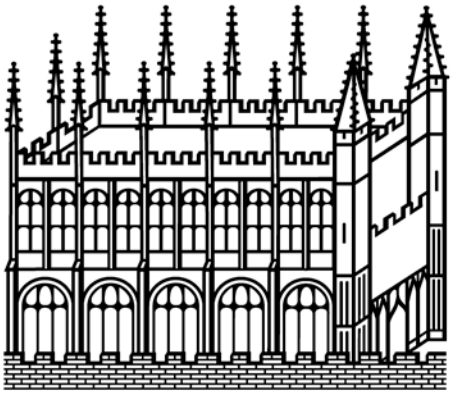

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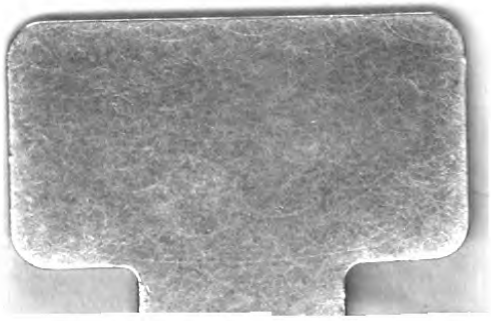
BELL'S NOVELIST READERS

THE MARRYAT BOOK

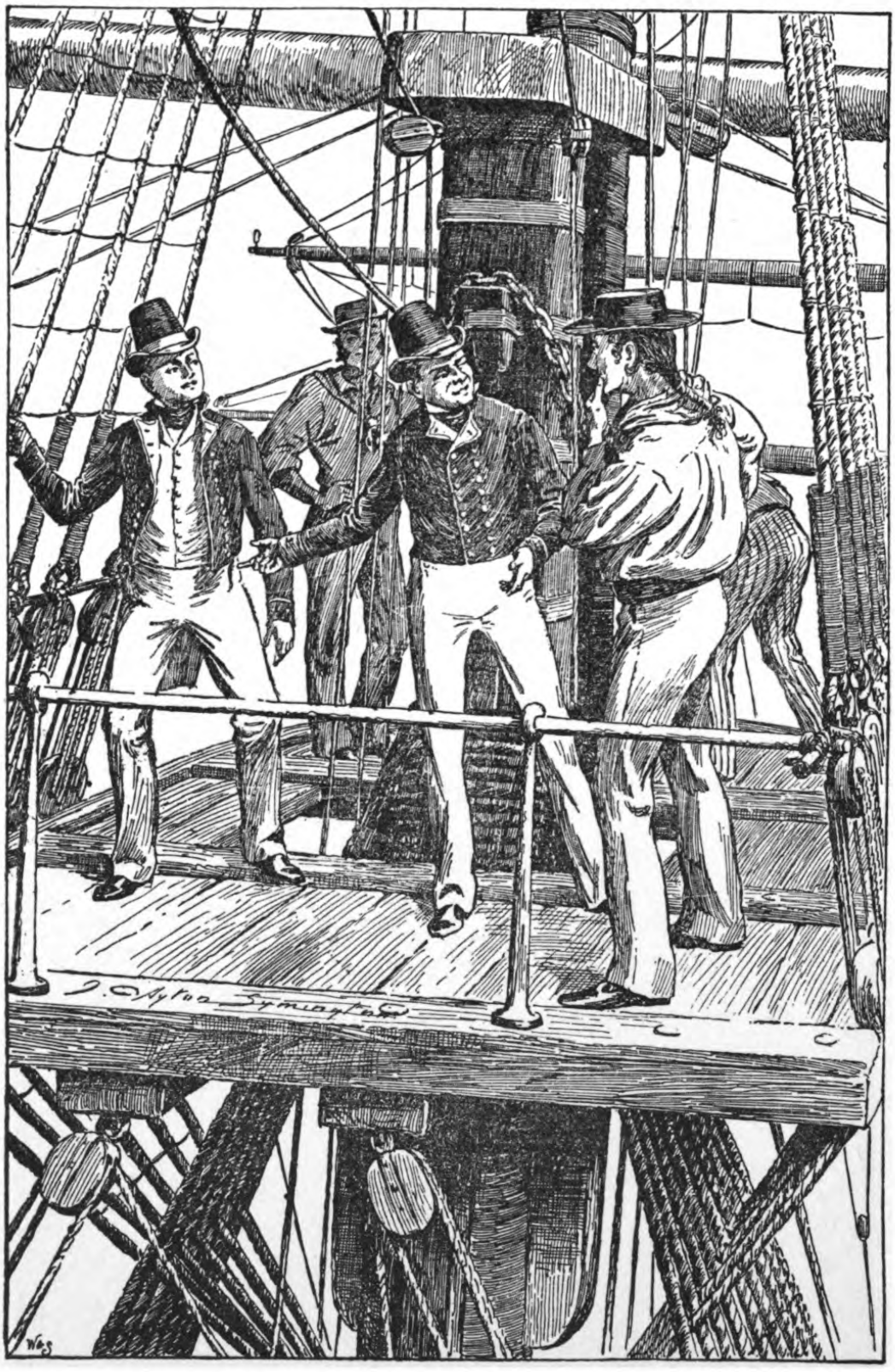
Scenes from the Works of

CAPTAIN MARRYAT

256 f. 2719



THE MARRYAT BOOK



AN ORDER FOR A COCKED HAT

[*See page* 19

THE

MARRYAT BOOK

SCENES FROM THE WORKS OF

CAPTAIN MARRYAT

EDITED BY HARRISON DALE

LONDON
G. BELL & SONS, LTD.

GLASGOW : W. & R. HOLMES
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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The importance has long been realised of providing older children with selections from standard prose writers, and of training them to appreciate the difference between good and bad literature. Hitherto, however, the practice has usually been either to rely on "reading books" containing a large number of snippets from various authors, or to choose a standard novel to be read and more or less studied by the pupils.

