy crowd aboard here, an' I'm sure none o' th' boys 'ud lay a hand on yer sanctified hide. Oh, no! by th' time we got through with ye, th' dogfish 'ud be sniffin' at yer corpse! Ef I say th' word th' hull crowd o' us 'ull board yer blasted timber drogher an' take yer whole crew away from ye! Run back, ol' blow-me-tight! That hairy mug o' yours gives me a pain in th' side!"

The *Pole Star's* skipper glanced along the line of determined faces aboard the schooner, while the boat's crew secretly enjoyed the situation, until, with a bitter oath, the skipper snarled:

"Lay to yer oars dam' ye!"

As he swung away, he shook his fist at the late members of his crew, who shouted after him,

"Never shanghai a fisherman, Cap! They ain't a healthy crowd t' handle!"

And amid hoots and jeers from the delighted trawl-haulers he pulled aboard his ship. They watched him climb aboard, and after the main-yard was swung the bark lurched off on her course to the southward.

Winslow had remained as an interested spectator of the affair, and when the bark drew away he swung the wheel over.

"All right, fellers, ye've had yer fun," he cried to

the laughing groups gathered around the two heroes, "now I'll have my little say. Get away for'ard with ye, an' let Henderson an' Burke step up here for a minute."

With the exultant smile fading from their features, the two adventurers slouched up to their skipper. Now that the excitement was over, they looked pictures of misery as, wet, haggard and bruised, they stood before Winslow. Their good clothes were ruined; Burke's tie had distributed its colors liberally over his white shirt, and the collars of both were missing. Burke sported a black eye which rivaled his tie in hue, and Henderson's nose was swollen to twice its normal size.

There was a steely look in the young skipper's eyes as he glanced over them, though a close observer would have noticed an almost imperceptible twitch at the corners of his determined mouth.

"What hev ye got t' say for yerselves?" he asked quietly.

"Nawthin', skipper," replied Henderson dejectedly, while Burke added apologetically. "It was th' movin'-pictures that done it!"

"Humph!" growled Winslow as he twirled the wheel a spoke. "Ye know what I do with men that get drunk an' can't be relied upon? Ye know what I sh'd ha' done with ye, eh? No? Well, I sh'd ha' let ye go down to Bweenose Ayres in that bark, an' maybe it would ha' learnt ye a fine lesson. As it is, I hev no use for men aboard my vessel that git full up th' night afore sailin' an' keep me hangin' aroun' for them. I won't have any booze-fighters in my gang. Ef I git them, I'll fire 'em when I strike port."

"Oh, don't do that, Harry!" wailed Burke, while Henderson maintained a shamefaced silence. "S'help me, I'll niver take another drink again as long as I

live—except at New Year's, Saint Patrick's Day, an' th' 'lections."

"Same here!" echoed Henderson.

Winslow turned his head to hide a smile and the two defaulters sensed it.

"Away for'ard with you, an' git a change an' a mug-up!" growled the skipper finally. "Ef I ever git any more of these monkey-shines from you jokers again——"

"There'll be no 'again'," interrupted Burke.

"All right, for'ard you go now an' send Jackson to th' wheel here."

As the two fishermen staggered to the forecastle, Winslow laughed silently.

"They're a great pair o' boys," he muttered. "Jest like kids, but movin'-picture shows ain't good for them!"

Dory-Mates

IT'S a strange fact that two diametrically opposed feelings as love and hate are often engendered by each other. The blackest and most diabolical crimes have been committed through love—love of a woman oftentimes—and, peculiar as it may seem, between the two passions there is but a slight barrier, and a human being can change from one to the other almost instantaneously. Without moralizing further, here is a tale of two strong men and a woman—a tale in which the two emotions led to strange happenings.

Elsie Conover was the daughter of a small farmer who owned a place on the shores of Anchorville Bay. Elsie was pretty, vivacious and something of a flirt—so much so that by the time she was twenty-one she had played serious havoc with the hearts of most of the young farmers, fishermen and sailors of Anchorville County. An impartial critic, endowed with the faculty of reading Miss Conover's mind, would have characterized the pretty, brown-eyed young woman as being shallow and heartless.

Tom Anderson and Westley Collins were young sprigs of Anchorville fishermen—both of them smart trawlers and able men in a dory. Tom was intelligent, quick-witted, a bit of a dandy and a good talker. As fishermen would say, "He had a way with the women" which made him attractive in their sight. He had a pleasant manner, the art of concealing his feelings, and was universally known as a good shipmate.

Westley Collins was the opposite. Though smart enough aboard of a vessel, yet he was slow and

clumsy when ashore. He dressed anyhow, walked with a shambling slouch, and conversationally was neither brilliant nor edifying. Though slow of speech and apparently surly, he was bighearted and kind.

Among the young fellows of Anchorville Elsie Conover was known as Tommy Anderson's girl. Tommy went boat-fishing all one summer and employed most of his time ashore in laying siege to Elsie's heart. He appeared to be the "white-haired boy" until big, blundering West Collins came home after a long salt-fishing trip and unintentionally "horned in" on Tommy's preserves.

Westley had drawn a big share out of a "high line" trip, and in all probability it was the size of his bank-roll which made him attractive in Elsie's eyes. At any rate, the roll gave the girl the means of a good time until the Fall fishing season came around and Westley began to talk of going to sea again.

"Will ye marry me, Elsie?" he blurted out one night in tones which contained more emotion than the girl had ever thought him capable of.

Having anticipated such a question for some time past, Miss Conover had carefully considered it."

"I—I don't know, Westley," she faltered, dropping her eyes. "I—I'd want to think it over."

"So ye kin, sweetheart," said Westley slowly, "but maybe ye'll give me somethin' to go upon? Kin I hope?"

The girl turned her head away as if thinking. After a pause, she looked up and spoke:

"Ask me again in the Spring, Westley. Save your money and ask me then."

"Are my chances good?" asked the other almost fearfully.

The girl made no reply, but stared at the toe of her shoe.

“Thar ain’t no one else, is there, girlie?” he questioned anxiously.

“N—no! There’s nobody else.”

“Then I might be safe in thinkin’ you’ll say ‘yes’ in th’ Spring?”

He did not wait for an answer, but slipped his arm around her shoulders and drew her to him.

“Gimme a kiss, girlie!” he murmured, and, unresisting, her face turned to his.

After the embrace, she rose to her feet and held out her hand.

“You must go now, Westley,” she said calmly.

“Until the Spring, sweetheart,” he said. “I’m going across to Gloucester to-morrow to join a vessel for the Winter haddockin’ and I’ll come back ’long towards the end o’ March. Wish me good-luck an’ high-line trips, dearie, and—and another kiss.”

When the big fisherman strode happily away, Elsie Conover drew her hand sharply across her mouth.

“The big fool!” she murmured callously. “Me marry him! Ugh!” She shuddered. “He’ll be telling Jack Hooper about it, and Jack will be sure to tell Tom Anderson. Maybe Tom will get jealous when he hears that West Collins is cutting him out and he’ll keep away from that doll-faced Jennie Hooper and come to me again. Marry West Collins in the Spring? I don’t think!” And with a crafty smile she went upstairs to bed.



IN company with a crowd of other Nova Scotia deep-sea fishermen West Collins went over to Boston and thence to Gloucester, where he got a “chance” with Captain Tim Davidson in the

schooner *Seldovia*, fitting out for Winter haddocking. It so happened that Tom Anderson arrived in Gloucester two days later and broached the *Seldovia's* skipper for a place with his gang.

"I cal'late I kin give ye a sight," said the fishing skipper. "Thar's a Novy named Collins what's lookin' for a dory-mate. Maybe you know him? Comes from Anchorville."

"Collins? West Collins?" grunted Anderson with a savage look in the eyes. "I'll be damned ef I'd dory-mates with that skunk." To himself he muttered "*Him*—of all men."

Captain Davidson shrugged his shoulders.

"Don't matter," he said. "Plenty o' men lookin' for chances these days. Collins'll git a dory-mate 'thout much trouble. I cal'lated, seein' you two was from th' same place, ye'd be glad to git together."

Anderson's face changed quickly.

"I'll go with him, Skipper," he said with an engaging smile. "He's a good scout, but I was sore on him for a little matter. He's a good man in a dory an' I'll be glad to mate up with him. Where is he now? Aboard th' vessel, ye say? All right, Cap, I'll ship."

Collins was sitting on the *Seldovia's* cabin house, overhauling a tub of haddocking trawl when Anderson jumped aboard.

"Hullo, Westley, boy!" cried Tom heartily as he held out his hand. "Jest came acrost an' h'ard from th' skipper you was lookin' for a dory-mate. I cal'late you 'n' I will make a pretty good pair in a dory. What d'ye say, West?"

The other grasped the proffered hand and assented heartily.

"Sure thing—bully! I'm more'n glad ye kem aboard. I was for goin' uptown an' lookin' around

for a dory-mate, but you're a home-town feller an' jest th' man."

"I'll go git my clothes-bag an' tick down an' see ye later. How many tubs does he rig?"

"Eight to a dory," replied Westley.

"Humph! American style. Hard fishin', I reckon," said Anderson heartily. "Waal, Westley, I cal'late you 'n' I kin stand the racket aboard these hard-drivin' market fishermen. I'm a hound for work myself. We'll git along fine. So long! I'll be down in a while an' help ye overhaul some gear."

Collins continued his work, whistling happily at the thought of having Tom Anderson for a dory-mate. As he had been away from Anchorville all Summer, he was unaware of the relations that had formerly existed between Elsie Conover and Anderson. He knew that the latter was acquainted with Elsie, but then Tommy Anderson was a devil with all the Anchorville girls. So while Westley crooned and whistled to himself, thinking of Elsie Conover away back home in Nova Scotia, Tom Anderson strode cursefully to his boarding-house with black hate in his heart

"The silly swab!" he muttered through clenched teeth. "Fancy th' likes o' him grabbin' Elsie. Th' boob! An' to tell that silly mug, Jack Hooper, all about it, an' Jack to put th' hook into me by th' tellin' of it. 'West Collins has cut ye out with Elsie Conover,' says he, with his smug face laughin' as he spun th' yarn afore his sister. Thought maybe that Jen Hooper would stand a better chance with Elsie out of th' way. An' when I telephoned Elsie! 'He's to ask me again in th' Spring,' says she. 'Towards th' last o' March. Westley'll be back then an' I'll know my mind which o' youse it'll be.' Th' big mug, dam' him! Ay, to hell with him!"

So vociferous had he become in his denunciatory

epithets that he spoke his thoughts aloud, and two or three people looked at him strangely.

His facility in concealing his feelings came uppermost; and while hate consumed him inward, yet outwardly he carried an air of heartiness which belied the murderous thoughts fermenting in his brain.

Carrying his bag and mattress to the vessel, a half-formed notion raced through his mind. It was a sinister notion—a black-hearted idea—but there was nothing of it in his voice as he hailed his dory-mate.

“Hey ye go, Westley, boy! Catch a-holt o’ my dunnage. I’m all ready t’ give ye a hand now, ol’ dory-mate!”

II.



THE *Seldovia* put to sea and fished on George’s Bank. As dory-mates, Collins and Anderson got along famously, and the rest of the gang remarked that Collins had picked up a dandy partner. Anderson not only did his share of the work, but seemed eager to help Collins in every way. In the dory, Anderson was for doing all the trawl-hauling—the hardest and heaviest work—and his dory-mate often protested. “You must let me do my share, Tom,” he would say. “You’re doing all your work an’ part o’ mine too. I’m able enough, an’ ye mustn’t do it. Not but what I take it as kindly of ye, Tom. It shows th’ big heart ye have, and a better dory-mate I never sailed with.”

Anderson laughed.

“I’d do anythin’ for a good scout,” he said, “an’ you’re one o’ th’ best, Westley, boy. Watch an’ wheel, baitin’ up an’ haulin’ trawls, it’s a pleasure for me to work with ye. Lord Harry, old townie! We’ll hold her down together this Winter—the best an’ ablest pair that ever swung a dory over.”

He turned his back to Collins and the smile on his face turned into a look of the most malignant hate. Lord! How he detested the big simple-minded fool! He'd get him even though he had to play his masquerade the whole Winter season.

Aboard a fishing vessel a man has a thousand opportunities to rid himself of a rival or an enemy. An accidental shove on a dark night when the two were alone on watch, and Collins would swell the list of fishermen "drowned at sea from the vessel."

Yet many times, Westley stood by the lee rail absolutely unsuspecting of the sinister thoughts in the mind of his dory-mate a few feet behind him. In the dory, with Westley standing in the bow, hauling, and Anderson coiling just aft of his hated rival, a smash on the head with the bailer, a slingding rock, or the dory-jar would send him headlong into the chilly green depths never to rise again.

A man clad in heavy sea-boots, with winter clothing and oilskins on, goes down like a stone, and dories are easy craft to fall out of. Out on a bowsprit furling a jib in the dark of a winter's night with the wind blowing and the sea roaring, a moderately strong push under the chin would topple a man over backwards and his shout would be unheard by his shipmates a few feet away. Oh, ay, there were many ways, but Anderson waited his chance and smiled and joked and laughed while the man he was out to kill trusted him and felt that never, in all his going a-fishing, had he shipped with a truer and better dory-mate.

When dories are alongside the schooner in anything over a flat calm, a dory-painter *must* be held in the hands of some person aboard. On no account must it be made fast to a pin or a cleat. With a vessel under sail and heading through the water, the dory is rolling alongside and tugging and jerking at the painter in the rise and fall of the sea. The man holding the

bow rope eases off when the dory tugs, but were the painter belayed to an unresisting object, the cranky craft is liable to capsize or swamp.

On a rough January day on Brown's Bank, the *Seldovia* was running out her string of ten dories. All the little craft were slung over, and Number Ten, Collins' and Anderson's, was the last put over the rail.

Westley jumped down into the boat and Anderson handed him the four tubs of baited trawl, while the cook held the painter and the skipper busied himself aft. The latter had occasion to go into the cabin for something and slipped the wheel into the becket. Anderson turned suddenly to the cook.

"Jump down, Jack, an' hand me up a few doughnuts or something for a mug-up for me 'n' West. I'll take that painter."

The cook handed the rope over and went down into the forecastle. Anderson saw that his dory-mate was busy stacking the trawl tubs and clearing the buoy-lines in the pitching dory, and with lightning-like swiftness he belayed the painter to a pin in the rail. Springing over to the forecastle scuttle, he jumped down the ladder and began shouting at the cook:

"Look alive, Jack, with that grub. D'ye think we kin wait all day?"

A cold sweat broke out on his face as a muffled yell told him something had happened and he leaped on deck to see the skipper with the long dory-gaff in his hand make a drive at something over the rail.

"Aft here, some one!" roared Tim Davidson. "Gimme a hand or I'll lose him!"

And as Anderson raced to the quarter, he felt that his plan had failed.

When Collins had been hauled, gasping and red-faced, over the rail, the skipper opened the ball.

"What in Hades d'ye mean by belayin' that dory-

painter?" he bawled. "Don't ye know enough? Ain't you bin a fishin' long enough to know that dory-painters sh'd never be made fast when there's a man in the dory? Consarn me! Ef I had'nt jest happened to come on deck jest as that dory capsized an' gaffed yer dory-mate, there would 'a' bin a drownin' scrape on yer hands. Help me git that dory up on th' tackles while th' cook sees to Collins. He's 'most all in."

A few minutes later, Anderson was down in the forecastle where Collins was changing his sodden clothing. Striding across to him, Tom grasped his hand.

"Say, old man, I'm sorry I was guilty o' sich a lubber's trick. I jest went to git some grub from th' cook for a second an' I took a turn with th' painter thinkin' she'd be all right for a moment. I sh'd ha' known better, an' 'tis bitter sorry I am that I sh'd ha' risked th' life o' my old dory-mate. Ye'll forgive me, West, for 'twould ha' bin a sore day for me sh'd I have lost ye."

"Say nawthin' about it, Tom," answered Collins with a laugh. "'A miss is as good as a mile', an' we all make mistakes sometimes. Too bad we lost th' gear——"

"I'll pay for that!" said Anderson hastily.

"No, ye don't, boy. We'll half up as good dory-mates should. Say no more about it."

Anderson went to his bunk in the peak and raged inwardly.

"It was a lubber's trick all right," he growled to himself. "But, dam' him, I'll get him yet!"



JANUARY and February passed and the windy March days worried the fishing-fleets and had them lying at anchor in shelter harbors when they should have been fishing for the great Lenten market. The *Seldovia* had made a good win-

ter of it, but Tim Davidson was anxious to make a high-line haddocking season and took more risks in setting dories out than would most skippers.

Anderson, with wonderful strength of mind, kept up his heartily friendly relations with Collins and effectually disarmed all suspicion. So well did he play his game that Westley looked upon him as his best chum and even confided in him his prospects for the future. One can imagine the tumult which raged in Anderson's mind as he listened to Collin's clumsily worded confidences about Elsie Conover.

"We'll ha' made a good stock this winter, Tom," confided Westley, "and I cal'late I'll hev enough to get married on. I'm for buyin' that small pink o' John Anson's and I'll go hake fishin' in the bay so's to be near home an' her."

Anderson puffed hard at his pipe and nodded interestedly.

"Sure Westley, boy, that's the grand idea. No married man sh'd go off Bank fishin'. It's risky, an' ye're away from home too much."

He spoke the words easily, but his whole nature longed to beat, kick, tear and even kill the man he addressed.

With hate burning in his heart, Anderson went on watch that night tood the first trick at the wheel. Collins paced the lee quarter, keeping a look-out. It was a black dark night with plenty of wind, and the *Seldovia* was storming along on her way to the Bank, plunging and pitching through the gloom.

Collins in his pacing had a habit of standing for a minute or so at the after-end of the cabin-house near the wheel. Anderson, with a calculating eye, noticed this—he had noticed it for weeks—and he pondered over a villainous plan as he steered.

"Next time he stands aft with his back to me I'll give him a shove," muttered Anderson coolly glanc-

ing at the low rail. "It won't take much to push him over that, and I kin swear he was for'ard when he went over th' side."

Collins continued his pacing and Anderson watched him like a cat and muttered to himself:

"He'll make four turns an' then stop. That's one—there's two—three—four. He's stoppin'. Now for it!"

He let the wheel spokes go and nerved himself for the push on the broad oilskinned back of the man three feet in front of him. Collins was crooning a little song to himself and standing with his mittened hands behind his back. Anderson tensed his muscles for the shove that would send his rival headlong into the roaring void of sea.

"Wheel thar! How's she headin'?" It was the skipper's voice from out the cabin gangway and Anderson grabbed the spokes again in sudden fright, and in the reaction forgot the course.

"Wheel thar! How's she headin'?" The skipper came half-way up the steps and shouted louder.

"Er — er — ah — west b'south-half-south, sir!" blurted Anderson wildly.

"That ain't what I gave th' watch," growled the skipper coming on deck and glancing in the binnacle, "and you ain't steerin' that. You've let her run off. She's headin' sou'west. Bring her up west half south and watch yer steering'. Some o' you fellers don't seem to know th' compass yet." And he went below.

Collins looked hard at his dory-mate.

"Say, old man, you're lookin' sick. Gimme that wheel an' you go down for'ard an' hev a mug o' tea. West half south! I got ye, Tom, so go ahead!"

Anderson felt sick, but it was more the sickness occasioned by strained nerves and thwarted revenge than anything else. He was furious. Muttering curses to himself, he dropped below into the forecandle and

poured himself out a cup of tea. One of the men was sitting on the lockers doctoring a poisoned hand, and being anxious to rid his mind of an unpleasant episode, Anderson spoke to him.

“What stuff is that ye’re puttin’ on there, Jim?”

“That’s arsenic,” answered the man. “It’s great stuff fur burnin’ away th’ proud flesh from them p’izenings by rusty hooks.”

“Ain’t that arsenic a deadly p’izen itself?”

“It sure is—ef ye were to drink it. A teaspoonful ’ud stretch ye stiff inside a minute. It’s one o’ th’ deadliest p’izens known. Thar’s enough in this bottle to p’izen ivery man aboard. Drop it in that tea-kittle an’ th’ *Seldovia* ’ud hev a gang o’ corpses arter breakfast-time.”

The man finished his doctoring and stowed the bottle away under his bunk mattress. Anderson watched him curiously and as he finished his tea an idea flashed through his mind which caused him to smile.

III.



IT WAS a dark, dirty-looking morning when they made the Bank, and the barometer was hovering on the 29.5 and dropping. Davidson was anxious to make a few sets before the next March gale struck in, and he blinded himself to unpromising forecasts and ordered the dories away.

“Set tub an’ tub, fellers” he sung out. “An’ watch th’ vessel. I’ll h’ist th’ queer thing for ye to come aboard ef it comes away nasty, but ye can’t always tell—we may git a whole day here afore it breezes up. Away ye go, now, top dory over.”

Collins and Anderson oilskinned and seabooted hauled their baited trawl tubs to the rail and overhauled their buoy-lines.