The objections to the books of snippets are obvious; the extracts are rarely long enough to give the full flavour of any writer's style and characteristics; too many writers are included for the pupils to be interested in; and very frequently the extracts are chosen, not because they will be interesting to the children, but because they are considered by literary critics to be best as literature.

But, from the point of view of the teacher, there are almost equally serious objections to the use of any complete novel by a great writer. There are few, if any, standard novles that are wholly suitable for use by normal children between the ages of eleven and fourteen or fifteen years. In some the language is here and there so difficult as to make reading burdensome to all but the exceptionally gifted children. In others many of the characters, situations and incidents do not appeal to ordinary children. The result of using such novels has, unfortunately, only too often been to give many children, if not an actual distaste for good novels, a certain disinclination to tackle them. To meet these objections many teachers have adopted abridged and even simplified editions of great

works, and have succeeded in giving to their scholars only a partial, and often misleading, impression of the author. In any case the reading of one novel (or even two) by, say, Scott or Dickens, can obviously do very little towards giving children anything like an adequate idea of the greatness of these men, of their varied sympathies, of the many-sidedness of their genius. It may, of course, and often does, induce children to read other novels by the same author; so far it is all to the good. But important as the development of interest in the work of Sir Walter Scott may be, it is not the only reason for reading his novels in schools.

If good literature is read at all, it should be used as a means of training in the elements of taste, appreciation and criticism; and this training can be given only by affording means of comparison and contrast with other aspects of the same writer's genius.

It seems, therefore, to be far preferable to give children a series of extracts from a particular writer, to choose those extracts to illustrate all the main aspects of his greatness, and to include only passages which have been proved by experience to interest most children.

In this way a teacher may provide a four or five year course, not only of good literary reading, but also of broad and intelligent study of literature, dealing with the author by means of the simple exercises and questions based on the selected extracts. Thus the chief objections to the books of snippets from many authors, to the complete novels, and to the abridged or simplified versions of these novels are overcome. The material is suitable for children, it is not presented in any misleading or pretentious form; the thread of each novel is given, and every extract is

therefore likely to lead children to wish to read the complete work; the varied character of the passages is sufficient to provide, in the hands of a skilful teacher, a sound basis for the training of appreciation, of sympathetic criticism, and of a genuine insight into the greatness of the author.

CAPTAIN MARRYAT

LIFE AND WRITINGS OF CAPTAIN MARRYAT

For a century Captain Marryat's novels have delighted boys of all ages. He is one of the few writers whom we read with real pleasure during our schooldays and re-read with even greater enjoyment in later life. This is partly because he wrote novels for his readers' amusement, not for their instruction; but there is also another reason. Marryat remains the greatest writer of life in the Royal Navy. Himself a naval officer with a brilliant record in the service, he wrote from his own wide experience of the most famous and most picturesque period in English naval history. Thus, his descriptions of battle and tempest have that easy and vivid reality which only an eye-witness of the actual scenes could hope to reproduce on paper. In his pages we see again the tall ships of Collingwood and Nelson sailing in line of battle, and the lovely frigates under their white clouds of sail gliding down the seaways. Equally vivid are the characters which throng his pages, from Mr. Chucks, the bo'sun who yearned to be a gentleman, to that delightful apothecary, Mr. Cophagus; from pirates and privateersmen on the high seas to "bargees" and wherrymen on the Thames. To make their acquaintance for the first time is a delightful experience; to renew it at a later date is to prove that in literature as in life old friends are best.

Frederick Marryat's life reads like one of his own novels. He was born on July 10th, 1792, in Catherine Court, in the parish of All Hallows, Barking, just by the Tower of London. His parents removed to New

Bridge Street, Blackfriars, where Marryat spent his early boyhood, constantly among the bustle of that riverside life which he was afterwards to describe so well in "Jacob Faithful" and "Poor Jack." Although his father was wealthy, the boy's home life was not very happy. He was sent to a small private school at Ponders End. If we are to believe Marryat's own description of his school-days given in his first book, "Frank Mildmay," this school was not a great deal better than that other more notorious one kept by Mr. Squeers, of which you have probably read. Three times Marryat ran away, intending to go to sea, but each time he was caught and brought back to school. At last his father decided to let him try a sea-life, and in September, 1806, at the age of fourteen, Marryat entered the frigate *Impérieuse* as a midshipman under Captain Lord Cochrane.

This was the time of the great Napoleonic wars in Europe. Only a year earlier Nelson and Collingwood, by defeating the combined fleets of France and Spain at Trafalgar, had practically broken the sea-power of France. Thereafter, the French fleet remained chiefly in port, but they still sent out occasional cruisers, the pursuit and capture of which was the chief duty of the blockading English ships. There were also many other difficult operations to be carried out—enemy convoys to be chased and attacked, privateers and other doubtful craft to be overhauled, land forts to be besieged and destroyed, and so on. Most of this work fell to the frigates, and Marryat's three years under Cochrane were crammed with almost daily actions, either afloat or ashore. He wrote in his private log: "The cruises of the *Impérieuse* were periods of continued excitement, from the hour in which she

hove up her anchor until she dropped it again in port: the day that passed without a shot being fired in anger was with us a blank day. . . . When memory sweeps along these years of excitement even now my pulse beats more quickly with the reminiscence."

He spent twenty-four years in the Navy, serving in the Mediterranean, the East and West Indies and North America. He was promoted to commander when only twenty-three years old. One of his ships, the *Beaver* sloop, was the last English warship to be employed cruising off St. Helena to prevent the escape of Napoleon. When the great Emperor died in captivity, Marryat, who was a skilful artist, made a sketch of him on his death-bed, and it was he who brought the news to England. After spending some time on revenue duty against the Channel smugglers, Marryat went to India and served with great distinction in the Burmese War. All this is very much to his credit, but we can best understand the type of man Marryat was by recalling that during the time he served in the Navy he was presented with twenty-seven certificates and the gold medal of the Humane Society for saving the lives of others at the risk of his own. Whenever a man fell overboard—a thing which often happened in sailing-ships—Marryat plunged in after him as a matter of course, and more than once he was picked up, exhausted and nearly senseless, more than a mile away from his ship.

In 1830 he resigned from the Navy and began his career as an author. During the rest of his life he wrote with the same energy with which he did everything else. He published some twenty-four novels, most of them two or three times longer than our modern novels. In addition, he became editor of the "Metropolitan

Magazine," stood as a candidate for Parliament, travelled on the Continent, and spent two years journeying up and down America and Canada. To this, the busiest period of a very busy life, belong his best novels. In the following selections you will see something of the rapid action, the vivid description, the direct simplicity of style, the wealth of characters, and the love of honest fun which is Marryat at his best.

To have something to say and to say it as simply and clearly as possible is the first rule of good writing. To have something to do and to do it as thoroughly as possible is the first rule of good living. Marryat kept both these rules. As a seaman he was brave, capable, and active in his duty. As a writer he was delightfully clear and straightforward. Whether he was handling a sword or a pen, he used it to the best of his ability, and his success was brilliant and deserved. His popularity is not so tremendous to-day as it was in his own lifetime, but it is more firmly fixed. A century after the publication of his first book he remains one of the greatest of native English writers on the sea, and certainly the greatest novelist of English naval life in the brave days of sail. Those days are gone, but Marryat's books still flourish because, as someone has said, they are not good because they are old, but old because they are good.

The frontispiece and the illustrations in the selections from *Newton Forster*, *Peter Simple*, *Jacob Faithful*, *Mr. Midshipman Easy*, *Japhet*, *Poor Jack* and *Masterman Ready*, are taken from the Standard Edition of Marryat's Works published by Messrs. Macmillan. They are here reproduced by the courtesy of that firm, to whom thanks are tendered.

CHIEF WORKS OF CAPTAIN MARRYAT

1829. Adventures of a Naval Officer; or Frank Mildmay.
1830. The King's Own.
1832. Newton Forster.
1834. Peter Simple.
Jacob Faithful.
1835. Pacha of Many Tales.
1836. Mr. Midshipman Easy.
Japhet in Search of a Father.
Pirate and the Three Cutters.
1837. Snarleyyow; or the Dog Fiend.
1839. Phantom Ship.
Diary in America.
1840. Olla Podrida.
Poor Jack.
1841. Masterman Ready.
Joseph Rushbrook; or the Poacher.
1842. Percival Keene.
1843. Narrative of the Travels and Adventures of Monsieur Violet.
1844. Settlers in Canada.
1845. The Mission; or Scenes in Africa.
1846. Privateersman.
1847. Children of the New Forest.
1848. The Little Savage.
1849. Valerie.

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THE MARRYAT BOOK

I. NEWTON FORSTER

This, one of Marryat's earliest novels, is a story of the Merchant Service in the days of the East India Company. The hero, Newton Forster, begins his sea life aboard a small coasting vessel. He rises eventually to the command of one of the Company's largest ships. In the interval, however, Newton has to endure a good deal of hardship and to run many risks. The following passage, describing his escape from his enemy, Jackson, is one of the many exciting adventures which happen to our hero at different times.

Newton is second mate of the merchant brig, "Eliza and Jane." Before leaving Barbados on the homeward voyage, the captain transfers to another ship, leaving Newton and the crew at the mercy of the rascally first mate, Jackson. Newton, falsely accused by Jackson of mutiny, has been locked in his cabin. Jackson, having killed one of the crew by his brutality, determines to run the brig ashore rather than return home to face a trial in England.

I

Newton, who had been below four days, had retired as usual to his hammock, when a sudden shock, accompanied

by the fall of the masts by the board, woke him from a sound sleep to all the horrors of shipwreck. The water pouring rapidly through the sides of the vessel proved to him that there was no chance of escape except by the boats. The shriek, so awful when raised in the gloom of night by seamen anticipating immediate death, the hurried footsteps above him, the confusion of many voices, with the heavy blows from the waves against the side of the vessel, told him that danger was imminent, even if escape were possible. He drew on his clothing and rushed to the door of his cabin. What was his surprise, his horror, to find that it was fastened outside! A moment's thought of the malignity of the wretch (for it was indeed Jackson who during the night had taken such steps for his destruction) was followed by exertions to escape. Placing his shoulders against his sea-chest, and his feet against the door, his body in nearly a horizontal position, he made a violent effort to break open the door. The lock gave way, but the door did not open more than one or two inches; for Jackson, to make sure, had coiled down against it a hawser which lay a few yards farther forward in the steerage, the weight of which the strength of no five men could remove. Maddened with the idea of perishing by such treachery, Newton exerted his frantic efforts again and again without success. Between each pause, the voices of the seamen asking for the oars and other articles belonging to the long-boat, proved to him that every moment of delay was a nail in his coffin. Again and again were his efforts repeated with almost superhuman strength; but the door remained fixed as ever. At last it occurred to him that the hawser, which he had previously ascertained by passing his hand through the

small aperture which he had made, might only lie against the lower part of the door, and that the upper part might be free. He applied his strength above, and found the door to yield. By repeated attempts he at last succeeded in kicking the upper panel to pieces, and having forced his body through the aperture, Newton rushed on deck with the little strength he had remaining.

The men—the boat—were not there! He hailed, but they heard him not; he strained his eyes—but they had disappeared in the gloom of the night; and Newton, overcome with exhaustion and disappointment, fell down senseless on the deck.

Jackson has been caught in his own trap. Attempting to escape in the long-boat with the other seamen, he has been knocked senseless by a blow from a handspike. He recovers consciousness to find that he also has been left aboard the wreck in company with Newton.