“Cal’late I’ll go below an’ fill th’ dory-jar with fresh water,” sand Anderson. “I’ll git a bit grub as well. Ye never know when one o’ them snow squalls is a-comin’ up’ an’ we’ll take no chances ’case we git astray from th’ vessel. A drink an’ a bite help some ef ye sh’d be a day or two adrift in a dory.”

Grasping the earthenware water-jar, Anderson jumped below into the fore-castle. The cook was on deck giving a hand at the dory tackles and there was nobody below. The fisherman gave a hasty glance around and delved with his hand under the mattress in a lower starboard bunk until he found a small bottle.

“Arsenic!” he muttered. “That’s the stuff!” And drawing the cork, he poured the poison into the dory-jar.

“I’ll fill Jim’s med’cine bottle with water or he’ll maybe git suspicious. Enough to kill ivery man aboard, he said —Um! I cal’late West Collins ’ull take a sudden turn o’ heart trouble in th’ dory today after he has a drink. Our tank-water is bilgey an’ he’ll niver notice any queer taste. Now for some grub.”

On deck, the men were busy swinging the dories over, and Anderson placed the water-jug and the parcel of food on top of the gurry-kid.

“That’s our water an’ grub, West,” he said to his dory-mate who nodded.

“Git that jib on her some o’ yez!” cried the skipper just then. “You Anderson and you Watson—ye might jump out an’ set that jib!” And the treacherous fisherman turned to execute the order with an apparently careless glance at his dory-mate who was carrying the water-jar and the food to their dory.

Some hours later when they were hauling their third tub of gear in the dory, the weather changed with the fickleness of the season. The wind came from

the southeast in spiteful gusts, and the swell was momentarily getting heavier. Overhead, the leaden clouds spread across the sky in an opaque thickness and the horizon became misty and undefined.

Collins, hauling the trawl in the bow of the dory, paused and looked around.

“Don’t see th’ vessel, Tommy! Cal’late it’s a-goin’ to breeze soon!” Anderson, coiling the gear amidships, was smoking and staring anxiously at the dory-jar lying at his dory-mate’s feet. He was nervous, terribly nervous, and his overwrought imagination was picturing the sight of his hated rival writhing in the death-agonies among the fish and blood-stained water in the dory bottom. So preoccupied was he with his ghastly thoughts that he did not heed the ominous portent of the weather.

“I reckon we’ll jest haul this tub an’ make for th’ vessel,” said Collins. “We’re a-goin’ to git a snifter in a while.”

“Aw, hell!” growled Anderson irritably. “This ain’t goin’ to be nawthin’ but a little snow squall. Ef we run back aboard every time it gits cloudy we’ll niver git ’ny fish. We’ll set the other tub yet.”

Westley looked at him strangely, looked at sea and sky, and resumed his trawl hauling.

“You may be right, Tom,” he thought, “but th’ weather looks bad—mighty bad. And th’ vessel’s no-where in sight.”

The other had sense enough to know that it was time to be getting aboard, but he wanted to see Collins drink first. Blast the man! He had been hauling for hours—hot, thirsty work—and hadn’t even broached the jar for a drink. Usually, West Collins would drink half the jar inside of the first two hours. He was an awful man for water and drank more than any man aboard. Anderson had purposely allowed him to do all the trawl hauling that morning, as the

exertion would be likely to excite thirst and cause him to drink earlier than usual.

There was a wind rising now and the black-green sea was beginning to crest under its impetus. A breaker burst under them and slapped a few gallons of water into the dory which was jumping and rearing like a fiery, untamed bronco.

“Startin’ to breeze!” shouted Westley, turning a spray-reddened face to his dory-mate.

“Keep-a-haulin’—it’s nawthin’!” answered the other, bailing the water out.

The dory gave a wild lurch and the heft coming on the thin trawl-line caused it to part at the roller.

“We’re parted!” yelled Collins. “Git yer oar out an’ head her up, Tom!”

Suddenly the horizon was blotted out in a pall of smoky gray. The wind began to pipe up and tear the crests off the waves and hurl them through the air like rain, and stinging sleet hurtled down from the somber gloom aloft. The dory, tossing like a chip, drove off to leeward, with the two men in her tugging at the oars.

“Where in blazes is th’ vessel, Tommy, boy?” shouted Collins trying hard to peer into the blinding, face-stinging spray and sleet.

“I didn’t notice,” growled the other sullenly.

He was feeling savage at the predicament his folly had got him into. Adrift on Brown’s Bank in a March southeaster! It was no joke. In his blind hate, he felt less chagrined over that than in the fact that Collins had not broached the water-jar yet. However, there was time enough. But he hoped that his rival would drink before the schooner drove out of the smother and picked them up.

For an hour they tossed around in the inferno of gale-whipped, sleet-lashed sea; plying the oars to keep the little craft from swamping and keeping a lookout

for the vessel. The perspiration was pouring off Collins's face and Anderson noted the fact with strange satisfaction.

"By golly, Tom, but I'm thirsty!" grunted Westley, panting. "I ain't had a drink sence we left th schooner. Gimme that dory-jar!"

Suppressing the wild feeling of joy which thrilled him, Anderson passed the water-jug aft. The other threw in his oars, drew the jag plug, and deftly tipped the receptacle into the crook of his elbow preparatory to drinking. Anderson watched him with bated breath and bulging eyes.

Suddenly, Collins lowered his arm and put the cork back in the jar.

"No!" he said slowly. "I cal'late I won't drink yet awhile. We may need that water badly afore we git out o' this. If we're astray it might mean a pull to the land—a good seventy or a hunder miles away. Here ye are, Tommy! Hev a little swig ef ye feel like it. I kin hang out for a spell."

"No—no—no!" almost shrieked Anderson. "I don't need any. Keep it for later."

And when his dory-mate placed the precious jug carefully down on the dory bottom, the potential murderer grasped the oar handles savagely and clenched his teeth to suppress the flood of raging oaths which rose to his lips.

For two hours they pitched and tossed about, saying but little to each other. The sea was blank of any other craft, and both knew that they were astray. The wind was increasing in violence. It was snowing heavily, and the sea was running over the fifty fathom water of the Bank in gigantic undulations capped with roaring crests.

"We'll hev to make th' land somewheres!" yelled Collins. "We'll pitch out th' fish an' git her ship-shape fur a long pull. Due north by th' dory compass

oughter fetch us up somewheres on th' Cape Sable shore. What d'ye say, Tommy, boy, shall we run for it?"

"Ay! Go ahead!" growled the other.

Westley noticed the change in his demeanor, but put it down to the fact that he was frightened.

"Cal'late he don't like the idea o' bein' adrift," thought Westley. "Waal, I don't blame him. Thar's plenty good men scared when they know they're astray. I 'member wunst pickin' up a dory on Green Bank, iced up an' with two men in it froze as stiff as herrin's. Th' thought o' gittin' like them scares me too, but never say die!" And he set to work pitching out the fish.

Swinging the dory off before wind and sea, they shipped their oars and pulled for the land some sixty or seventy miles away.

IV.



THE wind commenced to veer to the northwest by sundown and it blew hard and bitterly cold. The change in wind and the set of the tides kicked up a terrible sea, and both men realized that they could not run the dory much longer.

"We'll lash that trawl anchor inside o' that trawl tub an' pay it out to wind'ard with th' buoy-line to it. It sh'd make a drogue that'll keep us headin' to it until things ease up." It was Collins who made the suggestion.

Anderson nodded sullenly and made no attempt to assist his dory-mate. He was parched with thirst and eyed the dory-jar with a decidedly uneasy mind.

Westley whistled calmly as he prepared the drogue. Not being gifted with much imagination, he did not worry about the future. Properly handled, the dory would live out the sea; there was enough water for a week in the dory-jar if used sparingly; they had

some bread and doughnuts. The cold would be the worst peril.

With the wind northwest, it would freeze the spray which drenched the frail dory, and they would have to pound the gunwales and the dory interior clear of weighty, encumbering ice—ice which would swamp them if allowed to make. Well, pounding ice would keep them warm, so there was always a bright side to things. Westley whistled cheerfully, while his dory-mate regarded him with a baleful light in his eyes, and strange suspicions crept into his disordered mind.

“Thar’ we go!” cried Collins happily, after heaving his improvised drag over. “She’ll ride like a duck now, an’ we’ll lay to the oars in the mornin’. Sure to be lots o’ vessels around. We’ll see them tomorrow, for this wind’ll clear things up.” Looking at Anderson, he said with some concern, “You ain’t lookin’ bright, Tommy, boy. Better hev a little drink an’ a bite.”

Anderson was about to refuse, when an idea entered his head. Yes! he’d make a bluff at drinking from the water-jar. If he were to decline, the chances were that Westley would decline also.

“Pass me the jug,” he said hoarsely.

He tilted it up, placed the jar to his lips and allowed the water to wet them. Not a drop entered his mouth, though the temptation was terrible. What a queer smell the water had!

“Here ye are, Westley,” he grunted thickly. “You hev a slug now. I’ve had mine.

Collins took the jar, and looked hard at him.

“I don’t believe you took a drink at all,” he said. “You made a bluff at it!”

“Aw, ye’re crazy!” growled Anderson, restraining his desire to smash the smiling Collins across the face for his suspicions. “What sh’d I make a bluff for? D’ye think I’m a blasted camuel?”

The other took a long, almost affectionate look at his dory-mate, and raised the jar to his lips. "Waal, here's happy days, Tommy, boy!" And he took two great gulps while Anderson watched him almost fascinated.

"Lord, Harry! But the water tastes good," said Westley. "Better'n all th' rum ever brewed." He made a wry face. "Ain't it bilgy an' bitter-like, though?"

It was getting dark now, and Anderson could hardly discern his shipmate's face. He watched him intently. Something would happen soon.

"I cal'late this wind'll blow hard from th' nor'-west all night," remarked Collins calmly. "She's be-ginnin' to ice up already."

He took the bailer and knocked the film of ice off the dory gunwales beside him. Anderson cowered aft in the stern of the dory and waited developments.

"God!" he thought. "He sh'd feel that p'izen now! I wonder how he'll die? Will he git suspicious, an' make for me afore he goes? Or will he crumple up quickly?"

For fully ten minutes he waited, every nerve on edge, for the hoarse cry or the sliding thump of Collins' body into the slush and water on the dory bottom. Heavens! The man was a long time feeling the effects of the poison. It was strong enough to kill a man in a few minutes, he knew, and the water in the dory-jar was highly charged with the stuff.

The sea was running wild and the foaming crests gleamed phosphorescent in the dark of the night. Anderson lolled in the dory's stern and watched Collins like a hawk for half an hour, and when he heard Westley singing to himself, he felt that something was wrong.

"He couldn't ha' drunk that water," he murmur-

ed to himself. "He's wise, an' made a bluff. I wonder ef he knows how I hate him——"

"Oh, thar, Tommy!" came Collins's cheery voice. "How ye makin' out?"

"All right!" growled the other.

"Ain't feeling th' cold?"

"Naw!"

Westley resumed his singing, and Anderson cursed him under his breath.

"How kin that swab sing," he muttered, "when I kin hardly speak with th' dryness o' my tongue an' mouth, damn him!"



THROUGHOUT the long night the dory pitched to the drogue, and ice formed on the gunnels and thwarts. Collins sat on the forward thwart and kept an eye on the buoy-line holding the drogue, and occasionally busied himself clearing the ice away.

Anderson, burning with thirst, lay huddled up aft, his mind a whirl of conflicting thoughts and strange schemes. In a daze he watched his dory-mate, and his hate for the unsuspecting Collins grew until it almost consumed him.

"He bluffed me, by Judas!" thought he. "He never drank that water, or he'd have been a dead one by now. God! How thirsty I am!"

He broke a piece of ice from the gunnel and began to suck at it. It was salty, so he threw it away with a curse. He pulled out his pipe and attempted to smoke, but it only seemed to increase his thirst, so he stowed it away again.

The tardy daylight came at length, and Collins rose to his feet and stretched himself with a yawn.

"How ye feelin', dory-mate?" he said cheerfully.

"All right," grunted Anderson.

“Cal’late w’d better hev a small drink an’ a bite, an’ make a move. What d’ye say?”

The other nodded, and rising to his feet stamped his rubber boots and swung his arms. Though heavily clothed, both felt the cold.

Collins carefully opened the little paper parcel and handed Anderson a doughnut.

“Pass me th’ jar!” said the latter.

He turned his back to Collins and placed it to his lips. Fear of the poison which it contained restrained him from allowing a single drop of the precious fluid to moisten his parched tongue, though the temptation was frightfully hard to resist. With a great show of wiping his lips, he passed the jug over to Westley.

“Aha! that feels better,” he remarked hoarsely.

The other was chewing at a doughnut, and washed it down with a swig of water from the fateful jar while the other watched him swallow. It was only a small gulp, but after finishing the doughnut Collins took another one, and without replacing the cork, handed the receptacle to Anderson.

“Hev another little swig, Tom!”

“Naw, I’ve had enough.”

He was vainly trying to swallow the doughnut, but the food tasted like sawdust in his mouth, and with a muttered oath he blew it out again when Collins was hauling in the drogue.

“He’ll croak this time,” thought he. “He didn’t bluff in that drink. I c’d see it goin’ down his throat —”

“All aboard!” cried the other. “Lay to yer oars, Tom, old son. We’ll head to th’ no’th’ard.”

Both men shipped their oars and commenced to row. It was twenty-four hours since Anderson had a drink or anything to eat. He was feeling the pangs of hunger and thirst—thirst especially—but he pulled stolidly and awaited the tragedy which he knew

must happen soon. Collins may have made a bluff at drinking yesterday, but he surely drank that morning.

Several times he glanced over his shoulder to make sure that his dory-mate was still alive. He did not need to do that, as he could see the blades of Collins' oars at the end of his stroke, but he wanted to see his face. The sight was not encouraging. Westley was smiling and smoking and very much alive.

"Hell! There's something wrong," muttered Anderson savagely. "Th' p'izen don't seem to hurt him."

The wind was going down and the sea ran in long swells, over which they pulled monotonously. They sighted a vessel, but she was far off and making a passage. Anderson was feeling the lack of a drink, and suffered acutely. He was beginning to think that the poison was neutralized to some extent by the amount of water it was mixed with. Later on he would take a small drink himself. If West Collins was strong enough to be proof against the poison, so was he, and a small drink would relieve his agonies.

They pulled, with but a short spell now and again for a rest, until late in the afternoon. Not a vessel was to be seen, and around them rolled the blank expanse of tumbling blue-green sea.

"Better hev another little drink," said Anderson throatily. "Go ahead, an' pass me th' jug."

Collins hove in his oars, reached for the dory-jar and took a good mouthful. "Thar's plenty water left," he said, giving the jar a shake before handing it to the other.

Anderson turned around in his seat and grasped the jug with his mittened hand. His fingers were almost frozen inside his mittens, and he failed to hold the handle tight enough, and it slipped from his hands. Striking the dory gunwale as the little craft

gave a lurch, the precious water-jar plopped into the sea and vanished with but a few bubbles marking where it disappeared.

“God!” almost screamed Anderson. “It’s gone!”

“It sure is!” grunted Collins dolefully.

Thirty-six hours without water made Anderson endure the torments of Dives. The hard work of pulling the dory made him sweat all the moisture out of his body. He was suffering, and Collins noticed it.

“Feelin’ bad, Tommy, boy?” he asked kindly.

“Yes, blast you, yes!” snarled the other, and Westley looked at him curiously.

“H’m,” he murmured sadly. “Poor Tommy’s breakin’ up quick. I sh’d ha’ thought he’d have hung out better’n this. He’s had th’ same as me, and I ain’t feelin’ anyways weak yit. Hope we sight a vessel soon, fur I can’t tell when we’ll make th’ land with them queer tides swingin’ us all ways.” Aloud he said: “Throw in yer oars, Tom. I’ll pull her along, an’ you take a rest——”

“I don’t want a rest!” snapped the other. “We’ve got to git out o’ this. Gimme that compass aft here ——”

He was going to say more, but his articulation failed him.

When night shut down they were still rowing, and the wind was beginning to breeze again from the northeast. Collins noticed it, and shook his head.

“A bad quarter. We’re goin’ to git another blow,” he said.

V.



DAYLIGHT revealed a dory lifting and tumbling over a wind-whipped sea flecked with roaring crests of foam. The drogue was out again, and Westley Collins sat on the bow thwart and watched the line.

In the stern crouched Tom Anderson, red-eyed and panting like a dog, his tongue was swollen and clove to the roof of his mouth. Every now and again, in spite of his dory-mate's objections, he sucked at a handful of sleet.

"Tommy, old man, don't suck that stuff," pleaded Collins. "It's salty, an' 'twill make ye feel worse."

Anderson answered with a hoarse, throaty growl. He was suffering intense agony, and his brain whirled with the idea that he owed his tortures to his companion. The mad hate which imbued him was increased a thousandfold now, and he longed to kill the man who was his successful rival in love and who seemed to be invulnerable against the various attempts he had made on his life. Strange it was that a man's love for a flightly girl should conjure murderous thoughts and actions and result in such implacable hatred. Anderson was going mad.

Throughout the long day the dory rode to the drogue while the wind blew a bitter gale from the north-east and a heavy sea tossed the frail craft like a chip. Sleet and snow fell at intervals, and Collins collected some in his sou'wester and forced the frozen moisture between Anderson's swollen lips. Even while he was engaged in this act of kindness, Anderson had the dory-knife hidden underneath his body and seriously contemplated an effort to stab the man who was trying to alleviate his sufferings.

He lacked the energy, however, to make the effort then, and decided to wait until dark. The little water that Collins had collected for him in the short squalls of snow and sleet refreshed him a little and made him feel better, but his head throbbed and his tongue was so swollen that he was unable to talk. Collins himself was beginning to feel the lack of water, but while his dory-mate lay in the stern, he busied himself bailing out the boat and tending the drogue-line.

Smoking made him feel thirstier, so he threw his pipe and tobacco overboard.

When the night shut down again, the gale showed signs of breaking up. The wind quieted down to a moderate breeze, but the sea still ran very heavy.

"We'll git under way at daylight," muttered Collins. "I hope we'll git picked up tomorrer. It's a long pull to the land from here, and I reckon we've been blowed off-shore agin. Another day, an' poor Tommy 'll croak."

It was bitterly cold—savage weather to be lying in a dory-bottom—and West went aft and tied lashings of marline around the wrists and the legs of Anderson's oilskins to keep the bitter wind and spray out.

"You'll be warmer now, Tommy, boy," he said cheerfully. "We'll git picked up tomorrer sure, an' we won't do a thing in muggin' up aboard th' vessel that takes us aboard. We'll eat our way through th' shack locker an' drink her tanks dry. Ain't gittin' friz, are ye, Tom?"

The other gave an inarticulate groan and glared at Collins with a strange light in his eyes.

"I don't like his looks," muttered Westley. "He's goin' batty, sure. Another day, an' he'll go crazy an' jump overboard. He's bin drinkin' salt water an' chewin' at his mitts all day. God help us! I wonder ef He sees us in this here dory bargin' around th' Western Ocean. I cal'late I'll say a little prayer."

And the brave fellow knelt over the for'ard thwart and prayed—a sailor's prayer, simple, original and pregnant with a childlike faith:

"Dear God, our Father in Heaven. I ain't always singin' out to You to bear a hand like church an' Salvation Army gangs, but listen to me now, an' send a vessel this ways before noon tomorrer, or my dory-mate'll croak. I thank You, God, for listenin' to me, an' I promise not to bother You again. Amen!"



IT WAS black dark—the hour before the dawn—and Westley Collins lay dozing in the bow of the dory. Anderson, awake, and with his mad hate spurring him to extraordinary efforts, felt for the handle of the dory-knife concealed behind him. Grasping it, he sat up and peered at his sleeping dory-mate. God—how he hated him!

The girl was forgotten now, and Anderson scarcely knew what he hated Collins for, but the idea possessed his mind to the exclusion of everything else, and he longed to kill the man who regarded him as his dearest friend. Strange? Even Anderson had to smile at the thought.

His feet were too numb to stand upon. Encased in rubber boots, they were chilled to the bone. So he crawled laboriously for'ard with the knife in his hand. Crawling over the midship thwart he made a noise, and Collins awoke from his lethargic doze and sat up.

“What’s up?” he cried as Anderson made a savage lunge at him with the knife.

The blade drove into Westley’s oilskin coat and ripped it from the shoulder to the waist, but the heavy sweater-coat which he wore under the oil-jacket prevented the knife from cutting to the skin.

“Eh, eh!” growled Collins closing with the maddened Anderson. “Crazy already!”

Imbued with extraordinary strength, Anderson rose to his feet and made several vicious stabs at the other who held him around the waist and by the right wrist. Both struggled desperately—the one to kill, and the other for possession of the knife—and the dory careened dangerously with their efforts. For a few seconds they wrestled, panting and growling, and then the dory capsized and threw both men into the water.

Both were separated by the sudden immersion, and as quick as a flash Collins struck out and grasped the drogue-line and the bow of the upturned dory. Turn-

ing to look for Anderson, he saw the gleam of yellow oilskins floundering and splashing a fathom away and caught sight of his dory-mate's face.

Without a moment's hesitation he reached for the trailing dory-painter, and twisting it around his arm, swam for the drowning man. Grasping him by the collar, he hauled himself and Anderson back to the dory and hung to it for a minute while he regained his breath.

Tom Anderson was unconscious, but, though heavily clothed, was no great weight in the water owing to the lashings around his wrists and the bottoms of his oil-pants keeping in enough air to buoy his weight. Collins knew that, as his own were keeping him up, but he also knew that the air would gradually escape and the dead weight of winter clothing and top boots would soon send him under.

On all dories there is a rope-loop rove through the dory-plug. This loop is outside on the dory-bottom and is made for the purpose of a hand-hold should the dory be capsized, and many a fisherman owes his life to a dory-plug becket.

Collins crawled up on the dory-bottom and grasped the plug-strap with one hand and dragged the inanimate body of Anderson alongside with the other. Thrusting his dory-mate's arm through the loop, he got the dory-painter and tied a bowline under Anderson's shoulders and made it fast to the plug becket. This served to secure him and kept his head and shoulders out of water.

With his dory-mate safe for the moment, Collins caught the two trawl buoys which floated near the upturned boat, and hauling himself to the bow by the bight of the dory-painter, pulled himself up on the dory-bottom. By doing so, he steadied the capsized craft and brought the unconscious Anderson farther out of the water at the other end of the dory.

The water was bitterly cold and the air colder. Though thirsty and half-famished, chilled with the cold and played out with his strenuous exertions, Westley set to work, and, overhauling the buoy-lines, he lashed the kegs on either side of the dory.

“That’ll steady her,” he panted. “We may have to hang here for a good many hours. Now for Tom. I’ll git him on th’ dory-bottom, an’ lashed.”

And dropping into the water again, he worked his way aft and, hoisting his dory-mate’s prone body on to the dory-bottom, he passed several turns of buoy-line around him and the boat.

The sea was smoothing out and ran in long, oily swells. A light breeze was blowing from the west and when the first flush of the dawn illuminated the eastern sky, Westley hailed the prostrate Anderson:

“Oh, thar, Tommy, boy! How’re ye makin’ out?”

The other evidently heard him and waved a feeble hand. The immersion in salt water relieved him considerably from the tortures of thirst, and he felt better. Lying on the dory-bottom, Anderson, though in a comatose condition, was able to sense his position and knew how much he owed to Collins. In a dull yet comprehending way he felt that his feelings had changed.

In spite of the dreadful experiences he had undergone, Collins had an instinctive feeling that rescue was near. Since he prayed, his heart had lightened considerably, and he hung to life with a hopeful persistence which gave renewed strength to his abnormally rugged constitution.

“Ef Howard Blackburn e’d stick out nine days adrift in a dory, I cal’late I kin hang out part o’ that time on a dory-bottom ef it don’t git colder or breeze
_____”

He turned his head, and there burst upon his sea-

weary eyes the joyful sight of a vessel heading towards them.

It was a fisherman under four lowers, and from his position Collins could see her sails shivering as she rounded up to windward. A voice rolled down the wind.

“Weather up yer jumbo! Git a starboard dory over! Away ye go!”

“We’re saved!” hoarsely shrieked Westley. “Tommy, boy, wake up! We’re saved! Vessel ahoy! Dear God, I thank ye! We’re all right now, dory-mate. Plenty to eat an drink ’board o’ that packet.” And he talked and shouted until the rescuers in a dory cut him adrift and hauled him and Anderson aboard.



“THREE days an’ three nights adrift in a dory in that last breeze!” exclaimed the skipper of the *Annie L. Westhaver*. “An’ no food an’ water! Sufferin’ Judas! You’re a tough guy, Collins. Your dory-mate ain’t made very good weather of it, though I think he’ll come around. We’ll run ye into Shelburne an’ git ye fixed up—a tough guy, by Jupiter!”

In a forecandle bunk, Anderson, with toes and fingers badly frost-bitten, lay and raved in delirium. He talked strangely of a dory-jar and arsenic, and in his ravings the name of Elsie Conover was mentioned. Westley Collins, little the worse for his experiences, sat on a lee locker and yarned with the gang while the schooner stormed on her way to Shelburne.

“He’s the best dory-mate a man ever had,” he was saying. “He got himself into that state because o’ me. Boys, he purposely avoided drinkin’ from our dory-jar so’s I’d git th’ water sh’d we be adrift long. He knew I was promised to a gal back home, an’ he wanted to see me live. Ain’t he a *man* for ye?”

“And do ye know, boys, it might ha’ bin worse, ’cause I was nearly goin’ off in th’ dory without a jug that day. We was in a hurry settin’ out th’ string that mornin’ an’ when I hove our dory-jug down inter th’ dory it struck one o’ th’ trawl anchors an’ broke. I wasn’t agoin’ to bother gittin’ another one, but th’ skipper sees it an’ says to me: Here! Take this spare jug with ye, an’ git away. Winter fishin’s no time to neglect carryin’ a full dory-jar, and I never let a dory leave th’ vessel without water aboard.’

“Lucky for me he was so particular, but it done poor Tom no good. He hung out without drinkn’ a drop so’s I’d git it all. An’ when he couldn’t hold out no longer he lost th’ jar overboard jest as he was for havin’ a drink. Poor old Tom! Boys, oh boys, but he’s a man with a big heart!”

VI.



MISS ELSIE CONOVER knocked apprehensively on the door of the Anderson cottage. An elderly lady answered the summons.

“Oh, Miss!” she exclaimed anxiously, “I’m glad ye’ve come. Tom’s bin askin’ to see ye all afternoon. He’s had a terrible time down on th’ fishin’-grounds, an’ ’most died but for West Collins. Come right up.”

With a strange fluttering at her heart, Elsie entered the plain bedroom and hesitated half-frightened when she caught sight of the haggard features of the man she loved.

“Oh, Tom!” she cried with a catch in her voice.

The sick man turned and beckoned to her.

“Come over here, Elsie,” he said quietly. “Mother, please leave us for a spell.”

The girl approached the bed and sat down in a chair.

“Tom, Tom,” she said. “What happened out there?”

He ignored the question and stared at her with eyes which were cold and penetrating.

“I’m a-goin’ to talk to you, girl!” he said after a pause. “What kind of a game are you playin’ with West Collins?”

She flushed and dropped her eyes in confusion at the question. “I—I’m not playing any game with him, Tom.”

“Do you intend to marry him?”

She made no answer, but fingered her dress feverishly.

“Do you intend to marry him?” came Anderson’s insistent voice.

“No!” blurted the girl.

“What did ye mean by tellin’ him ye’d give him yer answer in th’ Spring?”

“I—I—oh, don’t ask me, Tom. I—oh, don’t be so cruel!”

“All right, I won’t. Ye told me th’ same thing. What was your idea? Who did you intend to have? Him or me?”

The girl grasped his bandaged hand nervously.

“Why, you, Tom. I always intended to marry you, but you were chasing around with ‘Jen’ Hooper. I—I told him that so’s you’d be jealous and come to me again.”

Anderson withdrew his hand and nodded slowly.

“Huh! So that was the idea. Waal, you started a fine pot a-boilin’. Now, I’ll talk to ye. West Collins and I hev bin dory-mates all this Winter. He’s th’ best dory-mate I ever had, and a man’s man. He told me about his deal with you. Me, of all men! Me, that was crazy over you an’ whom you made th’ same promise to. He talked to me of his prospects an’ his future with you as his wife. He’s madly in love with

you, and talked to me about you in our watches and in th' dory. To me, mind ye—me that really wanted you worse than he did!"

He paused for a moment and stared at her pallid face.

"I made a vow that he'd never see you again. I was out to kill him. Actin' as his dory-mate, mind ye, I meant to put him out o' th' way at th' first chance. I tried it several times—" she shuddered—"but failed every time, thank God! He never suspected, an' treated me as his best friend. Then we got adrift in th' dory. 'Twas my fault, that. I tried to kill him then by p'izenin' th' water in our dory-jar. Th' jar was changed, but I didn't know it, an' fur three days an' three nights adrift I darsen't have a drink.

"I went through hell then, woman, an' went crazy. I tried to knife Westley, an' th' dory capsized. He saved me an' hauled me up on th' dory an' lashed me there. I won't tell ye any more. I've told ye enough, an' ye'll please not breathe a word o' what I've told ye."

The look in his eyes frightened her.

"Now," he continued steadily, "when West Collins goes to see you you'll accept him. I won't have ye, for I don't care about ye any more. He's in love with you, an' believes in you. He thinks you love him. You do—you'll have to! You ain't a-goin' to make a bluff like I did. You've played your bluff—so did I. I pretended to be his friend. I hated him, but I love him now. He's a man's man. You'll love him too."

He paused and continued in a kinder tone:

"Elsie—my love for you is dead. I've changed it for West Collins. He's a man what's true blue. He ain't none o' yer fancy kind, but he's all there, and he'll make ye a better husband than ye deserve. You marry him, an' ye'll be happy."

“But, Tom, I don’t love him,” almost wailed Elsie.
“It’s you I ——”

“Forget it!” snapped the other. “I have no use for ye. I’m for hookin’ up with Jennie Hooper whom I used to go with for years.”

Miss Conover felt a strange pang, and Anderson knew that the shot had gone home. Jennie would have him, he knew, and Jennie was a nice girl. He saw her in the hospital at Yarmouth before he came home, and was sure of his ground.

“Yes,” he said, “you can count me out. West Collins is your man, and he’s one o’ th’ best. You’ll marry him, Elsie, an’ keep yer promise. Goodby!”

The following announcement in the *Anchorville Daily Echo* pertains to the story:

At the Anchorville Baptist Church, on Wednesday afternoon, Miss Elsie Conover was united in holy matrimony to Mr. Westley Collins—both of this place. Miss Jessie Theriault acted as bridesmaid, and Mr. Thomas Anderson acted as best man.

Human nature is a queer thing. Love begets jealousy; jealousy begets deceit and hate; and hate begets murder. Yet in the case of Westley Collins and Tom Anderson, these passions led to mutual respect and abiding love between them. If Collins had known? It is perhaps better he did not.

The Education of Billy Stream

BILLY STREAM arrived home in Anchorville after two years at college, and Captain William Stream, senior, fish merchant, vessel owner, and proprietor of the plant which turned out Stream's famous "Morning-Glory Finnan Haddies and Fillets,—the Nation's Breakfast," was reviewing his son's university career in language which caused the young man to squirm.

"Yer ma was foolish to imagine that the likes o' you 'ud ever be anything," raved the old man. "She had an idea that ye'd git yer degree an' be an engineer or somethin', an' what hev ye done for th' last two years? Ye've wasted yer time an' my money boozin' an' card-playin' an' hellin' around town with yer good-for-nawthin' pals. About all ye learnt was to write home for money. Ye got scrappin' with waiters in resturongs an' I had to pay yer fines; ye were tourin' around the country playin' football an' hockey when ye sh'd have bin studyin' yer books, an' now ye've come home with nawthin' but a bad reputation an' dressed up with yer dam' fancy clothes like a blasted picter post-card!"

Billy attempted to speak, but his father checked him.

"Gimme none o' yer guff!" he stormed. "I'm talkin' and you'll listen. I've lost fifteen hundred dollars over your eddication, an' I'll have it out o' yer hide. I was a fool to ha' sent ye to college. I sh'd

ha' sent ye to sea. Ye'd ha' learnt more useful knowledge out on th' Banks haulin' trawls.

"I've had enough o' you at college. Ye'll git them fancy duds off an' git down to th' fish-house. Ye'll work there from seven in th' mornin' to six at night at whatever th' foreman likes to put you at, an' you'll git three dollars a week an' your board at home here. Ef ye git sassy an' sojer yer work, I'll kick ye out an' ye'll never darken my doors again."

"Won't you give me something better than that, dad?" pleaded Billy. "Put me in the office or let me take the little vessel and pick up the fish down the shore ports——"

"Put ye in the office?" sneered the elder Stream. "A white-collar job a-slingin' ink! That 'ud suit ye nicely, wouldn't it, but it won't suit me. Ye'd soon be struttin' around town as the young boss, and as for lettin' ye have the little vessel—why, I wouldn't let ye take charge of a dory. You'll go to work in the fish-house or git out o' this."

The old man gave his son a contemptuous glance and stamped out of the room.

Young Billy Stream, a husky, broad-shouldered, handsome fellow of twenty-two, sat silent for a while and felt that he deserved all he got. He had become a star football player, a crackerjack cover-point at hockey, but his college accomplishments ended there. In his studies he was a laggard, but in his social life he was a shining light. He could dance—such fantasies as are common to the all-night cabarets of a college city—and he could drink, smoke and play cards.

He was a noted scrapper, not a bully, but a hard-hitting young demon when aroused and among the college crowd he was known as an "Indian," a reputation which was well enough in college fights and differences with authorities, but detrimental to his prospects with the faculty.

“Well,” murmured Billy after a mental retrospect, “there’s no use kicking, for ‘that’s all shoved behind me—long ago an’ far away,’ as Kipling says. I’ll simply have to knuckle down to the old man or get out.”



NEXT morning at seven he reported to the foreman at the Stream Fish Company’s plant, and the latter gave the young fellow a contemptuous look and set him to work loading fish-gurry into a scow. Billy pitched in, and being a powerful young buck did the work well, but evidently not well enough for Jack Hemsley, the foreman, who nagged at him all the time. Jack had his orders from the elder Stream, and having no use for Billy rather exceeded his orders.

In the afternoon two young ladies came down the wharf to fish. One of the girls was a particular pal of Billy’s, and she stopped to talk to him while he shoveled the gurry off the dock to the scow below.

“Daddy mad, Billy?” she said, smiling.

“Some mad, Ethel,” he answered, knocking off for the moment to speak with her. “I’ve got a fine job here now.”

“Oh, but you’ll do something better than that, I hope. You must buck up——”

The eagle-eyed foreman spied him resting from his task, and strode over, bawling:

“Now, then, git to work, you! What th’ hell d’ye think ye are? None o’ yer sojerin’!”

Billy turned very red and faced the big foreman with his eyes blazing. Hemsley was a rough fellow and did not choose his language before ladies, but Stream resented the hectoring tone and the words.

“Be careful how you speak, Hemsley. There are ladies present!”

“I don’t care a cuss ef thar were fifty ladies present!” roared Hemsley. “Don’t you imagine because there is a skirt on the dock that you kin hev a spell-oh to yarn with them. Git on with yer work, you blasted college dandy!”

This was too much for Billy. Forgetting everything, he hove the shovel down and went for the foreman and socked him one on the jaw.

Hemsley cursed and put up his hands. He was a big fellow and as tough as iron, but while he had the strength, yet he lacked science, and a beautiful fight soon brought all the fish-workers from the sheds to form an appreciative audience.

The scrap was hot and heavy while it lasted. Some of Hemsley’s sledge-hammer blows got home and Billy lost a tooth and had one of his eyes bunged up. It served to cool him off however, and he fought more scientifically. Getting a straight right to Hemsley’s jaw, he hit in with his left, and while the man was dazed for a second, gave him the right again smash on the nose.

The foreman saw stars and Billy gave him a crack which knocked him down into the gurry-heap. The foreman was tough and jumped to his feet and grabbed Billy around the waist, and both men wrestled and struggled around the slimy dock.

For a moment they clinched in a deadlock, and Stream remembered the wrestling tricks of the college gym. He made a rapid movement and hove his opponent from him into the gurry-heap again. As he went down, Hemsley swung his rubber-booted foot up and caught Billy a staggering smack on the side of the head.

The young man saw red and hurled himself on the prostrate foreman. Grabbing him by the collar of his shirt, he yanked him to the cap-log of the wharf and hove him down into the scow-load of gurry, in the

midst of which he landed with a gurgling plunk.

Panting and sweating, he stood up and became aware of the fact that the spectators had vanished. A savage kick from a rubber-booted foot caused him to jump around and look into the angry face of his father. The foot rose again and Billy grappled with his enraged parent.

"Don't you try that again, dad!" he panted. "I only gave Hemsley what he deserved."

"Damn you!" yelled the old man "Keep your hands off me, you beach-comber. Git away out o' this. Git out now! You're a disgrace to the town! Clear out, or by Godfrey I'll have you thrown out by the men!"

Billy released his hold.

"Father," he pleaded, "listen to me a minute——"

"Not a word!" roared his parent. "Clear out!"

The young fellow saw the look on his father's face, and having a certain amount of pride, did not feel like doing any cringing before the interested eyes peeping out from the windows of the plant. He turned shortly on his heel, picked up his coat from a pile and strode away. As he walked down the wharf he could hear his father talking to the discomfited Hemsley.

"Why didn't ye hit him with a billet o' wood—the infernal young sculpin."

Feeling sick at heart, Billy Stream left the waterfront and walked up the fields.

"Give a dog a bad name and hang him," he muttered, and threw himself down on the grass to think.

"I won't go home," decided he after a mental survey of the case. "Dad is mad and he'll nurse his temper for months. He thinks I'm no good—and, by Jove, I don't blame him for thinking so! I haven't been fair to him or mother. It's up to me to retrieve myself."

He lay for a while looking up at the sky and thinking. The thoughts were not pleasant. He realized that for the past two years he had idled and wasted his time without a thought for the future.

Billy wasn't a bad fellow. He was like a young colt—a little wild, but strong and full of life. The college crowd idolized him for his prowess in athletics, and he liked their admiration. It took away his individuality, however, and he became too much of a good fellow.

The little poker parties and shines which he gave in his rooms brought him popularity, but it was only transient and would not help him in his life-work. He was beginning to realize that now. The commendation, "Billy Stream is a good scout!" would not fetch him any money, and there he was, twenty-two years of age and only worth laborer's hire—twenty cents an hour.

"I've got to buck up," he resolved. "I'll cut out drinking and fooling and get down to solid work. I'm no good for an office, but I might be some good aboard a vessel. Dad won't have me, but may be Uncle Ben will. I'll go over to Port Anthony and see him. He'll put me up for a few days anyhow."

Rising to his feet, he cleaned some of the signs of conflict from his person and swung out on the road to Port Anthony and Uncle Ben Anthony.

II.



"SO WILL kicked you out?" repeated Ben Anthony, with a smile creasing his bronzed visage.

Uncle Ben ran a small fish-plant in the village of Port Anthony, but unlike his brother-in-law, who was energetic and ambitious, Ben was good-humored and easygoing.

William Stream began as a fisherman and built up

an immense plant by dint of sheer hard work. The toil of his early days had ingrained itself into his nature, and he was a hard man, though kind enough at heart. Between him and Ben Anthony there was no love lost, as they were rivals in business. Both men packed and smoked fish for market, and when any of the inland dealers came down to Anchorville, William Stream would show them over his fine plant and draw odious comparisons between it and the establishment of Ben Anthony's at Port Anthony.

"Ye've seen our modern sanitary plant," Stream would say; "now ef you want to look over a wrack of a place go to Port Anthony an' see whar' them Excel-sior Brand fish are put up. A dirtier, lousier hole ye never saw, sir. It's fair fallin' to pieces an' sh'd be condemned. I wouldn't eat a fish put up by Ben Anthony for fear I'd be poisoned."

As Port Anthony was a little out of the way, the visitors seldom went there, and it was just as well that they did not, or Stream's words would have been confirmed. Dealers, however, are human and understand the libels of rivals, which understanding allowed Ben Anthony to keep a certain amount of trade from the Stream Fish Company—a trade he would not have kept were the dealers to take the trouble to visit Port Anthony.

"So the old man cut up rough an' hoofed ye?" reiterated Ben Anthony again. "An' ye trimmed Jack Hemsley an' hove him inter th' gurry-scow? Ha! ha! I kin imagine it. Ho! ho! Well, well, boy, I'd give ye a place for that alone. Now, what d'ye want to do—go in the office an' keep th' books?"

"No, uncle," replied Billy. "I think I'll go to sea. I have a fancy that I might make good as a fisherman and take a vessel out as skipper after a while. I've been in the dory before I went to college. I put in a whole Summer with Arthur Thomson in the *Leonora*

shacking, and I can rig gear, bait up and haul a trawl fairly good."

Uncle Ben laughed.

"Fishin's hard work, boy. Summertime's not bad, but the winter haddockin' is a tough proposition. However, ef ye'd like to try it, why, go ahead. My vessel, the *Jennie Anthony*, will be in any day now an' ye kin go in her. Make yer home here with me. I'll do anythin' for ye jest to put one over on Will. Tell me about that scrap ye had with Bully Hemsley!"