It was broad daylight when Jackson first came to his recollection. His brain whirled, his ideas were confused, and he had but a faint reminiscence of what had occurred. He felt that the water washed his feet, and with a sort of instinct he rose and staggered up to windward. In so doing, without perceiving him, he stumbled over the body of Newton, who also was roused up by the shock. A few moments passed before either could regain his scattered senses, and at the same time, both sitting up on the deck at about a yard distant, they discovered and recognised each other.

Newton was the more collected of the two, for Jackson's insensibility had been occasioned by bodily—his, by mental

concussion. The effect of the blow was still felt by Jackson, and although recovered from the stupor, a dull, heavy sensation affected his eyesight and confused his ideas.

The sight of Newton went far to recover Jackson, who started up as if to grapple with the object of his hatred. Newton was on his legs at the same moment, and retreating, seized upon the handspike, which lay on the deck close to where Jackson had been struck down, and placed himself in an attitude of defence. Not a word was exchanged between them. They remained a few minutes in this position, when Jackson, whose brain was affected by the violence of his feelings, dropped down upon the deck in a renewed state of insensibility.

Newton had now time to look about him, and the prospect was anything but cheering. It was almost low water, and in every direction he perceived reefs of coral rock and large banks of sand, with deep channels between them, through which the tide flowed rapidly. The reef upon which the brig had been grounded was of sharp coral, and in the deeper parts the trees could be discerned, extending a submarine forest of boughs; but it was evident that the reef upon which the vessel lay was, as well as most of the others, covered at high water. As a means of escape, a small boat was still hanging over the stern, which Newton was able to manage either with her sails or her oars, as might be required.

As there was no time to be lost, and the only chance of escape remained with the boat, Newton commenced his arrangements. The mast and sails were found and the latter bent; a keg was filled with water, a compass taken out of the binnacle, a few pieces of beef and some bread collected in a bag and thrown in. He also procured some

bottles of wine and cider from the cabin; these he stowed away carefully in the little locker which was fitted under the stern-sheets of the boat. In an hour everything was ready: and throwing into her some pieces of spare rope, and a small grapnel to anchor with, there being still sufficient water alongside to float her, Newton gradually lowered one tackle, and then another, until the boat was safe in the water. He then hauled her up alongside, made her fast by the painter, and stepped her mast.

All was now ready. But to leave Jackson to be washed away by the returning tide, when the brig would unquestionably go to pieces!—Newton could not do it. True, he had sought his life, and still displayed the most inveterate rancour towards him; and Newton felt convinced that no future opportunity would occur that his enemy would not profit by to ensure his destruction. Yet to leave him—a murderer!—with all his sins upon his soul, to be launched so unprepared into the presence of an offended Creator!—it was impossible—it was contrary to his nature, and to the religion which he professed. How could he hope for the Divine assistance in his perilous undertaking, when he embarked on it regardless of the precept to forgive his enemy?

Newton ascended to that part of the deck where Jackson lay, and roused him. Jackson awoke, as from a deep sleep, and then stared at Newton, who as a precaution held the handspike in his hand.

"Mr. Jackson," said Newton, "I have roused you to let you know that the boat is now ready, and that I am going to shove off."

Jackson, who recollected the scene of the previous night, and perceived Newton standing over him with the hand-

spike, appeared wholly unnerved. In point of muscular power Newton was his superior, independent of the weapon in his possession.

"Not without me!—not without me!" cried Jackson, raising himself upon his knees. "For mercy's sake, Mr. Newton, do not leave me to this horrid death!"

"You would have left me to one even more dreadful," replied Newton.

"I beg your pardon! Pardon me, Mr. Newton; I was drunk at the time—indeed I was. I don't know what I do when I'm in liquor. Don't leave me! I'll obey your orders, and do anything you wish! I'll wait upon you as your servant! I will, indeed, Mr. Newton!"

"I neither ask that you will obey my orders nor wait upon me," replied Newton. "All I request is, that you will lay aside your wanton animosity, and exert yourself to save your life. For what you have already attempted against me, may God forgive you, as I do! For what you may hereafter attempt, you will find me prepared. Now, follow into the boat."

Without further exchange of words, Newton, followed by Jackson, went into the boat and shoved off. The weather was moderate and the wind light. There were two islets which Newton had marked, which apparently were not covered at high water, one about ten miles distant in the supposed direction of the land—for Newton had shrewdly guessed the locality of the reef—and the other about two miles from the first, farther out, with trees growing to the water's edge. To this latter Newton proposed pulling, and waiting there until the next morning. When they were both in the boat, Newton, finding that the wind was contrary, unshipped the mast, and taking

"PARDON ME, MR. NEWTON"

the foremost oar, that Jackson might not sit behind him, desired him to take the other. The tide, which was now flood, and swept out to the southward, obliged them to pull at an angle to reach their intended destination. It was not until sunset that, with great exertion, they fetched the island nearest to the land, not the one that was covered with trees, as they had intended. As soon as the boat was secured, exhausted with fatigue they both threw themselves down on the sand, where they remained for some time. Having recovered a little, Newton procured from the boat some of the supplies which they required, and after satisfying their hunger in silence, they both lay down to repose. Newton, who was still afraid of Jackson's diabolical enmity, which his silence implied to be again at work, closed his eyes and pretended for some time to be asleep. As soon as it was dark he rose, and first listening to the breathing of his comrade, who appeared to be in a sound slumber, he walked away from him about one hundred yards, so that it would be difficult to find him; he placed the handspike under his head for a pillow, and, worn out with mental and bodily fatigue, was soon in a state of oblivion.