A week later, William Stream, senior, heard the news that his son had gone to sea in the *Jennie Anthony* as a fisherman, and he laughed grimly:

"Ha! ha! Gone as a fisherman—th' lazy, good-for nawthin' sculpin. God help th' man as goes dory-mates with him. He'll hev to do his own work an' Will's as well. A college-eddicated fisherman! Huh!"

He felt exceedingly bitter, the more because Ben Anthony had taken his son to his home, and he said to his wife:

"Don't you go a writin' to that young whelp, May. Let him work out his own traverse with Ben. We'll see what kind o' stuff's in him, though I cal'late he's too much of an Anthony to amount to much."

Noting the dangerous look in his wife's eyes he added:

"Th' womenfolk o' that family are the best o' the breed."

Mrs. Stream said nothing, but felt all a mother's sympathy for her son, just then beginning his apprenticeship in the toughest and hardest college in the world—that of the deep-sea fishing fleet.

It was a hard school and Billy Stream cursed the endless monotony of it. The life he had lived in a university town with its pleasures, the dances, theaters and social life; the excitement of the football grid-

iron and the hockey rink; the fraternal bonhomie of a college crowd—it was all gone, and here he was, overhauling hooks on apparently endless trawls, baiting the same hooks with herring, pulling a pair of oars in a heavy dory, hauling the gear, pitching out and gutting cod, haddock and hake, and doing the same work all over again from daylight to dark, day after day.

Waking and sleeping, he lived in a world which swung and pitched with the restless heave of the ocean. He herded in an odoriferous forecastle with a crowd of rough-spoken, though kindly, men, and with them, toiled and fought the ceaseless menace of the sea. Though not at all enamored of a fisherman's life, yet he made up his mind to stick to it, and, knowing how his father would be keeping track of his work, he toiled the harder just to spite the "old man."

After his third trip to the Banks, Johnny Wilson, his dory-mate came aboard one night after visiting Anchorville.

"Saw your old man, Billy," he said.

"Did he speak to you?" queried Stream.

"Sure thing. Came up to me an' says, 'You're Will's dory-mate, ain't you?' I says I was, an' he asks me ef I wasn't tired o' havin' a blasted college guy to look after as well as my own work?"

"What did you say?"

"I ups an' tells him that Billy Stream needed no man to look arter him, an' that you was jest as smart a fisherman as any what shipped out o' the bay."

Billy slapped his dory-mate on the back.

"You're a good sort, old man," he murmured feelingly, "and I won't forget it."



HATING the monotonous toil of the dory, Billy read up on navigation and perfected himself in the art of handling a vessel, with the fixed idea of going out as skipper as soon as possible. To that end, he studied the Bank charts, noted the best fishing bottoms, watched the set of the tides on the various grounds and picked up a vast store of knowledge from his shipmates, men who had fished all over the Western Ocean. The little learning he had assimilated in science during his two years at college, helped him wonderfully—especially in navigation and weather lore.

The *Jennie Anthony* was a poor vessel for winter fishing and Ben Anthony usually hauled her up for the winter months. She was a bad sea-boat and rather cranky, and the skippers who had ventured out in her in Wintertime usually made but one voyage. Fish prices were high during the Fall that Stream fished in her, and Ben Anthony induced her skipper to keep her fishing as long as possible.

This he did until they took a November snifter in the bay and swept the decks clean of dories, cable and gurry-kid. It was Billy's first experience of a breeze and it failed to frighten him, though it scared the skipper and some of the gang.

While the gale was at its height, Stream, oil-skinned and sea-booted, sat astride of the furled-up mainsail and watched the schooner's behavior. The water came aboard very heavily and the vessel lay-to like a log with no lift in her. The skipper watched her apprehensively and spoke to Billy.

“Reg'lar barge, ain't she?” he growled. “Heaves-to like an' old bucket. Look at her diving!”

“I'd like to try her on the other tack,” shouted Billy above the roar of wind and sea. “Let me make an experiment, skipper!”

The other laughed.

“Go ahead, son,” he said. “Ef you kin make her lie easier, you’re a wonder.”

Billy got the gang up and, taking the wheel, wore the ship around.

“Now slack off that jumbo an’ the foresheet!” he cried. “So! That’ll do!”

He took the wheel and watched the compass, putting the helm down slowly. Scanning the run of the sea, he kept a careful eye on the motions of the vessel and finally lashed the wheel.

“We’ll try her at that, skipper,” he said, and went below.

Half an hour later, the watch came below.

“She’s lyin’ nicely sence Billy fixed her. She ain’t makin’ near as bad weather of it as she did afore an’ it’s blowin’ jest as hard.”

Billy, in his bunk, felt a thrill of pleasure at the words. The men would remember the incident, he knew, and it made him feel strangely confident.

“She a dam’ barge in a breeze, anyway,” growled the skipper, “an’ I’m a-goin’ to knock off soon’s we git in. She’s no vessel for winter fishin’ an’ never was.”

Stream, however, thought otherwise.

The bulk of the business carried on by Ben Anthony was in dried salt fish. He owned the ninety-five-ton Bank schooner *Jennie Anthony* and two shore-fishing motor-boats, each run by two men. The haddock caught by these craft were smoked and packed for market under the Excelsior Brand, and Ben Anthony shipped them up to various jobbers in the inland cities who disposed of them. The other fish—cod, hake, pollock and cusk—were salted and dried and sold to traveling buyers, who exported them to the West Indies and South America.

The Stream Fish Company was a large organization owning three Banking schooners, the *Leonora*, *Euge-*

nora, and *Astronora*, fine modern semi-knockabout vessels, each carry ten dories. In addition they owned a pick-up gasoline schooner which plied between the fishing villages on the bay buying fresh fish, and the company also bought the fares of the motor-boat fishermen running out of Anchorville. The fish handled by them was shipped to market fresh and in a cured state; the mainstay of the business being the marketing of the famous "Morning-Glory Brand of Finnan-Haddies and Fillets, Kippered Herring and Bloaters." To market their products, the company had sales agencies throughout the country.

The *bête noire* of the sales agents was the Excelsior Brand. Every time Ben Anthony procured a stock of fresh haddock, he smoked the fish and his jobbers undersold the products of the Stream Fish Company and played havoc with the market. William Stream, senior, tried many times to put his brother-in-law Ben out of business, but could not manage it, and as Ben had no regular and steady trade in his products, Stream considered that he was an interloper and disorganizer.

When the *Jennie Anthony* tied up to her dock in Port Anthony, the skipper resigned and Ben made preparations to haul her up above high water for the Winter months. Billy then broached his ideas to his uncle.

"Look here, Uncle Ben," he said, "if you could keep the *Jennie* fishing all winter wouldn't it pay you well?"

"Sure it would," replied Ben, "but who'll go a-fishin' in her? She's cranky an' wet an' no skipper'll take her out winter fishin'."

"You let me have her," said Billy. "I'll take her out."

Ben Anthony looked hard at the young fellow and then he laughed.

“Waal, by heck, you hev a nerve, son! Three months a’fishin’ an’ ye want to go skipper on that cranky barge in wintertime. Ha! ha!”

“Uncle Ben,” said the other seriously, “I mean what I say. I put in three months aboard of her just to get the hang of things so’s I could take charge of a vessel. Did you think I meant to stick at the grubby drag of work in the dory? Not on your life! Not on your life! I’ve been keeping my eyes open and learning, and I’m confident of my ability to skipper the *Jennie Anthony*. With ordinary luck, I’ll catch fish, too.”

“Even supposin’ ye can sail an’ navigate her,” demurred his uncle, “that won’t alter the fact that she ain’t a winter fishin’ vessel. She’s too cranky for heavy weather, an’ ye’ll never git a gang to sail in her.”

“That schooner can be made seaworthy, uncle,” replied Billy decisively. “I’ve been watching her. She’s badly ballasted, and if you’ll agree, I’ll draw off her lines and reballast her properly. With a little money spent on her I can fix her up.”

The other waved his hand.

“We’ve tried that,” he said. “We’ve overhauled her ballast lots of times——”

“Yes,” interrupted Billy, “you have. That’s just the trouble with you fishermen. You get monkeying about with a vessel and, instead of ballasting her the way the designer meant her to be ballasted, you go ahead on your own ideas.

“That’s what you did in the *Jennie*. You’ve got a big pen of sand placed in her fore-hold—a regular dead-weight in the fore-end of her—that takes all the life out of the vessel. No wonder she’s cranky. I’ll make a safe bet that her pig-iron and stone ballast was dumped in under her floors and leveled off anyhow. I’ve done a little yacht sailing up West and I.

know how much ballast affects a vessel's trim and sailing qualities."

At last, with many misgivings, Ben Anthony gave his consent, and for several days Billy spent his time measuring the schooner and drawing off her lines, a piece of work he credited to the little knowledge he picked up during his two years at college. Procuring the plans of a similar vessel—the original designs of the *Jennie* were lost—he figured out displacements with certain loads, and with his plan of the *Jennie's* lines and a small wooden half-model, he calculated the centers of buoyancy, gravity and lateral resistance.

When the designs were finished to his satisfaction, he got men to work unloading the schooner's ballast, and personally supervised its replacing. Uncle Ben, as an interested looker-on, felt impressed with the careful manner in which his nephew restowed the ballast in a cigar-shaped form along the keelson fore and aft.

"Now, uncle," said Billy when the ballasting was finished, "we'll alter her sail plan a little. She's got too much headsail. We'll cut the jib, jumbo and foresail down a little and get another reef-band in the foresail. In lying to, I think it will come in useful. After a little painting and overhauling of the rigging, she'll be ready for fishing——"

"Ef you kin git a gang to go in her," interrupted the uncle pessimistically.

"Don't worry. I'll get a gang."

III.



WHEN the Anchorville trawlers heard that young Billy Stream intended taking the *Jennie Anthony* out winter haddocking, there was much doubtful comment. The fishermen all liked Billy—especially after he thrashed Jack Hemsley—but to

their unsophisticated ideas, Billy was a "wrong 'un" and full of the crazy notions which comes to those who have been up to a college and absorbed some sort of education.

The fishermen knew the breed of old. They had listened many times to be-spectacled ichthyological professors who had lectured them on fish and fishery subjects, but because these gentlemen had never stood in the bow of a dory and hauled a trawl, they were of no account and not convincing. It is thus with fishermen the world over. They resent ideas propounded to them by men who "read them out of a book."

Billy had not visited his home since the row with his father. He had seen his mother and sister once or twice when the latter drove over to Uncle Ben's, but his parent had evinced no desire to see him. The fact of his linking up with Ben Anthony embittered the harsh old man. When the latter heard that his son was going to skipper the *Jennie Anthony* he laughed grimly and issued an edict, orally of course, that any man who shipped on the schooner would never get a "sight" on the Stream Company's vessels again. This was an error of judgment on Captain Stream's part. Fishermen are singularly independent and refuse to be coerced or restrained from following their inclinations.

Billy Stream found it hard work getting men. His old dory-mate, Johnny Wilson, promised to go with him, and he secured Jim Cline, a half-witted fellow, as cook. When Billy approached the Anchorville and Port Anthony trawlers about shipping with him, they laughed and refused to go. At the end of a week Billy was desperate.

There was a big political meeting held in the Anchorville Hall one night at which many fishermen were present. Just as the conclave adjourned, Billy

jumped up on the platform and addressed the crowd.

“Boys,” he said, “I want a gang for the *Jennie Anthony*. She’s been overhauled and reballasted and is now a fit and able vessel for winter fishing. I’m a green skipper, I know, but I’ll learn, and I’m willing to learn. Anybody that will take a chance, let him come down to Johnny Morrison’s pool-room to-night and sign up. Thank you, gentlemen!”

“Anybody that goes with that young fool is crazy!” roared a voice which Billy recognized as his father’s. “He’s no good an’ never will be any good. He’s double-crossed his father and will double-cross any man that’s fool enough to go with him in that crazy tub o’ Ben Anthony’s. What does that feller know about sailin’ a vessel or ketchin’ fish? Take my advice an’ keep away from him, boys. Ef he don’t drown ye, that crazy cook of his’ll pizen ye!”

There was a general laugh at Captain Stream’s indictment of his son, but Billy jumped on the platform again, flaming.

“Any man that thinks I’ll double-cross him, poison him or drown him, I’ll knock the stuffing out of him,” he bawled defiantly. “I’ll fight any man in the crowd and if I lick him he’ll ship with me. Come on, now, who’ll take me up?”

Some one did take Billy up. It was the two town policemen who at a sign from the mayor grabbed William and ejected him from the hall as a disturber of the peace. Billy went out quietly and strode off to Morrison’s pool-room feeling angry with himself for being such a fool.

At the pool-room, Patrick Clancy sought him out. Mr. Clancy was the town’s sporting promoter and owned the local skating-rink.

“Looky-here, Billy,” he said. “You play hockey, don’t ye? Yes? Well, I’ve a proposition. Anchorville has always bin licked by the Cobtown boys. Now, ef

you'll play for us on Saturday and help lick that Cobtown crowd, ye'll have all the boys with ye. Fishermen are good sports and they'll ship with ye, I'm sure, ef ye help win that game."

Stream laughed.

"I haven't had any practise this season; but go ahead, I'll try."

Clancy turned around to the crowd in the pool-room.

"Boys," said he. "Cap'en Billy Stream is a-goin' to play in the big hockey match against the Cobtown fellers at the Anchorville Rink on Christmas Eve. I told him ef we won, that some o' youse fellers would make up his gang. He's playin' on them conditions, an' I hope ye'll be sports enough to help him out. Dam' me, ef I could only haul a trawl I'd go mesilf. Now, give him a chance."

Billy came in from Port Anthony on the morning of December twenty-fourth. He had his skates and old college hockey gear with him, but somehow or other he did not feel at all enthusiastic about Clancy's proposition. The idea of getting a fishing crew by prowess at hockey was so absurd that he thought little of it. However, when he arrived in town, he found there was more of a furore over the game than he imagined.

The ingenious Clancy had billed the whole county about the event and, being a skillful press-agent, did not fail to advertise the fact that a college-bred fishing-skipper was going to play a star game in order to get a crew. As a result, fishermen from all up and down the coast came into Anchorville to see the game, and at 7 P. M. the rink was crowded.

The Cobtown men came in on a special train, and a husky crowd they were—hard-muscled young fellows who played a rough, slashing game when science failed to give them victory.

"They're a dirty crowd, Stream," said an Anchorville man to Billy as they climbed into their clothes at the rink. "Most of them are mechanics from the Cobtown Engine Works and they rough it up in the second half. Our fellows are lighter than they are, most of us being bank-clerks and store-keepers, so we'll look to you at coverpoint to help us out."

"I'll do my best," answered Stream, "but remember, boys, combination is everything. Don't hog the puck and play lone-hand games. Pass every time you're tackled, and let your forward men keep in a line across the rink ready to take a pass. Remember that—combination's the thing."

The Cobtown men in black-and-yellow jerseys and stockings were already on the ice and shooting the puck around. When the red-and-white arrayed Anchorville boys appeared, a great cheer greeted them.

"Now, then, Billy Stream!" shouted a man. "The Jennie gits a gang ef you play the game!"

Billy took up his position as cover-point when the whistle blew and the referee faced the puck off. The ice was hard, and from the outset the game was fast—too fast for Billy, who lacked practise.

With dull skates on the hard ice, Stream made a poor showing during the first half of the game. Several times the Cobtown men got past him and the Anchorville goal was bombarded with shots which only the skilful goal-tender saved. Once, with the puck at his feet, he fell down on the ice, and a smart Cobtown forward got it and shot a clean goal from the wings. The roar of approval from the Cobtown fans made Billy feel badly, and he cursed his dull skates and lack of practise.

"If the ice only softens up a bit," he murmured, "I'll be able to do something."

The first half had a minute to go, with the score 1—0 in favor of the visitors, when Billy got the puck

and the Cobtown men had their goal undefended. With an eye to an off-side play, Stream cautiously carried the puck up the rink, dodged a Cobtown forward, passed to center, received the puck again, dodged the Cobtown point, and saw the goal clear.

“Shoot! Shoot!” roared the Anchorville spectators.

He glanced at the direction of the goal, stiffened up on his stick for the drive to goal, and then ignominiously slipped and fell down on the ice amid the angry howls of the home crowd. The half-time bell rang, and Billy went to the dressing-room with shouts of “Take Stream to the morgue—he’s a dead one!” ringing in his ears. One thing alone served to alleviate his chagrin—the ice was getting softer.

In the dressing-room, Clancy hunted around for a new pair of skates, but failed to find any.

“Never mind,” said Stream. “I’ll do better this next half—the ice is getting softer.”

“For Heaven’s sake, man, wake up!” almost pleaded Clancy. “If we git trimmed I stand to lose a pile of money. I betted on you—you being a college man and a good hockey player.”

The second half of a hockey game is usually the fastest and most exciting. The men have gotten into their stride by then and the deciding goals are won or lost. Stream noted with satisfaction that the ice was softer and that his dull skate cut in better. He took his place with an air of grim determination and stood, a strapping, handsome figure of a man, strong and agile.

The puck was faced off and a Cobtown man got it and came down the rink like a streak of lightning. He passed the Anchorville forwards, the rover, and made a stick play in front of Billy.

To the Cobtown man’s surprise, Billy got the puck and started up the ice as quick as a cat. He dodged the Cobtown forwards and their cover-point and then

passed to center. The center man, relying on Stream no more after spoiling the last shoot for goal shot himself and missed. Four times Stream got the puck and went up the ice with it and on passing, the shot was spoiled by his own men.

"I'll play my own game after this," muttered Billy, and he did.

At the Anchorville goal, he got the puck and made a splendid single-handed run through all the Cobtown forwards. The cover-point tried to block him but was easily eluded, and Billy shot—a wonderful unerring drive—which sent the rubber into the Cobtown nets, and the cheers which followed showed how his play was appreciated.

The score stood an even one to one with fifteen minutes to play.

With another goal to get in order to beat their opponents, the Cobtown team started roughing the play and body-checked the Anchorville men heavily. The pace was telling on the home team, and Stream noticed that his men were getting fagged and failed to follow up the puck. Andy Kelly, a bank-clerk, playing as rover for Anchorville, was their best man, and Stream skated up to him.

"How're you feeling?" he asked.

"Pretty fit," replied the other.

"Well then, you follow me and stand by for passes. Our team's breaking up."

"Right-oh! I'm with you!"

A heavily built Cobtown player literally bodied his way down the rink with the puck and knocked his opponents off their feet with his strength and weight. Like a wild horse he came speeding down toward Stream, and it looked as if nothing could stop him.

Billy skated for him. The two bodies met with a clink of steel and the clash of hockey sticks. There was a sullen thud as the Cobtown man drove into the

sideboards and sprawled headlong, and Billy came racing up the rink with the rubber disk before him. Glancing around, he noticed Kelly pacing him. He dodged numerous, black-and-yellow figures, who slashed at the puck and his stick savagely, and made a lightning pass to Kelly on the right wing.

“Shoot! shoot! Kelly!” screamed the crowd.

The Cobtown point tackled him just as he was about to make a drive for the goal and amid the disappointed roars of the Anchorville fans, the point player secured the puck and started to run the rubber down the rink again.

Like a red-and-white streak, Billy went for him; sticks clashed, and before the Cobtown goal-minder knew what happened, the puck came at him like a shot from a gun and clattered into the net. The spectators yelled with delight and Clancy shouted himself hoarse.

“Good boy, Billy! Only ten minutes more an’ we’ve got them trimmed!”

The puck was faced off, and Stream found himself the objective of all the Cobtown players. He had the rubber again and was running up the rink when the big fellow, whom he sent sprawling previously, deliberately slashed him over head with his stick.

Stream fell to the ice like a pole-axed ox and lay prone while shrieks of rage went up from the crowd. The referee blew his whistle; the Cobtown player was sent off the ice for the balance of the game, and Billy was carried into the dressing-room bleeding profusely from a nasty cut on the side of the head.

He revived a minute later and in a daze allowed his head to be bandaged. While he was being attended to, Clancy came bustling in.

“We’re trimmed! We’re trimmed!” he wailed. “Kelly’s the only man on the ice that can stand on

his feet—the rest's gone to pieces, and Cobtown hev evened up the score—three to three!"

Stream struggled to his feet.

"Let me out!" he growled savagely, and he staggered out of the room and on to the ice in time to check a rush of the Cobtown forwards.

His head swam with the crack he had received; he could see nothing but the Cobtown goal ahead of him and the puck. He had to get the rubber into their goal once more and he summoned all his strength and energy.

"Another goal and I'll trim them and get my gang!" he murmured subconsciously.

Feeling horribly weak, he speed up the rink, bodying his opponents, leaping over swinging sticks, but keeping the little black disk forever before him.

The opposing team sped after him, but he dodged, doubled and outdistanced them all. They slashed at his stick, but the wrists that held it were wrists of steel—the puck seemed to be contained within an impregnable curve of rock-elm and they failed to get it.

It was a spectacular run from one end of the rink to the other—a gauntlet in which five men were eluded as a hare might elude a pack of snarling hounds. And at last he found himself before the Cobtown goal with the tender awaiting his shot as watchful as a cat.

"Shoot! Shoot!" shrieked the excited crowd, and summoning all his strength, Billy shot, and collapsed just as the closing bell rang.

He woke up to find himself lying on his back on a bench in the dressing-room. Clancy was bending over him and forcing brandy between his lips.

"God, boy!" he shouted ecstatically. "What a game! We've trimmed them—th' swabs! Four to three an' you're th' lad what done it. That last bit o' play was a blame marvel. Run through th' hull crowd o' them single-handed an' shot—Lord Harry,

what a shot! It was like a bullet an' actually bust th' cussed net. If it had hit that goal-tender it 'ud ha' killed him sure."

"Where's that guy that clipped me?" growled Billy ominously.

"Oh, never mind him," said Clancy. "He's gone."

The door burst open and Ben Anthony and a crowd of Anchorville fishermen swarmed in.

"When are ye shippin' yer gang, skip?" shouted one of them.

"Sail on th' second or third of January," replied Stream.

"Give me a sight, by Judas! I'll go jest for th' fun o' th' thing!"

Other voices shouted: "Me too, by Godfrey! Count me in, Billy! I'll go even ef the ol' *Jennie* rolls over!"

IV.



IT WAS a rare bunch of terriers that sailed to the Banks with Billy Stream—a young, harum-scarum gang, imbued with the sporting instinct, afraid of nothing and ready to take a chance on anything. Through the hockey match, the young skipper secured seventeen men, an eight-dory gang and a spare hand, and two days after the New Year holiday, the *Jennie Anthony*, in Winter rig of four lowers, swung out to sea with the Winter had-docking fleet and made her first fishing set on the northeastern edge of Brown's Bank.

Billy soon realized that commanding a fishing vessel entailed numerous responsibilities and anxieties: The selection of the fishing-ground; the direction and number of tubs of trawl the men had to set from the dories called for an intimate knowledge of the bottom and the run of the tides; the schooner had to be

maneuvered by the skipper and the spare hand when the dories were strung out over four miles of sea, and the former must keep an eye on them all, and attend to them should their gear part or they need help in any way.

Sail-handling and the navigation of the vessel was in the skipper's hands entirely. The men merely obeyed orders, and in that it was absolutely necessary that he gain their confidence and give his commands without hesitation. Stream, with but three months' experience in fishing-vessels, felt that he had a lot to learn.

While the fleet were in sight, Billy felt easy. He would watch them and do what they did. Unfortunately for him, the wind came away heavy one night, and when morning dawned, there wasn't a sail in sight.

"Scattered, I guess," said Billy. "Well, we'll take a sound and fish where we are."

During two gray days, they fished and brought aboard a handsome fare with the ground all to themselves. With sixty thousand pounds of haddock and other ground fish below on ice in the holds, Billy was **for swinging off for Port Anthony**, but he listened to the men who urged him to hang on a day or two longer and make a "high-line" trip of it. The appearance of the sky, the oily run of the sea and the falling barometer caused him some apprehension, but some of the men averred that such signs did not always mean bad weather.

"Ef you're for swingin' her off every time th' glass falls or th' sky looks greasy, ye'll be in and out o' shelter harbors all th' time," they said, and Billy, allowing for their experience in such things, kept the vessel on the grounds.

It ended in his having to pick the dories up in a moderate gale of rain and sleet. He had just time to get them and the fish aboard when a savage squall

struck the schooner and hove her down with the four lowers still on her.

“Haul down yer jib!” he roared from the wheel. “Aft here and sheet in yer mains’l! Now, fellers, get ready to tie the mains’l up. Get your crotch tackles hooked in. Ready? Settle away yer halyards! Roll her up! We’ll heave-to under fores’l and jumbo till this blows over.”

They dressed the fish down while the *Jennie* bucked and jumped a steep breaking sea, and Stream noted with satisfaction that the schooner rode like a duck.

“She’s doin’ fine, Skip, sence you ballasted her properly,” remarked his old dory-mate Wilson. “The ol’ *Jennie*’s a different craft altogether.”

It was blowing hard, but the vessel was lying comfortably, and after giving instructions to the two men on watch to put the vessel about on the other tack at the end of their watch, he went below and turned in. He did not sleep, however, but lay awake listening to the conversation of the men hugging the stove in the cabin.

“Skipper sh’d be puttin’ it to her,” growled one man. “No use lyin’ out here with a trip below.”

“Yes,” remarked another. “’Tain’t blowin’ no-ways hard. She’d drive along under ridin’ sail, fores’l an’ jumbo.” And so it continued, regular fisherman’s gabble which no experienced skipper ever listens to. Billy Stream was green, and he astonished the crowd by tumbling out of his bunk and singing out for all hands to set the riding sail and get the vessel under way.

The *Jennie* made heavy weather of it, and the talkers began to regret their outspoken opinions when the watches came around. The wind hauled northwest and freezing cold, while the spray which whirled over the schooner froze on her decks, sails and rigging.

During the night it was "ice-mallets and belaying-pin drill," pounding the ice away.

It froze harder during the day, and the ice made so fast that all hands were unable to clear it. The decks were filmed in ice a foot thick and ropes and standing rigging were encased to the thickness of a man's thigh. The deck-houses, dories, windlass and cables were indistinguishable in the shroud of ice which covered them, and Billy ordered life-lines to be rigged fore-and-aft and ashes scattered upon the slippery decks to prevent the men from sliding overboard.

"This is getting tough," muttered the skipper. "If it makes much more, she'll capsize with the weight of it. Um! Let me see! Cobtown Harbor is thirty miles away. It'll take us seven or eight hours—maybe more—to make it. We can't do it if it keeps cold like this."

The men were getting unusually nervous and frightened and were throwing anxious glances in Stream's direction. The vessel was looking like an iceberg, and the tons of frozen water on her superstructure caused her to roll dangerously.

The men came aft.

"We can't clear her, Skip," they said. "What are you goin' to do? We'll sink soon."

"What do you usually do in a case like this?" asked Billy anxiously.

"How in hell do we know?" growled a man. "We ain't bin out like this afore. You're skipper here an' you ought to know."

"All right," snapped Stream. "Stand by to wear ship! Slack off yer foresheet! Git that riding sail down and the mains'l hoisted. Put a single reef in it!"

"What are ye goin' to do?"

"Go ahead an' do as I tell you!" he replied grimly. "Pound that sail clear and get it hoisted."

Setting the reefed mainsail was a terrible job. The great piece of canvas was frozen solid on the sixty-foot boom, and the men pounded it clear, tied the wire-like reefpoints, and, after knocking the ice off the hal-yards, hauled the sail up with lurid oaths.

"There, damn ye," they growled. "Drive the barge for whatever port yer eddicated skipper kin fetch!"

"Now, get busy with those ice-mallets and keep pounding!" bawled Billy, taking no notice of the remarks.



RUNNING before a heavy sea with the reefed mainsail on her caused the ice-laden craft to perform some hair-curling antics, and the men pounding ice glanced apprehensively every now and again at Stream, who had the wheel. It was ticklish work steering the logy schooner, but Stream was equal to it and held her steady.

"Where are we goin', Billy?" asked Wilson. "Ye ain't headin' for an American port on that course."

"No," replied the skipper. "She's heading right for the open sea."

"Where in blazes for?"

"The Gulf Stream, Johnny."

"Th' Gulf Stream!" echoed the other in amazement.

"What's the idear?"

"Warmer weather, Johnny," replied the skipper.

"In a few hours we'll get into it and this ice'll melt."

When the gang heard the news they laughed the idea to scorn.

"Who ever heard of sich a crazy notion?" said a man. "This is some o' his noo-fangled college idears. Here we are runnin' away to blaze-an'-gone offshore. Let's make him fetch her up an' run for Portland or Boston."

They went aft in a body and suggested it.

"That's no use," replied Billy grimly. "This area

of low temperature will prevail all down the New England coast as far south as New York. Just as soon as we run west again we'll strike it. We'll keep to the sou'southeast until the wind shifts from the northerly board——”

“Aw, that be hanged, Skip!” exclaimed a man. “Ye read that in a book. Fetch her up an' head inshore.”

“You go ahead and pound ice,” retorted Stream. “I'm master of this craft and I know what I'm doing.” The men began to murmur among themselves and Billy recognized the fact that he must assert his authority.

“Here, Johnny Wilson” he cried. “Take the wheel and hold her! Now, fellers, get busy with your ice-mallets and no more guff.”

A young fisherman stepped forward.

“Say,” he growled. “Who d'ye think ye're talkin' to?”

Stream answered him by a well-directed punch on the jaw and the man fell to the deck. Billy stood over him as he rose to his feet.

“Want another crack?” he snapped.

“Naw!”

“Then don't question my doings. Get to work, the gang of you, and clear that ice away. Refuse, and I'll sail in and lick the lot of you!”

It was a bold speech, and Billy knew it. There were among his gang who could have eaten him if they were so disposed, but the circumstances were too serious then for men to commence brawling. Besides that, Stream's confident manner impressed them and they went back to their work of ice-pounding without any more words.

Toward evening the temperature rose and the ice began to melt. The wind still breezed hard, but the air became perceptibly warmer and no more ice made on the schooner.

"Aft here, boys, and take in your mains'l," shouted Stream. "We'll heave her to here!"

At midnight the red light of a sailing vessel appeared on their weather quarter and an ice-coated schooner stormed past.

"What vessel's that?" hailed Billy. "*Regina* of Gloucester! Who's that?"

"*Jennie Anthony* of Anchorville!"

"Hard weather," shouted a voice. "Had to run off here to git clear of ice!"

"By Jupiter!" exclaimed one of Stream's gang. "That's Ansel Watson's vessel. He's a high-line Gloucesterman and I cal'late he knows what he's doing when he runs off here. Skip, ol' dog, I'm sorry I doubted yer idear. You knew what was best, arter all."

Stream said nothing, but when morning broke and showed five fishing-schooners around them hove-to on the edge of the Gulf Stream, he felt that the sight was sufficient testimony to his good judgment. When the wind hauled to the west'ard and they made sail again, Stream had graduated as an able man in the opinion of his gang.

For three days they "warmed it to her" as the saying is, and came storming up the bay and into Port Anthony in fine style. Uncle Ben was over the rail ere the schooner was anchored.

"Thought ye were lost in that breeze," he cried. "H'ard nawthin' of ye sence th' fleet came home. Jupiter! I'm glad t' see ye. How much fish have ye got? Eighty thousand! Good work! There's none to be got now. Nary a vessel or boat out for th' last ten days. Th' fleet jest went out yesterday mornin' an' yer ol' man's crazy to git some fresh stock."

"Is he?" said Billy. "Then sell him our trip."

"At the market price?"

"What was it last?"

“Two and a half cents a pound for haddock.”

“Ask him five. If he really needs it to fill his orders, he’ll have to pay.”

“Wait a second and I’ll telephone him,” said Uncle Ben. In a minute he came back. “He says it’s a hold-up, but he’ll take it. That’ll make a dandy stock for your gang—over eighty dollars apiece for a three weeks’ trip. Billy, you’re a high-liner, but ye sh’d ha’ heard yer old man cuss at the price. Ye’ve put one over on him this time, an’ what’ll make him feel worse is the fact that ye’ve made good as a skipper and fixed the *Jennie Anthony* up as an able vessel again. Now git acrost to Anchorville with yer trip an’ make the old man mad.”

Feeling good at the price they were getting, the gang hoisted sail again and the *Jennie Anthony* sailed in the Stream Fish Company’s wharf. Captain Billy went up to his father’s office to ratify the sale of the fish and found his parent chuckling to himself over the telephone. When Billy entered, Stream, senior, glanced up, shouted “All right, send them up!” to some one on the other end of the line, and turned to his son with a face stern and saturnine in its expression.

“Hullo, Dad!” exclaimed Billy. “I’ve just brought the vessel over with the fish. Five cents for the haddock, you told Uncle Ben, eh?”

“Five cents be damned!” snarled the elder Stream. “D’ye think I’m crazy? I wouldn’t give more’n a cent and a half for any fish you’d bring in.”

“Didn’t you tell Uncle Ben over the ’phone that you’d take our trip at five cents?”

“I might have, but I’ve changed my mind since.”

“You’re going back on your word, Dad!” said Billy slowly.

“Am I? Waal, I reckon that’s my lookout. A

pretty fool I'd be to pay five cents for fish that I kin buy for half the price."

"Yes, but you can't get it now."

"Can't I?" snapped the other. "Don't you worry. I've got all I want. My vessels have jest run in to Cobtown harbor with fifty thousand among them, an' I'm having it shipped up by rail now. Ef you want to sell your trip to me, I'll take it at a cent and a half."

"Why, Dad, that's a cent less than the last market price."

"Take it or leave it then. I'm not anxious to buy!"

Billy was boiling with disgust and rage—so much so that he could hardly speak. His father was enjoying his discomfiture.

"Well, by Godfrey!" said Billy at last. "I always thought my father was an honorable man, but I find his word is worth nothing!"

"You infernal young pup!" shouted Captain Stream, rising. "Git out o' here! I wouldn't take yer fish ef it was given to me. You 'n' Ben thought ye c'd put it all over me, didn't ye? Git aboard that hooker o' yours an' away from my dock or I'll cast yer lines adrift!"

The young skipper turned to go. With his hand on the door, he said:

"You've welshed on this, Dad, but mark my words, I'll pay you back some day." And he went out, inwardly raging.

At the dock he communicated the interview to the gang, and amid the jeers of the shore workers, they cursefully hoisted sail and headed the vessel back to Port Anthony again. When Uncle Ben heard the reason of their return, he swore softly.

"He got me that time, but it was a mean game to play on the men. Never mind, Billy. I'll buy the trip at three cents and smoke them. Git yer hatches off."

That night the premises of Anthony Fish Company burnt down and morning revealed a heap of smoldering ruins.

V.



‘MY PLACE was set afire!’ said Ben Anthony finally. “It never started in the smoke-house, ’cause the wind was west last night and the smoke house ’ud be to loo’ard. The fire was set in th’ wind’ard buildin’ which held nawthin’ but three hundred quintal o’ dried fish, an’ nobody’s bin in it fur a week. It was set afire, Billy, an’ I believe yer old man had a hand in it to put me out o’ business!”

“I don’t believe that Dad would do that,” dissented Billy. “What’ll we do with the *Jennie’s* trip of fish? We can’t handle it now.”

“Um! The only thing I can think of is to telephone Will an’ ask him to take it off our hands at his own price,” said Uncle Ben dismally. “I’ll go ’n’ do that now.”

Ten minutes later he came down to the vessel almost white with passion.

“Told me he wouldn’t take it off my hands to make glue with,” stormed Anthony. “Said he was glad that a fire had cleaned my old shacks from off Port Anthony beach and he hoped I’d retire on the insurance money and keep out of the fish business.”

“That was cruel,” remarked Billy. “Did you telephone any one else about the fish?”

“Yes, I got the Cobtown people on the wire. They wouldn’t take them. Your father must have fixed them.”

Billy looked serious.

“Um!” he exclaimed. “This is war to the knife! Well, I guess we’ll show the old man that we’re not dead yet, uncle. You get those ruins cleared up and

I'll run this fish across to Bayport. When I come back, we'll hold a council of war."

He got some of the men together and hoisted sail on the schooner for the fifty-mile run to Bayport. Two days later, the *Jennie* shot into port again with her fish still aboard.

"Not a buyer over there would look at our fish," said Billy bitterly. "They've all been fixed by the Stream Fish Company. I couldn't give them away. The old man seems determined to put you and me out of business, but we'll best him. I'll get the gang together to split and salt them and then we'll have a talk."

While the men were discharging the schooner's fare and dressing it for salting, Billy outlined a scheme of future operations.

"Uncle Ben, why not go to work and build a modern fish-plant with smoke-houses, packing-rooms and everything just the same as father's place? You had the name of putting up a better finnan-haddie than the Stream Company."

"To be sure I did," interrupted Ben proudly. "Yer dad could never touch me in smokin' fish. I l'arnt th' proper way from an old Scotchman that used to fish for me. My Excelsior Brand will sell quicker than Morning Glory, 'Th' Nation's Breakfast,' as he calls it."

"Then why don't you develop that business?"

"Too much bother. Salt fish is easier. It don't spile and it kin allus find a market."

"Could you sell all the finnan-haddies you could turn out?"

"Easy. I git piles of orders fur them. Come to the office an' I'll show you letters from jobbers."

Billy went up to the combination store and gear shed in which was the tiny cubicle that Uncle Ben dignified by the name of "office." It contained a

base-burner stove, an ancient desk and a safe. The whole place was littered with papers filed upon nails driven into the walls and the desk was jammed full of miscellaneous correspondence. Uncle Ben was clearly no business man and his educated nephew's sense of neatness revolted at the disorder.

Ben's great hands groped among the papers on the desk and he selected some letters from large inland wholesalers offering to purchase considerable quantities of his Excelsior Brand.

"I can see by these that we can build up a good business if it is handled properly," said Stream. "Fix your wharves up; build a good fish-house on it and erect a first-class smoke-house with concrete floors and sides. The other buildings should be well built and nicely painted so as to look good to anybody taking the notion to visit the plant. Let's get out nice boxes; pack the fish in parchment paper and place a little booklet in each box giving hints on how to cook finnan-haddie. Build a new office; get a proper book-keeper and stenographer in it; have filing cabinets to take care of your papers. procure neatly printed letter paper and bill-heads and write your correspondence by typewriter.

"You keep out of the office and look after the smoking and the outside work. Buy a small gasoline schooner and use her for buying fish down the bay ports; have a good outfitting store and keep gasoline and gear. There's lots of fishermen in Port Anthony but there's nothing to keep them here—they all go over to Anchorville and fish out of that place. I'll take a trip up west and see some of the wholesalers and get them to act as our agents. Let us put up finnan-haddies, smoked fillets, kippers and bloaters. Let's cut in to the Stream Fish Company's trade. We can get it, uncle, if we go after it."

Uncle Ben gasped.

“That’s all very well, Billy, but to do what you want’ll cost more money than I’ve got. What’s all this a-goin’ to cost?”

“I can’t say,” replied the young skipper, “but I’ll soon figure it out. I’ll turn to and draw out plans for a new plant and make an estimate of the cost. If you can’t finance it all, I’ll get you to pay my expenses to go west and get some one with money to invest it in our scheme. Come! Let’s dope this thing out.”

Overcome by the arguments of his enterprising nephew, and with a strong desire to get back at his brother-in-law whom he believed to have had something to do with the destruction of his plant, Ben Anthony entered into the scheme enthusiastically, and after Stream had seen the *Jennie Anthony’s* former skipper and induced him to take the vessel out fishing again now that she was seaworthy, the young fellow took train and left for Montreal without breathing a word to any one of his intentions. Ben Anthony intended to do nothing until he heard from his nephew.

Captain William Stream, senior, heard in due course that Ben was doing nothing in the way of rebuilding his burnt-out premises. He also heard that the *Jennie Anthony* was fishing again under her old skipper and running her trips into another port, and that his son had gone west.

“Got tired of it—th’ young cub,” mused he contentedly. “I cal’late he had enough o’ fishin’ I knew he wouldn’t stick—it ain’t in him. Waal, th’ fire’s put Ben out o’ business. Th’ Stream Fish Company’ll hev things its own way now. We’ll put th’ prices up a cent a pound an’ hold them. Ef dealers want my fish they kin pay for them. Ben’s junk ain’t on th’ market to cut prices.”

The hard old man felt so good over the news that

he allowed his daughter to cajole him into buying an automobile.



BUOYED up with optimism and an enthusiastic faith in the future, Billy Stream landed in Montreal and called on several of the large wholesale fish distributors. They all knew the Excelsior Brand and liked them. The finnan-haddies put up by Ben Anthony had a peculiarly piquant and tasty flavor which was absent in the Stream Company's product, and customers preferred them. There was a good market for all they could supply and any one of the firms he visited would take up an agency and push the sale of the goods.

After looking up their various commercial ratings and a few other things. Billy appointed an up-to-date concern as his distributing agent and promised to let them know when he would be ready to start shipping the fish.

"Get to work as soon as possible, Captain Stream," said the wholesaler. "Your namesake's concern has jacked the price up on us and, as they have no opposition to amount to anything, they've got the market."

Getting an agent was an easier matter than getting money, however, and Billy spent an arduous week interviewing capitalists and exhibiting his plans and outlining the possibilities of his proposition. If he were engaged in promoting an oil-well, a silver mine or a real-estate option, he could have got the money, but a fish business— alas! It was too far away and visionary for the men he interviewed to invest in.

Stream haunted offices, raced around hotels to keep appointments, worked all his college chums for letters of introduction to moneyed men, and got thin and pale with his unavailing efforts. It was fruitless. Ten thousand dollars were as hard to get as ten million.