His sleep, although profound for three or four hours, was subsequently restless. The mind when agitated watches for the body, and wakes it at the time when it should be on the alert. Newton woke up: it was not yet daylight, and all was hushed. He turned round, intending to get up immediately; yet, yielding to the impulse of wearied nature, he again slumbered. Once he thought that he heard a footstep, roused himself and listened; but all was quiet and still, except the light wave rippling on the sand. Again he was roused by a sort of grating

noise; he listened, and all was quiet. A third time he was roused by a sound like the flapping of a sail; he listened—he was sure of it, and he sprang upon his feet. It was dawn of day, and as he turned his eyes towards the beach, he perceived to his horror that the boat was indeed under sail, Jackson, who was in it, then just hauling aft the main sheet and steering away from the island. Newton ran to the beach, plunged into the sea, and attempted to regain the boat; but he was soon out of his depth, and the boat running away fast through the water. He shouted to Jackson as a last attempt. The scoundrel waved his hand in ironical adieu and continued his course.

"Treacherous villain!" mentally exclaimed Newton, as his eyes followed the boat. "Was it for this that I preserved your life, in return for your attempts on mine? Here, then, must I die of starvation! God's will be done!" exclaimed he aloud, as he sat down on the beach and covered his face with his hands.

II

The tide was on the ebb when Newton was left in this desolate situation. After some minutes passed in bitterness of spirit, his natural courage returned; and although the chance of preservation was next to hopeless, Newton rose up, resolved that he would use his best efforts, and trust to Providence for their success. His first idea was to examine the beach, and see if Jackson had left him any portion of the provisions which he had put into the boat; but there was nothing. He then walked along the beach,

following the receding tide, with the hope of collecting any shell-fish which might be left upon the sands; but here again he was disappointed. It was evident, therefore, that to stay on this islet was to starve; his only chance appeared to remain in his capability of reaching the islet next to it, which, as we have before mentioned, was covered with trees. There, at least, he might find some means of sustenance, and be able with the wood to make a raft, if nothing better should turn up in his favour.

The tide swept down towards the islet, but it ran so strong that there was a chance of his being carried past it; he therefore determined to wait for an hour or two, until the strength of the current was diminished, and then make the attempt.

It was about an hour before low water that Newton walked into the sea, and commending himself to Providence, struck out for the islet, keeping his course well to windward to allow for the tide sweeping him down. To use a nautical phrase, he "held his own" extremely well, until he reached the centre of the channel, where the water ran with great velocity, and bore him down rapidly with the stream. Newton struggled hard, for he was aware that the strength of the current once passed, his labour would be comparatively easy; and so it proved. As he neared the shore of the islet, he made good way; but he had been carried down so far when in the centre of the stream that it became a nice point, even to the calculation of hope, whether he would fetch the extreme point of the islet. Newton redoubled his exertions; when within thirty yards of the shore an eddy assisted him, and he made sure of success; but when within ten yards a counter-current again caught him, and swept him down. He was

now abreast of the very extreme point of the islet; a bush that hung over the water was his only hope; with three or four desperate strokes he exhausted his remaining strength, at the same time that he seized hold of a small bough. It was decayed—snapped asunder, and Newton was whirled away by the current into the broad ocean.

Newton's strength was exhausted; his eyes were fixed on the clear blue sky, as if to bid it farewell; and, resigned to his fate, he was about to give over the last few painful efforts, which he was aware could only prolong, not save, his life, when he received a blow on his shoulder under the water. Imagining that it proceeded from the tail of a shark, or of some other of the ravenous monsters of the deep which abound among these islands, he uttered a faint cry; but the next moment his legs were swung round by the current, and he perceived to his astonishment that he was aground upon one of the sandbanks which abounded on the reef, and over which the tide was running with the velocity of a sluice. He floundered, then rose, and found himself in about one foot of water. The ebb-tide was nearly finished; and this was one of the banks which never showed itself above water except during the full and change of the moon. It was now about nine o'clock in the morning, and the sun shone with great power. Newton, faint from want of sustenance, hardly knew whether to consider this temporary respite as an advantage. He knew that the tide would soon flow again, and he felt that his strength was too much spent to enable him to swim back to the islet which he had missed when he had attempted to reach it, and which was more than two miles from the bank upon which he then stood. What chance had he, then, but to be swept

away by the return of the tide? He almost regretted that it had not been a shark instead of the sandbank which had struck him; he would then have been spared a few hours of protracted misery.

As Newton had foreseen, the ebb-tide was soon over; a short pause of "slack water" ensued, and there was an evident and rapid increase of the water around him. The wind, too, freshened, and the surface of the ocean was in strong ripples. As the water deepened, so did the waves increase in size; every moment added to his despair. He had now remained about four hours on the bank; the water had risen to underneath his arms, the waves nearly lifted him off his feet, and it was with difficulty that he could retain his position. Hope deserted him, and his senses became confused. He thought that he saw green fields, and cities, and inhabitants. His reason was departing; he saw his father coming down to him with the tide, and called to him for help, when the actual sight of something recalled him from his temporary aberration. There was a dark object upon the water, evidently approaching. His respiration was almost suspended as he watched its coming. At last he distinguished that it must either be a whale asleep, or a boat bottom up. Fortunately for Newton, it proved to be the latter. At last it was brought down by the tide to within a few yards of him, and appeared to be checked. Newton dashed out towards the boat, and in a minute was safely astride upon it. As soon as he had recovered a little from his agitation, he perceived that it was the very boat belonging to the brig, in whic Jackson had so treacherously deserted and left him on the island!

At three o'clock it was high water, and at five the water had again retreated, so that Newton could quit his station on the bottom of the boat and walk round her. He then righted her, and discovered that the mast had been carried away close to the step, but with the sail still remained fast to the boat by the main-sheet, which had jammed on the belaying pin, so that it still was serviceable. Everything else had been lost out of the boat, except the grapnel, which had been bent, and which, hanging down in the water from the boat being capsized, had brought it up when it was floated on the sandbank. Newton, who had neither eaten nor drunk since the night before, was again in despair, tormented as he was by insufferable thirst; when he observed that the locker under the stern sheets was closed. He hastened to pull it open, and found that the bottles of wine and cider that he had deposited there were remaining. A bottle of the latter was soon poured down his throat, and Newton felt as if restored to his former vigour.