A trip to Toronto on the money-raising errand took

nearly all his money, and when he returned to Montreal after an unsuccessful visit, he had to crave the hospitality of an old college chum and sell his watch in order to procure enough money to take him to Boston. He did not feel like wiring his uncle for funds, and once in Boston he felt sure that he would get a lift over to Nova Scotia upon a coaster or a fisherman.

Feeling decidedly blue, he decided to leave Montreal, and with Jack Anstruther, his college friend, he walked down-town to the railroad depot. It was a cold February evening, the streets were slippery and walking was difficult.

At a busy crossing an old gentleman, dressed rather meanly, attempted to cross the street, and slipped and fell in front of an electric-car which was coming downhill at a fair rate of speed. The motorman attempted to apply his air- and hand-brakes, but the wheels failed to grip on the slippery rails and the heavy vehicle went charging down the slope with unabated speed.

Spectators shouted in horror; a policeman made a rush, but while he hesitated in fright Stream leaped in front of the car, grabbed a bar with his left hand, and, as it drove down on top of the prostrate man, he reached down and grasped the old gentleman by the coat-collar and held it in a grip of iron.

Before the car could be brought to a standstill, both were dragged several yards in front of the car with their legs trailing under it, but, except for the hurts incidental to scraping along an icy street, neither was injured.

Stream swung the old gentleman to his feet.

“Dam’ you, sir!” shrieked the old fellow. “You’ve choked me. What the devil do you mean?”

Billy gasped in surprise. After saving the man’s life, such a greeting was incomprehensible, and he spluttered:

“Dam’ you! What d’ye mean by goin’ to sleep on the car-tracks? Tired of life, or what?”

A crowd had gathered and Anstruther elbowed his way to Stream’s side.

“You’ll have to hurry, Billy,” he said. “Your train goes in two minutes. Golly! That was a nervy thing you did! You must be an awful strong man——”

“Tend to that scurvy old gink and see him home,” said Stream hurriedly. “I’ll have to run for my train. So long, Jack, and many thanks for your kindness in putting me up. I’ll write you.”

He gave a glance at the old gentleman, who was surrounded by the crowd, and he struggled through the onlookers and commenced to run for the depot. Some one shouted after him, but as he had only a minute to catch the Boston train, he did not stop.

He swung aboard just as the train was going out of the station, and when he took his seat in the smoker, he had time to survey himself.

“My good boots and the bottoms of my pants all ripped to Hades,” he growled, “and my coat torn. Saved the old swab’s life and he cussed me for choking him. What d’ye know about that?”

He spent the night in the smoker thinking over the future and his prospects. Things were decidedly blue.

Arriving in Boston, he went down and had breakfast in a “quick lunch” on Atlantic Avenue. He did not sit up at the counter, but entered a partitioned-off compartment. While he was eating he could hear the slurring conversation of two drunken men in the next cubicle, but probably would have taken no notice of it had he not heard the name “Anthony” mentioned. Pausing to listen, he heard a familiar voice speaking in the egotistical bragging manner of “boozy” men.

“Yesh, Tom,” it was saying. “I got even with him,

see? He licked me, an' made a fool o' me afore th' men, an' you know I ain't th' man any one kin lick an' git away with it, see? He hove me down inter a scow-load o' gurry an' made a proper mug o' me, but I got even with him, tho' he don't know it. You know how?"

"Naw! How d'ye git him, Jack?"

"He was runnin' fish to Ben Anthony after his old man kicked him out fer lickin' me. The old man an' him don't pull, ye see? I owe Ben Anthony one fer gittin' me pinched one time an' I owed this college cub one fer lickin' me, so I jest went over to Port Anthony one night in a dory an' hove a handful o' lighted waste inter Ben Anthony's dried-fish house _____"

"*Sh!*" cautioned the other man, who was evidently more sober. "Be careful how ye talk. That's a jail job."

"Aw, hell!" growled the other. "Nobody kin hear me. I ain't shoutin'. So, as I was tellin' ye, th' cussed place burnt down. Ben Anthony's bin put out o' business an' that young swab had t' give up th' vesel. He's gone west——"

"Waal," interrupted the other. "What's yer plan? Ol' man Stream fired ye fer drinkin'. How're ye a-goin' to bleed him?"

"Lissen, son. You were in th' fish-shed that time when ol' man Stream was cussin' Ben Anthony. Remember what he said?"

"Only wished his buildin's 'ud burn down an' git him out o' business. That what ye mean?"

"Sure thing! An' thar were lots h'ard him. Now, I'm goin' over to ol' man Stream an' I'm goin' to say that he hired me to burn Ben Anthony's buildin's down. I'll tell him that you' n' others h'ard him say he wished some one 'ud burn 'em for him——"

"*Sh!*" interjected the other man. "You're talkin'

too loud! Here, finish yer cawfee an' let's git out an' aboard th' *Jennie May*."

Stream listened almost breathless at the disclosures he had overheard in this chance conversation. He knew the voices—one was Jack Hemsley's, the foreman he had thrashed—and the other was of a mar who used to work around his father's place. Both men were rising to their feet. Stream placed his head drunkenly on the table and snored stertoriously. As the two shambled out, he was conscious that Hemsley's companion glanced in at him.

"Who th' hell is that?" growled Hemsley.

"Another souse—dead to th' world. He h'ard nawthin'." And they passed out.

Stream finished his coffee.

"So they're going over on the *Jennie May*. She'll be going to Anchorville with a load o' hard coal, I guess. Stanley Collins is skipper of her, and I guess he'll give me a lift over as well. I must go down and see him. Even though I'm not friendly disposed to my dad, I won't allow those beach-combers to put a game like that over him, and I'll jug Mister Fire-bug Hemsley for burning Uncle Ben's place."

As he strode down to the coal dock, he felt that his excursion had not proved altogether fruitless.

VI.



CAPTAIN COLLINS of the *Jennie May* laughed heartily when Stream explained his wants

"Lord Harry! My old packet sh'd git inter th' passenger business. You're the third guy that wants a lift to Anchorville. Waal, I'm glad t' hev ye, Billy. A coaster kin allus do with a few extry hands in Wintertime. Pick yer bunk an' make yerself to home. We'll go out at noon with the ebbtide."

In the fore-castle Billy found Hemsley and his companion, a man named Jones. The former jumped to his feet on seeing Stream and ground out an oath.

“Hullo, Hemsley!” exclaimed Billy heartily. “Going across?”

The man growled an affirmative.

“Well, well,” said Billy, “we’ll make a regular family party. How’s everything at Anchorville?”

“Same’s usual,” grunted Hemsley sullenly.

Stream could see by the man’s demeanor that he was still sore over the thrashing he had got, but Billy treated him as if it had never happened.

They hoisted sail and put to sea, and for two days the weather held fine and they romped up the coast. When they made Matinicus Rock, the weather turned colder and a heavy-frost vapor shrouded the sea, settling down so thickly that it was impossible to see the end of the jib-boom from the windlass. Billy had the wheel from midnight to four, and when relieved by Captain Collins he went down into the cabin and turned into the latter’s bunk.

For a while he lay dozing and listening to the drone of the mechanical fog-horn which Hemsley was pumping for-ard, and then turning over in the warm blankets, he went into the deep slumber of sailormen. He was awakened an hour later by a terrific crash which hove him out on the cabin floor.

Grabbing his boots, he hauled them on while a medley of shouts sounded from the deck. The cabin was dark, but he could hear Captain Collins shouting:

“For God’s sake, stand by us. We’re sinking!”

Another voice, Hemsley’s, cried:

“Git th’ yawl over. She’s cut th’ bows off us clean to the forehatch!”

Sea-booted feet tramped overhead, and amid the shouting Billy heard Collins bawling:

“Open th’ cabin door, Hemsley! Billy Stream’s be-

low in my bunk.”

Stream leaped for the gangway ladder and clambered up the steps as Hemsley shoved the hatch back.

“That you, Stream?” he hissed.

“Yep! What’s——”

Before he could articulate the question something heavy smashed him on the top of the head and he toppled back into the cabin, senseless, just as the schooner settled in the water to her scuppers.

“He ain’t below!” bawled Hemsley. “Must sleep like th’ Seven Sleepers.”

“Hell!” ejaculated the coaster’s captain. She’s settling. Into the yawl with you. We can’t save him now!” And the five members of the coaster’s crew tumbled into the boat and shoved off just as the schooner hove her stern up preparatory to going down by the head.

“Lay to your oars, men!” shouted Collins. “I hear that cursed steamer whistlin’ down to loo’ard. Git down to him or we’ll be swamped. Poor Billy Stream!”

With a heavy sea running, there was no time for regrets, and the crowd in the yawl pulled hurriedly in the direction of the steamer which had run them down. Within ten minutes they sighted her in the mist and rounded up alongside. A Jacob’s ladder was thrown down her steep sides and a voice shouted:

“All saved?”

“Naw, blast ye!” shouted Collins. “Thar’s one man gone down in her!”



THE rescued crew were landed next morning in Cobtown Harbor and arrived in Anchorville that night. Captain Stream heard the news of his son’s death with genuine emotion and cursed himself bitterly for his harshness toward the boy. Ben Anthony evinced more grief than did Billy’s

parent, and both were present when Collins told his story.

"Billy came to me in Boston to git a passage acrost," he explained. "I took him as well as Hemsley an' Jones an' let two o' my crew go ashore while th' three o' them 'ud help work th' vessel acrost. Billy was below in my bunk when th' steamer struck us for'ard, an' he went down in her. Hemsley opened th' cabin door an' called to him. We had only time to git inter th' boat afore she settled."

"Did ye see her go under?" inquired Ben.

"She was awash to her rails when we left her. A vessel with a dead-weight cargo o' coal in her an' her bows shore off don't take long to sink. She must ha' gone down like a stone thirty seconds after we shoved off."

Hemsley was also questioned.

"He couldn't ha' bin in th' cabin," he said, "or else he slept mighty sound. I shouted down to him but got no reply. He might ha' bin for'ard when she was struck. Anyways, he's gone, poor chap. A fine feller, your son, Cap'en Stream. Had th' makin's o' a fine man in him."

Ben Anthony returned home and gave up all idea of rebuilding his plant again, now that his nephew was gone. He was a widower with no children and he had come to look upon Billy in the light of a son. His sorrow was real.

Over at Anchorville strange things were happening. Jack Hemsley—formerly dock foreman of the Stream Fish Company, and discharged for drunkenness—was reinstated in his old berth again and was more or less drunk all the time. The man Jones was placed in charge of the shipping-room and he, like his crony, seldom drew a sober breath.

The office-manager fired them both one day, but to his consternation, Captain Stream told him to leave

them alone. The manager wondered, but thought the old man's behavior in the matter was due to the fact that both men were shipmates with his son when he was drowned.

Like many uneducated men, Captain Stream had a horror of the law. The ingenious yarn spun by Hemsley made the old man appear in a damaging light, and the blackmailer assured him that any court would find him guilty of incendiarism.

"It's true enough that I fired th' place," said Hemsley, "you'd be th' one to gain by it. Burnin' down Ben Anthony's place was good business fur your firm. Ye said out loud right afore th' lot of us on th' wharf that ye wished some one 'ud burn down Ben Anthony's shacks."

Captain Stream winced. He had made these rash remarks to many people.

"And even ef ye had me up in court fur settin' fire to th' buildin's I'd swear you ast me to, an' I kin git Jones t' swear as well. You'd be convicted fur incitin' me to do th' job an' ye'd git ten years in th' penitentiary fur it."

So Hemsley had reasoned, and the old man capitulated. This accounted for his queer actions in employing two worthless characters and placing them in responsible positions.

Three weeks after the foundering of the *Jennie May*, a man, dressed in seamen's dungaree clothes, opened the door of the house where Ben Anthony lived, and entered. Anthony was reading a newspaper in the sitting-room; the housekeeper was engaged in the kitchen, and as it was dark, none saw the stranger approach the house.

"Uncle Ben!"

The old man started at the voice and paled under his tan. Turning fearfully around he gazed with evident horror at the sight of his nephew, Billy

Stream not the Billy Stream he knew, but an ill-dressed grimy individual with Billy's face, voice and figure.

"Sufferin' codfish!" ejaculated Anthony in an awed tone. "What d'ye want, Billy? Ye ain't come to ha'nt me?"

The apparition laughed and strode across to him.

"Don't be scared, uncle. It's me, all right, alive and well, but awfully hungry and awfully dirty!"

Ben slowly grasped the proffered hand, fully expecting it to vanish, but the feel of solid flesh reassured him that it was real, and that Billy, alive and well, stood before him.

"Waal, I be eternally gosh-swizzled!" cried the uncle, recovering from his fright and shaking the hand heartily. "Lord! but ye scar't me! How in th' name o' all that's sacred did you git here? I thought ye was drowned."

"*Sh!*" cautioned Billy. "I very nearly was, Uncle. What happened to me will never happen again in a thousand years."

"Tell me quick!"

"I was lying in the skipper's bunk aft when the steamer cut the bows off the schooner. I got up after I was hove out on the floor and pulled my boots on. Then I made for the ladder just as Hemsley slid back the hatch. 'That you, Stream?' says he, and when I answered him, he gave me a clip on the head with an iron belaying-pin or something and knocked me back into the cabin, dead to the world. I came to myself when the water poured in and I knew the schooner was sinking, so I swam to the companion-hatch and hung there. The whole vessel must have been under water and I just managed to haul myself through, ready to swim for the surface when she came up again and I found myself above water and jammed in the cabin slide."

“How in blazes c’d she come up an’ her loaded with coal?”

“I’ll tell you. When the steamer hit her she cut the fore-end clean off the vessel as far aft as the fore-hatch. When she settled, her head went down first and the cargo of coal simply ran out of her. As soon as she dumped it, being a wooden vessel and having no ballast, she came up and floated. I hung to her until daylight and was picked up by a big four-master bound for Philadelphia. I left her there and came up to Cobtown as a fireman in a coal tramp. And here I am.”

“And, boy, oh, boy, I’m glad to see ye!” cried his uncle heartily. “Ain’t you th’ divil for gittin’ into scrapes an’ out o’ them again. Now tell me all what’s happened sence I saw ye last. Ye didn’t manage to git’ny money up west?”

Stream related the details of his trip until the time he went aboard the *Jennie May*. He did not say anything about the conversation he overheard in Boston, reserving that for a later occasion.

“Why didn’t ye wire me for money?” inquired his uncle when he finished. “I’d ha’ sent ye all ye wanted. Now, what d’ye plan to do?”

“I can’t do much,” answered Billy. “There’s no use in us attempting to put finnan-haddies on the market unless we can keep up a steady supply and we haven’t go the money to do that.”

“I’ve got eight thousand dollars.”

“Not enough to do business with, uncle. There’s buildings to be erected, men to be employed, boxes to buy, and cash must be paid the fishermen for their fish. Eight thousand dollars won’t go very far.”

“Then what do you plan to do yourself, Billy?”

The young man hesitated.

“Well, I don’t know. I guess I’ll go to sea, fishing—coasting or deep-water. I’ll wait a day or so.”

“Son,” said Uncle Ben emphatically, “sooner’n see you do that I’ll start business again in a small way an’ let you run it. That’s what I’ll do now, so say no more about it.”

After supper, which the startled housekeeper served, Anthony spoke:

“You said Hemsley hit you aboard that vessel?”

“Yes. Where is he now?”

“Waal, it’s a funny thing about this Hemsley feller. He’s a rum-hound and always was, yet your old man has put him back as foreman again—him an’ that sweep Jones—an’ both o’ them are never sober. Th’ manager has sacked them several times, but Will allus puts them on to their jobs again.”

Billy laughed.

“Uncle, I must tell you something. It’ll explain a lot.”

He thereupon related the conversation he had overheard in the Boston “quick lunch.”

Anthony’s face grew black.

“So he’s th’ hound, is he? I’ll jail him for that, by Godfrey!”

“Can you, though?” said Billy thoughtfully. “It might be hard to prove. I have a bone to pick with him, too. He tried to kill me.”

“What’ll you do?”

“Uncle, I think if you let me give that man the worst hammering he ever had, it would be the best. He’ll skip out mighty quick afterward.”

“Your old man won’t be sorry, but if ye’re goin’ to git Hemsley ye’ll need to git him quick. Ef he hears you’re back, he’ll skip out.”

“We’ll drive into Anchorville tonight. I’ll take a lot of pleasure in beating up that scum—more satisfaction than seeing him jailed.”

“I’ll go with you, son.”

VII.



CAPTAIN BILLY STREAM made history in Anchorville that night. People talk about it yet and fishermen relate the incident with gusto in the fo'c'sle o' nights when the vessel is making a passage or lying-to on the Banks.

Jack Hemsley and Jones, half-drunk as usual, were down in Morrison's pool-room with a crowd of fishermen and others when the door opened and Billy Stream and his uncle walked in. The crowd remained spell-bound with horror at the sight of a supposedly drowned man walking in to the pool-room, and in their fright they remained transfixed and speechless.

Hemsley, his eyes almost starting from his head, hung on to a table to save himself from falling, and Jones, being the weaker-minded of the two, incontinently fainted and rolled under a bench.

For a moment, Stream stood looking around the room and then he fixed his eyes on the shrinking, apprehensive Hemsley. At the sight of the man, all the ferocious combativeness of his nature rose and he advanced on him like a tiger that has corraled his prey.

"So you thought you had got rid of me, Hemsley?" he rasped. "Answer me, you hound!"

His fist shot out and smashed the fellow full in the face and the blood spurted from his nose.

"Don't hit him in here, Billy," remonstrated Ben Anthony. "Get him into the stable at the back."

Hemsley was standing stupid-like and making no attempt to put up his hands.

"Boys," said Ben, turning to the wondering mob of men, "this feller Hemsley was shipmates with Billy on the schooner. When she was sinking, Hemsley hit my nevy on th' head with a belayin'-pin an' left him to drown. He didn't drown, an' he's come back

to settle up old scores. 'Sides that, he's playin' a bill o' mine, fur Hemsley is th' man what set my place afire, so drag th' hound outside, boys, an' we'll hev fair play!'"

It was a terrible fight. In fact, it couldn't be called a fight—it was a frightful beating at the strong hands of a relentless and powerful man. Hemsley was bigger and stronger than Stream, but in his composition he had a yellow streak a yard wide. True, he made a strenuous resistance, but Billy smashed him unmercifully with cold and calculating blows. When at last the man dropped to his knees, whimpering and whining, gasping for breath and with his face a pulp of blood-stained, bruised flesh, Ben Anthony mercifully pulled his nephew away.

"Let him be, Billy. He's had enough—Hullo, Will!"

Old Captain Stream pushed himself to the front.

"What th' devil's this? Who's that? Hemsley? Who's been hittin' him, eh? Who is it?"

Billy turned around to his amazed father.

"Only me, dad! I've been paying off some old scores," he said calmly. "You can go home and rest easy. Neither he nor Jones will trouble you any more!"

And as he spoke, he pulled on his coat and in company with his uncle climbed into their team and drove away.

"Billy," said Ben after a pause. "I think ye sh'd ha' spoken to yer dad a while."

"No! I didn't feel like it. He's treated us rotten and I won't court his favor. Mother and sis are the only ones I'd like to see and I'll probably see them tomorrow. They'll drive over as soon as they hear I'm back. If they don't, I'll telephone them."

After a clean-up, Billy was handed two letters by his uncle.

“I was jest a-goin’ to send them back yesterday. They’re from Montreal and addressed to you here.”

Billy opened the first one leisurely, and as he did so a slip of paper fell out on the floor. He let it lie for a moment while he read the letter and then he gasped:

“Holy jumping, cod-eyed Christopher Columbus!” he ejaculated. “What d’ye know about that!”

“What’s the matter?”

“Remember that old guy I told you about that damned me for pulling him from under a street-car in Montreal? Well, this is from him. Listen: ‘Mr. William Stream, Port Anthony, N. S. Dear Mr. Stream: Kindly accept the enclosed with my compliments. My life is worth more to my relations than it is to me, but I consider it is worth at least the amount I am enclosing. I consider it sufficient to compensate you for your trouble in rousing me when “I went to sleep on the car-tracks.” Will be glad to see you whenever you happen to be in this city, and thanking you for my life, I remain yours sincerely, Alvin H. Gardiner.’ ”

“Where’s th’ check? What’s the amount?” cried Uncle Ben.

Billy picked it up and hastily scanned it.

“Holy sailor! Ten thousand dollars!”

Ben jumped up.

“Are ye sure? It might only be one hundred dollars. They’s four noughts in that when they put th’ cents in. No, by Godfrey, you’re right! It reads ‘Pay to William Stream or order, the sum of Ten Thousand Dollars.’ Waal, ef that ain’t luck. Jupiter! I’m glad for you, son!”

The other letter was from Anstruther.

“Dear Billy,” it ran. “You will no doubt be surprised to learn that it was old Senator Gardiner you rescued from under the street-car that night you

went away. He is a millionaire flour-mill owner but as mean as Hades. He asked for my card after you ran for your train and next day telephoned for me to come down to his office. I went and he asked all kinds of questions about you and the reason for your visit to Montreal. I told him you wanted to raise ten thousand bones to start a codfish-ball factory or something of that nature, but you couldn't get it. I put it up strong to him as I thought he might lend you the money. He wouldn't give it to you, that's a cinch, for they say he couldn't be pried loose from a dollar with a crowbar. He'll want his old six per cent. if he loans it, but maybe that'll help you out. I may add that he gave me a rotten five-cent cigar when I left him. I'm having it put in a glass case to hang in the Frat House. Best wishes. Your pal, Jack Anstruther."

"Jack's wrong, anyway, uncle. The old man's come across handsomely. I never expected anything."

"Now you'd better bank that money, Billy," said his uncle solemnly. "It's a useful wad to have as a sheet anchor to wind'ard sh'd you git jammed on a lee shore. Ye'll be gittin' married some day—"

"You funny old scout!" cried Billy joyfully. "This ten thousand is what we need for the business. Let's get busy now and make our plans. The Port Anthony Fish Company is going to operate again, and like the Phoenix, it will arise anew, greater than ever, from the ashes of the old."

VII.



CAPTAIN WILLIAM STREAM, senior, was holding a board meeting of the Stream Fish Company. The president, general manager and board of directors were present in the person of himself, for he constituted them all, and the only other

member of the board present was his office-manager acting as secretary, *ex-officio*.

“Ben Anthony is playin’ the devil with our business!” reported the president in terse but unparliamentary language.

The secretary nodded dismally.

“Our smoked-fish business is fading away. Nobody seems to order the Morning-Glory Brand now since the Excelsior has been put on the market.”

“What d’ye know about them?” growled the old man.

“They’ve got a fine plant with everything up to date and modern,” reported the secretary. “Their smoke-houses are built of concrete and they’ve got all the latest devices for smoking fish. Their fish-sheds and packing rooms are splendid. They’ve a good wharf and handle fish quickly. Their gasoline schooner is faster than ours, and they’ve got all the best fishermen along the shore selling them. They’ve secured the best sales agency in central Canada for distributing their goods, and they’ve got the railroads and express company lined up to give their stuff preferred treatment and quick despatch.

“I hear they’ve just contracted for thirty carloads of Excelsior Finnan-Haddies to be delivered to a western dealer. They put up a fine fish and in nice style. Ben Anthony always could smoke a haddie better’n any one I knew. He’s looking after that end while your son looks after the general management of the plant. We’re dropping out of the finnan-haddie business, and we’re likely to lose the fillet, kipper and bloater trade as well. They——”

“Heave-to, you raven!” growled Captain Stream. “One ’ud think by th’ way you talk that you’re sellin’ the Anthony Company’s fish. We ain’t ruined—not by a long way. Our fresh-fish trade is good an’ so’s our dried-fish business. An’ th’ vessels are payin’

well. Ben's not touchin' th' fresh fish——”

“I'm not so sure of that,” interrupted the secretary. “I heard that your son plans on getting an English steam-trawler out.”

“What?” shrieked the old man. “A steam-trawler! He can't buy one. He hasn't the money.”

“He won't. He'll charter it and buy the fish.”

“He mustn't attempt it. He'll have all the fishermen up in arms. 'Sides that, he'll spile our market. These craft'll bring in fish when we can't, an' ef he gits to supplyin' the inland dealers regularly, they'll cut us out.”

“There's only one thing to do.”

“What's that?”

“Get one yourself!”

The president shook his head.

“I can't.”

“Why?”

“'Cos when there was talk o' fetchin' one o' them craft out here afore, I fought it an' made a report that they destroyed th' fishin'-grounds. Ef I was to go back on that, th' fishermen 'ud hang me.”

The secretary mused for a minute.

“I have an idea,” he said at last.

“Spit it out!”

“Amalgamate!”

“With Ben Anthony an' that young cub? Never!”

The other smiled.

“Captain. Ben's your wife's brother and Billy's your son. He's a smart lad and he's made good. His college training did that. It gave him a broader insight into things. It gave him a pull with people. He can talk intelligently. He understands conditions up west. He's scientific in his methods. Look how he fixed up the old *Jennie Anthony*! By shifting her ballast he made a new vessel out of her. He's a smart

sailorman and can lick his weight in wildcats. The fishermen all love him. He's a good sport."

The old man grunted.

"You're getting old, captain. You should be knocking off now and taking it easy. Who's to take your place when you go? Nobody but Billy. You might as well be sensible and live happily with your family for the rest of your life. Billy's a good lad. He licked Hemsley and chased him out of the place. Hemsley——"

"Yes, yes," growled Captain Stream. "Never mind about Hemsley." Then almost plaintively he said, "D'ye think Ben an' Billy will come in with me?"

"I think they may, captain," said the secretary thoughtfully. "I'll try them anyway."

"Don't let on that I sent ye, Jim," cautioned the old man. "I won't knuckle under to either Ben or Billy."

"No, no," answered the other. "Leave it to me. I'll fix it."

The old fisherman lit up a cigar.

"Jim", he said. "You fix up this amalgamation. an' I'll give ye a small share in th' business, but, mind ye, don't let on to Ben or Billy that I sent' ye."

The meeting then adjourned.



THAT evening, the secretary and manager of the Stream Fish Company sat in Ben Anthony's parlor. Ben and Billy were present and all three smoked cigars and laughed.

"So you talked the dad around, Jim?" said Billy. "Ain't he the proud old joker though? He wouldn't give in to me even if he were dying. Well, well, he's my dad, and I don't think ill of him, though he was a trifle severe on both Ben and me for a time. I'm glad you managed to talk him around. We don't want

to be in competition if we can get along together, so you tell dad that we're willing to amalgamate."

The meeting was held on the morrow. Captain Stream, senior, was rather frigid at first, but the evident friendliness evinced by Ben and his son soon had him feeling good. The business was rapidly consummated.

Ben Anthony was given full charge of the smoked-fish business and would manufacture in both smoke-houses as demand dictated. Billy was to take over both plants as general manager. Mr. James Dawson, the secretary, was given a share in the business and supervision over the books and accounting with the title of secretary-treasurer, Captain Stream would retain his position as president, but would take no active part in the concern.

When the deal was concluded satisfactorily, Captain Stream puffed hard on his cigar. He cleared his throat.

"Ahem—Ben—Billy—me—er, th' wife proposed ye come an' hev dinner with us tonight. Maybe ye'll come?"

"Sure we will!" cried Ben Anthony and Billy at once.

"Good! Jim! S'pose ye fetch out that bottle o' champagny water what's in th' safe. We'll hev a little touch to th' health o' th' noo Stream-Anthony Fish Company, Limited!"

A Skin Game at Deception Island

IT all happened with the coming of Red-Headed McDonald to Anchorville. A schooner had spewed him ashore in Halifax with money to burn, and, seaman-like, McDonald held high carnival for a delirious fortnight. When his money was gone he sobered up with the resolution of doing the prodigal son act before the old folks "somewhere up th' Bay o' Fundy." A friendly skipper of a packet schooner carried the prodigal as far as Anchorville and with a drink and a blessing left him to work his own traverse to the table and the fatted calf.

Ashore in the little Nova Scotia port and disgustingly sober, the prospect of going home "broke" began to appeal with decreasing insistence to the erring one.

Give him a stanch vessel, a good crew, and he knew where a fortune was waiting for the adventurous ones. It was a long distance away—down at the foot of the world. Wild winds, wild seas and pitiless cold would have to be fought by the men who dared to take the chance. Then came the memory of his debauch in Halifax. Maybe he talked to much? Mayhap he dropped valuable information into ears which understood? Curse the rum! It had ruined him, and always would while he retained a hankering for potent spirits.

With a deprecatory shudder at his own shortcomings, McDonald turned away from the wharf and,

making his way up-town, dropped into Morrison's Pool Room. He didn't know what led him there. It was warm, and perhaps there was a chance of picking up something.

The room was dense with tobacco smoke. One or two men, presumably fishermen, were knocking the balls about, while a big, rawboned fellow, dressed in good clothes, but collarless, was holding forth to the gang who lolled on the benches and practised expectorative shots at the brass cuspidor. The big man was evidently disgusted with something, and McDonald listened to the growling monotone of his voice.

"Aye," rumbled the speaker. "Fishin' ain't w'uth a dam' these days. I'll quit th' business for good, ef th' luck don't change. Here we are, jest in from a three weeks' trip from th' Cape shore an' what hev I got to show fur it? Nawthin' but a miserable fifty thousand, mostly hake at that — not enough ter pay fur all th' gear we lost, or even fur t' herrin' bait we used up. Last trip we did about as good—fed th' dog-fish with most o' our bait, bust our fores'l, an' had ter stay out so long, that th' shares went ter pay th' grub bill. I've lost enough this Summer ter pay fur a new vessel. Aye! a new vessel!"

"Why don't ye lay her up fur a spell, Cap'n?" inquired a man.

"Lay her up?" grunted the other. "I might as well do that as lose money every time I make a set. I'll probably have ter lay her up, as none o' the gang'll sail with me agen. They think I'm a hoo-doo. Ef I c'd do anythin' else with that vessel, barrin' fishin', I'd do it."

And Captain Bartley Simons turned dejectedly away.



AS HE sauntered out of the door, a sun-browned man with red hair plucked him by the elbow.

“Well? What’s the matter with you?” growled Simons, as he paused at the threshold.

“Come outside. I want to talk to you—particular.”

“What’s ter hinder ye talkin’ particular here?” snarled the skipped. “I don’t owe you anythin’, do I?”

Without answering, McDonald caught the disgruntled fisherman by the arm and swung him outside.

“Excuse me,” he said. “My name’s McDonald. I come from Maitland way. Used to be mate—sealing schooner. I h’ard ye growlin’ agin’ yer luck inside there, an’ I think I kin put ye on a pot o’ money, ef ye’ll take a risk.”

Simons glared at the red-haired one in surprise.

“Ye’ll put me on to a pot o’ money?” he repeated. “An’ how in th’ devil’s name kin a red-topped scallawag like you put me on to a pot o’ money? Why don’t ye git it fur yerself?”

With an insistence that was not to be denied McDonald piloted Captain Simons to a quiet spot on the adjacent wharf.

“Sit down,” he commanded, and Simons obeyed instinctively. Somehow this McDonald was like the Ancient mariner and “had his will.”

“I used ter be mate on the *Topsail Belle*—a ninety-ton sealin’ schooner. Three weeks ago I got back inter Halifax after fourteen months in th’ Southern Ocean. When I drew my share—it was quite a wad—I blew it all in, inside o’ two weeks, an’ now I’m broke—No! no! I ain’t goin’ ter make a touch on you, Cap’n—sit still! I’ve a good fifty-

dollar watch left yet, an' a ring which I got in Monte Video w'uth another twenty.

"Now, I sh'd ha' hung on to that there money, but you know th' way. Ye start with a little nip o' rum and end up with gettin' outside o' a puncheon o' th' rot-gut stuff. That's what I did, an' woke up in a shack on Grafton Street, dead broke. My watch an' ring were inside o' a pair o' sea-boots which I had in my bag, an' that's all I got left. That'll do fur interduckshun, an' explain why I'm here. Now fur th' business.

"V'y'ge afore last I went with my uncle, Pete McDonald on a sealin' trip to th' Sou' Georgias — away off Cape Horn. We got down there all right an' did some fair sealin', but my uncle had h'ard that seals were plentiful in the Sou' Shetlands, so we squared away fur there. As it was Summertime down south, we made th' run inter Bransfield's Straits without much trouble——"

"Did ye git any o' them critters there?" interrupted Simons, visibly interested.

"Did we git seals?" Well, I sh'd say so! Th' blessed islands an' rocks were covered with them, an' it did not take us long ter load pelts up ter th' hatch coamings. We made a fortune——"

"Huh!" grunted Simons sarcastically.

"And lost it", continued the other. "It was this way. While rootin' around in th' Strait, we discovered an island to th' west'ard that was shaped like a horseshoe. Isla Decepcion, the Argentinos call it. It looked like a snug harbor, so we hauled th' schooner inter th' middle o' it through a narrow passage a cable's length in width. An' unloadin' th' skins, we dressed them in Liverpool salt ready fur th' long trip to th' Cape. On goin' out o' the passage, we ran on th' rocks to th' starboard side, an' knocked a hole in th' schooner's bottom.

“We unloaded her to get her lightened, but as soon as we got all the skins an’ stuff out o’ her, she lifted in the tide, capsized an’ sank. This left us in a fine fix, an’ as there was some twenty of us all told, we jest managed ter save provisions enough to ha’ lasted th’ gang fur eight days—short allowance at that.”

Bartley Simons nodded his head, and as the other paused, he reached into his vest pocket and offered a particularly bilious looking cigar to the speaker.

“Smoke up, mate,” he rumbled. “I allus gives a cigar to th’ feller that can spin a good yarn. I believe yours, so fire away!”

McDonald regarded the weed with a doubtful air, and after a suspicious sniff, lighted it, and continued:

“As we did not want ter spend a Winter on a blasted, barren rock, we cached th’ pelts in a cave an’ takin’ to th’ boats, steered a course fur Elephant Island, four hundred miles to th’ no’theast.”

“That’s some pull,” commented the fisherman.

“Aye, it was some pull, you bet. Four hundred bitter miles to go—over a sea where th’ smallest waves are like mountains, an’ th’ month o’ May comin’ on. It was no joke, I kin tell ye. We had h’ard that the Argentine Government had established a depot on the island fur shipwrecked sailors, and we cal’lated if we got there we’d spend th’ Winter an’ chance bein’ picked up in th’ Spring. Ye see, it was gettin’ so late in th’ year—Winter was comin’ on down south—an’ th’ whalers an’ sealin’ craft had all gone to the nor’rard.

“Th’ second day after we left Deception Island we ran inter a heavy sou’west gale, an’ my uncle an’ th’ four men in his boat disappeared. Later we lost sight o’ the other, an’ never saw either o’ them again. This left two boats with five men in each.

an' we rode th' buster out by lashin' oars together an' headin' up to th' sea with them as a drog. I was sorry ter lose my uncle, for he was a fine feller, but the other men were an infernally hard crowd — mostly cod-haulers from Saint-John's, Newf'nland.

“Next day we lost the other boat. She was swamped by a big comber, an' th' crew in her went down like stones on the icy, cold water with such heavy clothes on. That left us alone—four men an' myself, an' for th' nex' three days we had a devilish hard time. Look at me left han'!”

As he spoke he thrust out his left hand, from which the third and fourth fingers were missing. Simons gazed on the sight unaffectedly, and McDonald resumed his narrative.

“I lost both o' my little toes an' them two claws by frostbite, an' one o' th' men in th' boat with me was frozen to death. He was as stiff as a frozen cod when I rolled him over th' gunnel, God, but it was cold! We pulled on the oars for a spell, sang a lot of silly songs, an' began ter count th' number o' strokes we pulled. For th' whole o' one night I tugged at them oars, countin', countin', countin', until I was up in th' millions. I was goin' batty then, but it kept me warm.

“We were picked up by a Scowegian whaler hangin' on to th' last minute, but the other fellers died when we came in sight o' the East Falkland. I landed at Port Stanley, made my way to Monte Video, an' findin' th' *Topsail Belle* lyin' there an' lookin' for a mate, I got th' berth. On her we worked around th' Crozets an' th' Indian Ocean grounds, an' I kep' a shut mouth regardin' th' pelts in th' cave on Deception Island. Ef I had told them, they would ha' scoffed th' lot an' probably bounced me in Cape Town.”



McDONALD paused and scrutinized the fisherman's face with hungry eyes. Bartley knocked the ash off his odoriferous perfecto and spoke slowly:

"I presume, now, that you want ter git them skins?"

"Yes, by Godfrey! I want to get them. I want to get my hands on some money, an' you're th' man that can help me!"

"How?"

"Well, ye hev a schooner. It's yer own I take it. By yer own sayin' ye would do anythin' with her, instead o' losin' money fishin'. Fit her out for me, an' I divide half with you. There's a good four thousand pelts layin' in that cave—all salted, dressed an' in an atmosphere where they'll keep forever. On th' basis o' twenty-five dollars a skin—they sell Cape Horn skins in London for thirty-five to forty dollars—that would make around one hundred thousand cold, hard plunks!"

Captain Simons recoiled.

"One hundred thousand dollars in seal-skins! Holy Smoke! what a fortune!" For a moment he pondered, then rising hastily, he grabbed McDonald by the arm. "Come to home with me," he cried. "I want ter think an' talk it over. You may be lyin', but I'll soon find out. An' ef ye are, th' Lord help ye! One hundred thousand dollars! Holy Smoke, but it beats fishin'!"

And taking the red-haired man by the arm as if he were afraid to lose him, he led the way to his home.

II



McDONALD had to undergo a gruelling cross-examination under Simon's questing tongue. Shipping records were looked up and the loss of the schooner verified under the Government record of "Missing Ships."

McDonald's name was also enumerated among the crew, and when he saw the fateful record, he suddenly thought of his folks at home.

"By Heck!" he cried. "They'll think I'm dead. Well, I won't bother 'em now. When I git my paws on th' dollars I'll go home." Dismissing the subject from his mind, he launched into fitting out details with the now enthusiastic Bartley Simons.

"Now," said the latter, "I'll provision th' vessel for a six month's trip, an' I'll hev ter git a cook an' at least six men. I wonder ef any o' my gang would go? They're only fishermen, but they know th' vessel an' kin handle her better than any o' yer deep-water fellers. You'll do th' navigatin', an' we'll stand watch an' watch."

And far into the night they discussed ways and means. Thus came the red-haired man to Anchorville. The man who came from nowhere into Morrison's Pool Room, and left the town with Bartley Simon's seventy-five-ton schooner *Roberta S.* and eight of Anchorville's sons. Where they went to, nobody knew. Simon's gave it out that he was running to Newfoundland for dry fish, and maybe a West Indies voyage. He would be gone some considerable time, he calculated—maybe three months maybe six months. It was nobody's business but his own. And with this enigmatical answer, Anchorville had to be satisfied.

Down the Bay of Fundy sped the little vessel un-

der all sail—four lowers, balloon and staysail. Once outside in open water, Simons informed the curious crew of his mission, and McDonald supplied details. They took the news easily, as if a trip to the south'ard of Cape Horn were an ordinary "shacking" trip to Brown's Bank. "If Bartley Simons was going, they would go!" And the *Roberta*, with McDonald laying the courses, swept hot-foot through her old jogging territory off Cape Sable and swung her nose for the Western Islands and the North East Trades.

Since they left the Nova Scotia port for their long trip to the south'ard McDonald's mind was in a state of unrest. He would sit for hours upon the cabin lockers, smoking, and with a face puckered in anxious thought. One night he unburdened his mind to Simons.

"Skipper," said he. "I'm afraid we may have a tussel ter git them skins."

"How's that?" exclaimed the other in surprise.

"Well," replied McDonald slowly, "I'm thinkin' there are others after them. It's only fair ye sh'd know. You're puttin' up th' schooner an' th' money an' standin' th' biggest loss ef we don't git them. Ye see, when I got paid off from that schooner I went ashore with Barney Olsen, her skipper, an' we got tanked up together. Now I hev a faint idea that I talked a bit too much to that joker. He's a quick-witted devil an' can see through a bollard further than most people. Now, jest afore we sailed, I looks up a Halifax paper an' sees this little paragraph. Here it is."

"The sealing schooner *Topsail Belle*, recently home from a successful voyage in the Indian Ocean, has left again for the Falklands and the sealing territory around the Crozets and Kerguelen Islands. On being asked by our correspondent the reason for

such a quick return after a two week's stay in port, Captain Olsen stated that as sealing was so good lately in the Southern Ocean, he wished to make but one more voyage and settle down ashore. For the past week, the *Topsail Belle*, has been on the railway, and was thoroughly overhauled and recoppered. She carries five men of her former crew."

"Well?" queried Simons, "What d'ye think?"

"What do I think?" reiterated McDonald. "I think that Barney Olsen is at present slammin' th' *Topsail Belle*, fur Deception Island as hard as she kin go. He ain't goin' to no Crozets nor Kerguelen Islands. Sealin' war nawthin' extraordinary last v'ye, an' furthermore, he niver intended to leave Halifax so soon. I know why he left. I opened my silly mug, an' he got wise. Curse him!"

Simons growled.

"Huh!" That's a nice thing ter tell me arter we're well on our way. Sh'd I turn back?"

"Turn back be damned!" cried the other. "We'll git them skins, never fear, even ef I hev ter kill Olsen an' his crowd ter git them—th' thievin' beach-comber! He's only got a week's start o' us, an' his schooner ain't any better at sailin' than this vessel. Slam her ahead an' don't worry."

Having, as it were, shared his depression with Captain Simons, McDonald began to get optimistic, and under his influence the other forgot the ominous import of the intelligence.