At seven o'clock in the evening the boat was nearly high and dry. Newton baled her out, and fixing the grapnel firmly in the sand, lay down to sleep in the stern-sheets covered over with the sail. His sleep was so sound that he did not wake until six o'clock the next morning, when the boat was again aground. He refreshed himself with some wine and meditated upon his prospects. Thanking Heaven for a renewed chance of escape, and lamenting over the fate of the unprepared Jackson, who had evidently been upset from the main-sheet having been jammed, Newton resolved to make for one of the English isles, which he knew to be about two hundred miles distant.

The oars had been lost, but the rudder of the boat was fortunately made fast by a pennant. In the afternoon he drew up his grapnel and made sail in the direction, as well as he could judge from the position of the sun, of the English isles. As the night closed in he watched the stars, and steered his course by them.

The next day came, and although the boat sailed well and went fast before a free wind, no land was in sight. Newton had again recourse to the cider and the wine.

The second night he could hardly keep his eyes open; yet, wearied as he was, he still continued his course, and never quitted his helm. The day again dawned, and Newton's strength was gone, from constant watching; still he bore up against it until the sun had set.

No land was yet to be seen, and sleep overpowered him. He took a hitch of the main-sheet round his finger, that should the breeze freshen he might be roused, in case he should go to sleep; and having taken this precaution, in a few minutes the boat was steering herself.

The reef upon which the brig had been wrecked was one of those extending along the southward of the Virgin Isles. Newton had intended to steer well to the eastward, with the view of reaching one of the northernmost English colonies; but not having a compass, he naturally was not very equal in his course. The fact was that he steered well to the southward of it; and after he fell asleep the boat ran away still farther off her course, for she was on the larboard tack; and having no weight in her except Newton, who was aft in the stern-sheets, she did not feel inclined to keep her wind. Newton's sleep was so profound that neither the pulling of the main-sheet, which he held with a round turn round his hand,

nor the dancing of the boat, which during the night had run fast before an increasing breeze, roused him from his lethargy. On sailed the boat, left to the steerage of Providence; on slept Newton, as if putting firm reliance on the same. It was not until the break of day that his repose was very abruptly broken by a shock, which threw him from the stern-sheets of the boat, right over the aftermost thwart. Newton recovered his legs and his senses, and found himself alongside of a vessel. He had run stem on to a small schooner which was lying at anchor. As the boat was drifting fast by, Newton made a spring, and gained the deck of the vessel.

Newton has escaped the sea only to become a prisoner on land. The vessel he has run into is French, and he is taken prisoner to Guadeloupe, in the French West Indies. He and Jackson, however, have both to meet again; but for their last meeting, in a hand to hand fight on the deck of a pirate ship, you must read the book itself.

II. PETER SIMPLE

This is certainly one of the finest of Marryat's novels. It relates the life and adventures of Peter Simple, son of a country clergyman and grandson of Lord Privilege. Peter, being "the greatest fool of the family," is sent to sea as a midshipman in His Majesty's frigate, "Diomede." From the moment when he joins his ship at Portsmouth the story moves as swiftly as a cinematograph film. With his friend, the gay Terence O'Brien, Peter is hurried from adventure to breathless adventure—pursuit, capture, escape, actions afloat and ashore. There is a fine salty flavour to the story, and the pictures we get of life aboard the old frigates are wonderfully vivid.

I

Peter manages to get into a good deal of trouble before he joins his ship, but at last he finds himself in the midshipmen's berth of the "Diomede." This is the first time Peter has ever been away from home. He is therefore, in sea language, a "green hand," and he promptly becomes a butt for the good-natured fun of his shipmates.

I had not been ten minutes in the berth before the midshipmen began their remarks upon me. One said that I looked like a hardy fellow, and asked me whether I could not bear a great deal of sleep.

I replied that I could, I daresay, if it was necessary for the good of the service; at which they laughed, and I supposed that I had said a good thing.

"Why, here's Tomkins," said the midshipman; "he'll show you how to perform that part of your duty. He inherits it from his father, who was a marine officer. He can snore for fourteen hours at a stretch without once turning round in his hammock, and finish his nap on the chest during the whole of the day, except meal-times."

But Tomkins defended himself by saying that "some people were very quick in doing things, and others were very slow; that he was one of the slow ones, and that he did not in reality obtain more refreshment from his long naps than other people did in short ones, because he slept much slower than they did."

This ingenious argument was, however, overruled, as it was proved that he ate pudding faster than any one in the mess.

The postman came on board with the letters, and put his head into the midshipmen's berth. I was very anxious to have one from home, but I was disappointed. Some had letters and some had not. Those who had not, declared that their parents were very undutiful, and that they would cut them off with a shilling; and those who had letters, after they had read them, offered them for sale to the others, usually at half price. I could not imagine why they sold, or why the others bought them; but they did do so; and one that was full of good advice was sold three times, from which circumstance I was inclined to form a better opinion of my companions.

I mentioned the reason why I was so anxious for a letter, viz., because I wanted to buy my dirk and cocked hat; upon which they told me that there was no occasion

for my spending my money, as, by the regulations of the service, the purser's steward served them out to all the officers who applied for them. As I knew where the purser's steward's room was, having seen it when down in the cockpit, I went down immediately. "Mr. Purser's steward," said I, "let me have a cocked hat and dirk immediately."

"Very good, sir," replied he, and he wrote an order upon a slip of paper, which he handed to me. "There is the order for it, sir; but the cocked hats are kept up in the chest in the main-top; and as for the dirk, you must apply to the butcher, who has them under his charge."

I went up with the order, and thought I would first apply for the dirk; so I inquired for the butcher, whom I found sitting in the sheep-pen with the sheep, mending his trousers. In reply to my demand, he told me that he had not the key of the store-room, which was under the charge of one of the corporals of marines.

I inquired who, and he said, "Cheeks[1] the marine."

I went everywhere about the ship, inquiring for Cheeks the marine, but could not find him. Some said that they believed he was in the fore-top, standing sentry over the wind, that it might not change; others, that he was in the galley, to prevent the midshipmen from soaking their biscuit in the captain's dripping-pan. At last I inquired of some of the women who were standing between the guns on the main-deck, and one of them answered that it was no use looking for him among

[1] This celebrated personage is the prototype of Mr. Nobody on board of a man-of-war.

them, as they all had husbands, and Cheeks was a *widow's man*.[1]

As I could not find the marine, I thought I might as well go for my cocked hat, and get my dirk afterwards. I did not much like going up the rigging, because I was afraid of turning giddy, and if I fell overboard I could not swim; but one of the midshipmen offered to accompany me, stating that I need not be afraid, if I fell overboard, of sinking to the bottom, as if I was giddy, my head, at all events, *would swim;* so I determined to venture. I climbed up very near to the main-top, but not without missing the little ropes very often, and grazing the skin off my shins. Then I came to large ropes stretched out from the mast, so that you must climb them with your head backwards. The midshipman told me these were called the cat-harpings, because they were so difficult to climb that a cat would expostulate if ordered to go out by them. I was afraid to venture, and then he proposed that I should go through lubber's hole, which he said had been made for people like me. I agreed to attempt it, as it appeared more easy, and at last arrived, quite out of breath, and very happy to find myself in the main-top.

The captain of the main-top was there with two other sailors. The midshipman introduced me very politely:—"Mr. Jenkins—Mr. Simple, midshipman,—Mr. Simple, Mr. Jenkins, captain of the main-top. Mr. Jenkins, Mr. Simple has come up with an order for a cocked hat." The captain of the top replied that he was very sorry that he had not one in store, but the last had been

[1] Widows' men are imaginary sailors borne on the books, and receiving pay and prize-money, which is appropriated to Greenwich hospital.

served out to the captain's monkey. This was very provoking. The captain of the top then asked me if I was ready with my *footing*.

I replied, "Not very, for I had lost it two or three times when coming up." He laughed and replied that I should lose it altogether before I went down, and that I must *hand* it out. "*Hand* out my *footing*," said I, puzzled, and appealing to the midshipman, "what does he mean?" "He means that you must fork out a seven-shilling bit." I was just as wise as ever, and stared very much when Mr. Jenkins desired the other men to get half a dozen *foxes* and make a *spread eagle* of me, unless he had his "parkisite." I never should have found out what it all meant had not the midshipman, who laughed till he cried, at last informed me that it was the custom to give the men something to drink the first time that I came aloft, and that if I did not, they would tie me up to the rigging.

Having no money in my pocket, I promised to pay them as soon as I went below; but Mr. Jenkins would not trust me. I then became very angry, and inquired of him "if he doubted my honour." He replied, "Not in the least, but that he must have the seven shillings before I went below." "Why, sir," said I, "do you know whom you are speaking to? I am an officer and a gentleman. And do you suppose," continued I, "that I would forfeit the honour of my family for a paltry seven shillings?"

This observation of mine, and a promise on the part of the midshipman, who said he would be bail for me, satisfied Mr. Jenkins, and he allowed me to go down the rigging. I went to my chest, and paid the seven

shillings to one of the top-men who followed me, and then went up on the main-deck to learn as much as I could of my profession. I asked a great many questions of the midshipmen relative to the guns, and they crowded round me to answer them. One told me they were called the frigate's *teeth*, because they stopped the Frenchman's *jaw*. Another midshipman said that he had been so often in action that he was called the *Fire-eater*. I asked him how it was that he escaped being killed. He replied that he always made it a rule, upon the first cannon ball coming through the ship's side, to put his head into the hole which it had made; as, by a calculation made by Professor Innman, the odds were 32,647 and some decimals to boot, that another ball would not come in at the same hole. That's what I never should have thought of.

II

We are introduced to "Gentleman Chucks," boatswain of the "Diomede."

The boatswain was considered to be the *taughtest* (that is, the most active and severe) boatswain in the service. He went by the name of "Gentleman Chucks" —the latter was his surname. He appeared to have received half an education; sometimes his language was for a few sentences remarkably well chosen, but, all of a sudden, he would break down at a hard word; but I shall be able to let the reader into more of his history as I go on with my adventures. He had a very handsome person, inclined to be stout, keen eyes, and hair curling in ringlets. He held his head up and strutted as he walked. He

declared "that an officer should look like an officer, and *comport* himself accordingly." In his person he was very clean, wore rings on his great fingers, and a large frill to his bosom, which stuck out like the back fin of a perch, and the collar of his shirt was always pulled up to a level with his cheek-bones. He never appeared on deck without his "persuader," which was three rattans twisted into one, like a cable; he called it his Order of the Bath, and this persuader was seldom idle. He attempted to be very polite, even when addressing the common seamen, and, certainly, he always commenced his observations to them in a very gracious manner, but, as he continued, he became less choice in his phraseology. As a specimen, he would say to the man on the forecastle: "Allow me to observe, my dear man, in the most delicate way in the world, that you are spilling that tar upon the deck—a deck, sir, if I may venture to make the observation, I had the duty of seeing holystoned this morning. You understand me, sir, you have defiled His Majesty's forecastle. I must do my duty, sir, if you neglect yours; so take that—and that—and that—(thrashing the man with his rattan)—you hay-making son of a sea-cook."

I remember one of the ship's boys going forward with a kid of dirty water to empty in the head, without putting his hand up to his hat as he passed the boatswain. "Stop, my little friend," said the boatswain, pulling out his frill and raising up both sides of his shirt-collar. "Are you aware, sir, of my rank and station in society?"

"Yes, sir," replied the boy, trembling, and eyeing the rattan.

"ARE YOU AWARE, SIR, OF MY RANK?"