FROM then on it was drive, drive, drive. Down the Northeast Trades, through the Doldrums, over the Line and the Doldrums again, and into the steady blow of the Southeast Trades, the gallant little fishing schooner went,

and, taking to her new traverses like an old deep-water clipper, she reeled off the knots in great style. Being easy and quick to handle, she made small bones of the fluky cat'spaws common to the Doldrum latitudes and drifted like a ghost with the least flicker of a breeze.

In the steady, blue-skied Trades she scurried along with balloon, maintopmast staysail and gaff-topsails set, while her crew would read the trailing patent log with wondering eyes and swear that "it beat fishin'." A pampero off the Rio de la Plata caught her with kites up and for a few minutes there was some excitement as she rolled half her deck under water, but before she had drained the water off her, it had passed and all was sunshine again.

Forty days from Anchorville the *Roberta S.* made the East Falklands and stood in for Port Stanley. Arriving in the harbor, tenanted by a large fleet of schooners, store hulks, and a dismasted sailing ship, McDonald and Simons slung a banker's dory over the side and rode ashore. In an hour they were back with a dory load of provisions.

"H'ist th' dory in, fellers!" yelled Simons. "Git the anchor up! Up on her fores'l there!"

All hands tallied to the fores'l halliards, and after jiggling up the sail as taut as a board, the windlass brakes were pumped with frenzied energy. Scarcely stopping to seize the anchor, the schooner was jibed and ran out of Port Stanley harbor under her foresail and jumbo.

"What's th' racket, Skipper?" queried Tom Slocum.

"That other schooner, th' *Topsail Belle*, jest left here a couple o' days ago. Git th' muslin on her an' don't stan' gapin' thar'! Hustle, fellers! Up on yer mains'l an' jib! Look alive!"

By dint of much strenuous exertion and bad language, in twenty minutes the little schooner was "dressed" and racing through the long gray-green rollers like a blooded horse. McDonald paced the weather quarter with an anxious eye to leeward, while Simons sat astride of the wheel-box and steered, his leathern jaws working spasmodically upon a quid of niggerhead.

"Here's where we're goin' ter git some weather, Simons," remarked McDonald. "Southern Ocean weather—wind an' seas!"

Simons spat carelessly.

"Huh! I guess me'n an' th' boys ain't scared o' th' Banks in winter we kin stan' any weather anywhere. I cal'late ef we kin stan' anythin' we git down hereabouts. Bill Simons, come aft an' relieve wheel! Sou'west b' south."

They got weather as McDonald prophesied. Leaving the Falklands astern the wind hauled ahead and stiffened, and before nightfall the *Roberta* was ratching down the parallels to a buster from the southward and bucking over tremendous seas. The light sails were taken in, and all through the night they kept driving into the gale, which hauled more to the westward as the Horn was opened out.

The fisherman regarded the huge seas with no signs of consternation, and even when the little vessel was performing antics among the overfalls of the Burwood Bank, they grudgingly "allowed it wuz a bit worse than th' tide rips off'n Brier Island." The swing of the Westerly and the Pacific Antarctic Drift coming around the Horn and meeting the seas flying south with the prevailing Norther on the Atlantic coast of South America cause these dangerous overfalls — great combers with breaking crests—and many a good ship has been sent to the bottom by them.

Before many hours among them the crew of the *Roberta* were forced to admit that they had never seen seas like them before. The wind forbade the mainsail, and the banker's riding-sail had to be hoisted, while the foresail was double reefed. Heavy seas broke aboard, flooding the decks and streaming down into forecastle and cabin. Men had to be careful in going aft or forward, and the two at the wheel were lashed to the wheel-box. By daylight it was too much for her, and Simons sung out:

"Come on, fellers. Douse that jumbo an' riding sail We'll hev ter heave her to."

While endeavoring to haul down the riding sail, McDonald and Slocum were caught by a big sea which broke over the bow, and under a ton of water, were washed into the belly of the sail. Enveloped in the slack, smothering canvas and the water contained in it, the two men had a narrow escape from being drowned.

"By th' 'Tarnal Thunder!" cried McDonald, when he recovered his breath. "I've had many a close call, but I'll be darned ef I ever was nearly drowned in th' belly o' a sail!

"Ha! ha!" laughed Simons when they came aft. "Sailed th' seas to be drowned in a ditch, or rather a sail! That's a new one on me!"

She was hove-to for ten hours, wheel lashed, and all hands essaying to stay in their bunks below, while the schooner reeled drunkenly over the mighty combers. By the time she had drifted to leeward of the Bank the seas eased down and sail was made again.

For fourteen long and weary days they drove to the southward, clawing on long tacks into south and southwesterly gales. With the pitching and tossing, the cold, and the almost continual rain, all hands were beginning to weary of the voyage, and it came

as a pleasant break in the monotony when one of the crew, who had climbed to the fore cross-trees, sung out,

“Land Ho!”

McDonald tumbled up the cabin companion — the sleep still in his eyes.

“Where away?” he bawled.

“Two p’int^s off’n port bow!”

“All right, said McDonald. “That sh’d be Livingstone Island. Keep her as she goes.”

The schooner raised the land rapidly, and as the sun rose it illuminated the gray, sterile cliffs and rocks to port. Upon them the mighty billows of the “Forties”, burst and thundered in acres of foam, while, as the mists of the chilly Antarctic morning dissipated, the loom of a high, snow-covered mountain could be seen. McDonald recognized the place at a glance.

“That’s Livingstone Island, boys. We won’t be long now afore we make our destination. How’s she headin’ now?”

“Wes’sou’west,” answered Simons from the wheel.

“Keep her so!” And the red-headed navigator busied himself in taking a fourpoint bearing.

III



DECEPTION ISLAND lies in latitude sixty-two degrees fifty-six minutes South, and longitude sixty degrees, thirty-three minutes West, and is one of the South Shetland Archipelago. The island is of volcanic origin and of the horseshoe shape peculiar to the atolls of the South Seas. Composed of a vast heap of lava rocks, boulders and ashes, the island rises sheer, forbid-

ding and gaunt looking, and upon its precipitous cliffs the long seas of the Southern Ocean fume and rage in acres of white water. Sterile, blasted and dead it is the home of countless penguins that march up and down the cliffs and ledges in regiments and render the region melancholy by their weird and peculiar cries. On the scant rocks that fringe the island at certain spots the Cape Horn seal disports himself with herd or family, and in the darkness of the Antarctic Winter the drifting bergs and floes reel and grind on the iron rocks as they swing north on the flood of the Drift.

The interior of the island is a vast, placid lagoon, undisturbed by the strong gales of the high latitudes and completely rimmed in by the stark cliffs. Close inshore there is a depth of thirty fathoms, but no sounding-line has yet plumbed the depth in the center. Vessels entering this silent lake come in through a narrow channel—a break in the island's rim—taking care to avoid a spur of sunken rocks on the port hand. These rocks were the doom of McDonald's vessel on his former voyage to the island.

As this passage is but a cable's length in width and but a cleft in the cliffs, it is hard to discern from seaward. Thus the name—Deception Island.

It was dark when the *Roberta*, with McDonald conning her, passed Sail Rock and ran down to leeward of Nature's monumental deceit. Hauling their wind, they worked in to the entrance of the lagoon as close as they dared and, letting go the headsails, hove the anchor over in twenty fathoms. Instead of chain cable, the eight-inch manila fishing hawser was bent on—"for good an' sufficient future reasons," the enigmatical McDonald explained.

When the cabin clock of the *Roberta* pointed to the hour of midnight, McDonald called all hands aft. The schooner was rolling slightly to the long swell

in the lee of the island, and the water chirped and gurgled around her rusty, sea-washed hull. The gang came down into the cabin, quietly and like shadows.

“Now,” said McDonald softly, when all were assembled, “the other craft may be inside that lagoon, an’ she may not. She may have reached the island an’ cleared out again, but I don’t think so, as we must ha’ bin on her heels all th’ way from th’ Falklands. I have a hunch that she’s inside thar’, as they’ll spend some time searchin’ fur that cave among them boulders. Ef she ain’t thar’, it’ll be plain sailin’ for us, but I’ll lay my hat that she is.”

The red-haired man paused and gave a glance at the clock.

“Th’ Skipper an’ I hev a plan which we’ll carry out to-night without any delay if we mean ter git what we’ve come for. Cookie and Morris ’ll stand by th’ vessel here. The rest of us’ll take two dories an’ go inter th’ lagoon. Ef the other vessel is layin’ there, we’ll board her an’ try ter work her outside here. Git th’ hatches off, sails loosed an’ halliards clear. We’ll hev ter do some spry work, maybe.”

The men nodded, voicing their endorsement of the plan by stolid grunts.

“How about guns?” queried Sam Johnson. “Them sealer fellers are all armed.”

McDonald opened a locker and produced three revolvers, while the Skipper drew two repeating rifles from under his bunk mattress.

“They’re all loaded,” said McDonald. “Th’ Skipper an’ I will take a revolver each—Johnson kin take the other. Slocum an’ Corby kin take th’ rifles. You other fellers kin use what ye like. Come on, now, man th’ dory tackles an’ git two dories over.”

Simons tumbled into one dory with three of the gang, while McDonald commanded the other with Johnson and Slocum. With hearts beating hard with

excitement, they pulled over the long swells for the entrance—McDonald leading to show the way. As the passage was to leeward, it was sheltered from the heavy swells which thundered on the western shores of the Island, and they had no difficulty in working through.

“Now, fellers,” cried McDonald softly “pull strong an’ quiet, for ef they sh’d hear us’ we’d be shark’s meat in two shakes. Ef they’re here at all, they’ll be up at Pendulum Cove, three miles up ter starboard. Give way!”

Silently and like a flotilla of ghosts they pulled the long miles up through the quiet darkness of this curious inland lake. Outside, the thunderous roar of the surf came but as a low murmur, while the eery silence of the crater pool was broken by the hoarse cry of a penguin or the squawk of a sea-bird as it flapped through the night. Overhead, the stars blazed with the scintillating glitter of the high latitudes, and the gaunt cliffs were shadowed in somber black on the waters—the star reflections dancing in the eddies left by the boats.

“She’s there!” came in an exultant hiss from McDonald. “They’ve lit a fire on th’ cliff. Easy as ye go, boys.”

Simons pulled up.

“What d’ye intend to do?”

“You board her to port an’ batten th’ gang down in her foc’sle, an’ I’ll attend to the afterguard. Make no noise, an’ keep well in th’ shadow o’ th’ rocks. Give way!”

And McDonald breathed a prayer for success.

IV



THE lookout man upon the *Topsail Belle* was sleepy and leaned against the foremast, his pipe between his mouth. With eyelids as

heavy as lead, he shivered and closed them at intervals.

As he gazed with hazy eyes at the fire on the bank of the lagoon he sprang into momentary wakefulness on hearing a slight splash, but with a muttered "Dam' sea-lion havin' a bath!" he relapsed again into a semi-somnolent state. The tired feeling began to take complete possession of him, while the snores of the foc'sle gang coming up through the open scuttle acted as a lullaby upon the watchman's soporific nerve, and stowing his pipe inside the furl of the foresail, he crossed his arms and found a soft streak in the mast for his back.

When he awoke again, it was suddenly and with a smothering sensation. Regaining his faculties, his slow mind took in the fact that a heavy hand had him by the throat and a voice was hissing in his ear.

"Make a sound, yuh swab, and I'll choke ye!"

He opened his mouth to shout, but a plug of ball-ed up marline filled his facial orifice, and he was unable to utter a sound. Gently, but with tremendous strength, his assailant bore him to the deck and, casting off a coil of halliard, lashed him from neck to heels in the strong hemp rope.

"Got th' beggar fast?" inquired a hoarse voice.

"Aye, for sure," answered McDonald out of the gloom. "He's sarved with good foretops'l halliard from head t' foot, an' a hank o' mousin' in his mug ter keep him quiet. Draw that foc'sle hatch, there, Corby, an' stan' by it with yer gun. Slocum kin do th' same aft.

Silent forms flitted around the sealing schooner's decks in stockinged feet, and McDonald peered down the open hatch, feeling with his hands.

"They're all aboard," he whispered to Simons. "They must ha' found th' cave without any trouble.

Now, fellers, we've got ter git th' fores'l on her an' git outside with th' little air blowin' down th' lagoon."

"How about the anchor?" growled a man. "There's three turns o' chain around th' windlass an' a good pile in th' box. We can't start haulin' all their cable over th' windlass ter let it go!"

"Come for'ard with me," replied McDonald. "There's a shackle at fifty fathoms. He ain't got any more than forty paid out here, so overhaul th' cable until ye come to th' shackle an' knock it out. Lively, there, lively."

With the clank and clatter of the chain cable rumbling over the iron-shod windlass barrel, and the horrible creaking from the foresail blocks as the throat and peak halliards were manned, the captives below awoke to sudden activity and commenced to hammer on the drawn scuttles.

"What's th' row?" roared a deep voice, which McDonald recognized as that of Olsen, the skipper. "Open th' hatch, Jim!"

Jim was unfortunately unable to reply, but McDonald answered. "Good mornin', Cap'n Olsen, an' how's yer liver this mornin'?"

"Who th' hell's that?" cried Olsen in surprise.

"Why, who sh'd it be but Danny McDonald come aboard for a social call an' ter git th' seal pelts he told you about up in Halifax. Oh, but it's you that is th' wily bird, Captain Barney Olsen! Ye put great credit in th' talk o' drunken men. Well, thank heaven, I kin remember who I was drinkin' with, an' git busy on my own hook." And while McDonald was jibing his late skipper, the schooner was gliding, ghostlike, for the passage.

"Say, Mac," cried Corby from for'ard, "they're startin' ter break th' foc'sle scuttle. What shall I do?"

“Give ’em a hail, an’ shoot through th’ door!”

Corby carried out his instructions, and silence reigned forward. Not so, aft. Here the hunters berthed and had their rifles, and, after their first surprise, they commenced firing indiscriminately through skylight and planking—making things unpleasant for those on deck. McDonald at the wheel began to get desperate and sang out:

“Cap’n Olsen, hold on a minute!”

“Aye!” growled a voice, while the firing stopped.

“I jest want ter say that ef we hev any more signs o’ resistance from youse fellers or any more shoot-in’, I’ll pile this schooner up on th’ rocks an’ set fire to her! An’ furthermore, I’ll take all yer boats an’ leave ye on this blasted island to die like rats! I mean what I say, an’ by God, I’ll carry it out!”



A LONG silence ensued after McDonald proclaimed his threat, and, the breeze freshening with the dawn, they made a successful run through the passage. Meanwhile, Simons and the others were busily engaged in getting the sealskin pelts up on deck.

Swinging around the point to the eastward of the Island, they ran down on the *Roberta* as she rode to her anchor.

“Stand by!” yelled McDonald.

By a piece of smart seamanship on his part, they ran alongside the fishing schooner and, cutting the foresail halliards, Simons had the sail down by the run. On the shout from Mac, the cook and Morris caught a rope and made it fast to the *Roberta’s* fore-bits. The *Topsail Belle* swung around and both schooners lay bow to bow, as, creaking and grinding, they surged into the long easterly swell.

With feverish haste the *Roberta’s* crew began to load the bundles of pelts aboard. Sweating and panting in the chilly air, they labored like Titans to get the valuable spoil out of the sealer’s hold. The

banging of rifle-butts against the hatches and the shouts of the prisoners started afresh and acted as incentives to fiercer exertions. A voice cried out from below,

“Mac! You’ve got th’ upper hand. Let’s divide th’ skins an’ call quits.”

“No, no, Captain Olsen!” answered McDonald sarcastically. “You’re too kind. They belong ter me an’ my friends, an’ why sh’d I give you any? Besides, seals are plentiful around th’ Crozets an’ Kerguelen. Arter ye’ve made a trip thar ye’ll make yer fortune an’ settle down ashore. Them’s yer own words to th’ noospaper in Halifax. No, no, me bird! I’ll take ’em all—ye’ll be able ter catch us easy when ye’re flyin’ light.”

A volley of impotent curses greeted this sally, and Mac laughed easily.

While the last bundles of pelts were being hove aboard of the *Roberta*, McDonald went around the sealing schooner with an ax. With a blow he smashed the compass to flinders, and striding to the mainsail halliards, he cut them and hauled the ends through the blocks. The main-sheet he chopped through in several places, and a few telling cuts put the wheel-gear out of business. Simons, with a fisherman’s bait-knife, severed the forestaysail halliards and cut all the lanyards of the standing rigging.

When the last bundle was hove aboard, McDonald yelled:

“For th’ vessel, now, fellers! Jump!”

With a rush the fishermen piled aboard of their vessel.

“Up on yer foresail!” yelled Simons, and McDonald with the ax cut through the manila fishing hawser and cast the *Topsail Belle* adrift.

The sealing schooner had drifted to leeward but

a scant hundred yards, when a mob of men poured out of her cabin with yells and curses of rage. Olsen stood up on the cabin and, grasping a gun, opened fire.

Bang! Bang! Zip! Zip! and the bullets began to chip and splinter on the *Roberta's* rail and cabin trunk. The gang were hauling up the foresail, when the fusillade commenced, and McDonald was at the wheel.

"Belay yer halliards!" he commanded. "An' lie down! We'll soon git out o' their range."

With the foresail half-way up the mast and bulging like a balloon, they ran down the Straits to the eastward, McDonald sitting on deck beside the wheel, steering.

For a moment the firing stopped, and Simons looked cautiously over the rail.

"They've tumbled in to the dories, and are pulling like the very devil after us!"

McDonald glanced hurriedly around.

"Boys!" he said, "We'll hev ter git that fores'l an' mains'l up." In spite of the occasional bullets which bit the woodwork around the fore and main masts, the gang managed to haul the sails up, and wing and wing they ran before the wind, quickly leaving the dories astern.

Standing alongside the wheel-box, McDonald watched them stop rowing, and waving his hand derisively to Captain Olsen who was standing up in the bow of the foremost dory, he shouted,

"Good-by, Barney!"

He was about to say something more, but a well-aimed bullet from the enraged Olsen's rifle missed his head by a hair's breadth and ripped through the mainsail.

"Damn!" growled Simons. "It ain't safe to palaver with these jokers. That was a narrow shave."

“Ho! ho!” laughed McDonald in greet glee. “Cleaned out, by Godfrey! ‘Twill take them half a day ter reeve that runnin’ gear again, an’ I’m thinkin’ they’ll have ter steer home by starlight or a codhauler’s nose. Ef they git their vessel fixed by ter-morrer, they’re doin’ well. I cut th’ taykles—”

“And I put a shot through th’ bottom o’ their boats afore I left,” exclaimed Corby modestly.

“And I”, cried Simons, “cut all th’ lanyards o’ th’ riggin’.”

“Ho! ho! Ha! ha!” McDonald rolled over the wheel-box in paroxysms of laughter. “What a mess for sure! I’ll hev that yarn published from Cape Town to Labrador—Captain Balney Olsen an’ his sealskins, or a skin game at Deception Island!” Becoming serious again, he said: “Well, boys, give her all she’ll carry—we ain’t out o’ th’ bush yet. With sich a crowd aboard, he’ll be after us hotfoot, an’ ef he kin catch us, we’ll see th’ lid o’ Davy Jones’ locker openin’ for us. Now, that beggar’ll figure out that we’ll swing off for Cape Town an’ land th’ catch there, but, I know a company in Monte Video that’ll buy our cargo, so I reckon we’d better shape for there. What d’ye say, Simons? Monte Video an’ home?”

“Monte Video an’ home it is!”

V



THIRTY-FIVE days later, a rusty, sea-worn schooner let go her mud-hook in the Inner Anchorage at Monte Video, and McDonald and Simons went ashore. A sale was made and each man pocketed a draft for a handsome amount. Simons and McDonald drew some thirty thousand dollars each out of the adventure, while the men were highly satisfied with a trifle over four

thousand apiece. They stayed but a short time in the South American city—long enough to procure fresh water and provisions—and early one morning a small fishing schooner, manned by a crew of wealthy men, stole across the turbid waters of the Rio de la Plata on the long trail for home.

Needless to say, Anchorville gossip was busy. The *Roberta S.* had been reported as arriving at Monte Video and diligent inquiry had failed to solve the mystery. When the report came from the lighthouse at the entrance to Anchorville Bay that the *Roberta* was passing in, the town flocked to the wharf. Shabby, rusty and scarred with the winds, seas and suns of the waters in which she had sojourned, she rounded slowly up to the wharf with Bartley Simons to the wheel.

Scarcely had the lines been slipped over the bollards, when the little vessel was invaded by all Anchorville and questions flew thick and fast. In answer to excited inquiries Simons with an enigmatical smile remarked that he was engaged “in a skin game at Deception Island!” and with this, the Anchorville gossip had to be satisfied. Simons had retrieved his ill-luck; his crew were discussing investments in farms and schooners, while McDonald of the flamboyant hair was going home to the old folks, with money to burn.