"Oh, you are!" replied Mr. Chucks. "Had you not been aware of it, I should have considered a gentle correction necessary, that you might have avoided such an error in future; but, as you *were* aware of it, why then, you have no excuse, so take that—and that—and that. I really beg your pardon, Mr. Simple," said he to me, as the boy went howling forward, for I was walking with him at the time; "but really the service makes brutes of us all. It is hard to sacrifice our health, our night's rest, and our comforts; but still more so, that in my responsible situation, I am obliged too often to sacrifice my gentility."

Peter later persuades Mr. Chucks to relate some of his adventures.

Mr. Chucks commenced as follows:

"My father was a boatswain before me—one of the old school, rough as a bear and drunken as a Gosport fiddler. My father was invalided for harbour duty and died shortly afterwards. In the meantime, I had been, by the kindness of the port-admiral's wife, educated at a foundation-school. I was thirteen when my father died, and my mother, not knowing what to do with me, wished to bind me apprentice to a merchant vessel; but this I refused, and, after six months' quarrelling on the subject, I decided the point by volunteering in the *Narcissus* frigate. I believe that my gentlemanly ideas were innate, Mr. Simple; I never, as a child, could bear the idea of the merchant service. After I had been a week on board I was appointed servant to the purser, where I gave such satisfaction by my alertness and dexterity that the first lieutenant took me away from the purser to attend upon

himself, so that in two months I was a person of such consequence as to create a disturbance in the gunroom, for the purser was very angry, and many of the officers took his part. . . . It so happened that after I had served the first lieutenant for about a year, a young lord (I must not mention his name, Mr. Simple) was sent to sea by his friends, or by his own choice, I don't know which, but I was told that his uncle, who was 'zeckative and had an interest in his death, persuaded him to go. A lord at that period, some twenty-five years ago, was a rarity in the service, and they used to salute him when he came on board. The consequence was that the young lord must have a servant to himself, although all the rest of the midshipmen had but one servant between them. The captain inquired who was the best boy in the ship, and the purser, to whom he appealed, recommended me. Accordingly, much to the annoyance of the first lieutenant (for first lieutenants in those days did not assume as they do now), I was immediately surrendered to his lordship. I had a very easy, comfortable life of it—I did little or nothing; if inquired for when all hands were turned up, I was cleaning his lordship's boots, or brushing his lordship's clothes, and there was nothing to be said when his lordship's name was mentioned. We went to the Mediterranean (because his lordship's mamma wished it), and we had been there about a year when his lordship ate so many grapes that he was seized with a dysentry. He was ill for three weeks, and then he requested to be sent to Malta in a transport going to Gibraltar, or rather to the Barbary coast, for bullocks. He became worse every day, and made his will, leaving me all his effects on board, which I certainly deserved for the kindness with which

I had nursed him. Off Malta we fell in with a xebeque, bound to Civita Vecchia, and the captain of the transport anxious to proceed, advised our going on board of her as the wind was light and contrary, and these Mediterranean vessels sailed better on a wind than the transport. My master, who was now sinking fast, consented, and we changed our ships. The next day he died, and a gale of wind came on which prevented us from gaining the port for several days, so the body of his lordship was buried at sea. None of the people could speak English, nor could I speak Maltese; they had no idea who we were, and I had plenty of time for cogitation. I had often thought what a fine thing it was to be a lord, and as often wished that I had been born one. The wind was still against us when a merchant vessel ran down to us that had left Civita Vecchia for Gibraltar. I desired the captain of the xebeque to make a signal of distress, or rather I did myself, and the vessel, which proved to be English, bore down to us.

"I manned the boat to go on board, and the idea came into my head that, although they might refuse to take me, they would not refuse a lord. I put on the midshipman's uniform belonging to his lordship (but then certainly belonging to me), and went alongside of the merchant vessel; I told them that I had left my ship for the benefit of my health and wanted a passage to Gibraltar on my way home. My title, and immediate acceptance of the terms demanded for my passage, was sufficient. My property was brought from the xebeque; and, of course, as they could not speak English, they could not contradict, even if they suspected. Here, Mr. Simple, I must acknowledge a slight flaw in my early

history, which I impart to you in confidence; or otherwise I should not be able to prove that I was correct in asserting that I had once dined with your grandfather, Lord Privilege. But the temptation was too strong and I could not resist. Think yourself, Mr. Simple, after having served as a ship's boy—clouted here, kicked there—to find myself treated with such respect and deference, and my lorded this and my lorded that every minute of the day. During my passage to Gibraltar I had plenty of time for arranging my plans. I hardly need say that my lord's kit was valuable: and, what was better, they exactly fitted me. I also had his watches and trinkets, and many other things, besides a bag of dollars. However, they were honestly mine; the only thing that I took was his name, which he had no further occasion for, poor fellow! But it's no use defending what was wrong—it was dishonest, and there's an end of it.

"Now observe, Mr. Simple, how one thing leads to another. I declare to you that my first idea of making use of his lordship's name was to procure a passage to Gibraltar. I then was undecided; but, as I had charge of his papers and letters to his mother and guardian, I think—indeed, I am almost sure—that I should have laid aside my dignity and midshipman's dress and applied for a passage home to the commissioner of the yard. But it was fated to be otherwise; for the master of the transport went on shore to report, and he told them everywhere that young Lord A—— was a passenger with him, going to England for the benefit of his health. In less than half an hour, off came the commissioner's boat, and another boat from the governor, requesting the

honour of my company, and that I would take a bed at their houses during my stay. What could I do? I began to be frightened; but I was more afraid to confess that I was an imposter, for I am sure the master of the transport alone would have kicked me overboard if I had let him know that he had been so confounded polite to a ship's boy. So I blushed, half from modesty and half from guilt, and accepted the invitation of the governor, sending a polite verbal refusal to the commissioner upon the plea of there being no paper or pens on board. I had so often accompanied my late master that I knew very well how to conduct myself, and had borrowed a good deal of his air and appearance—indeed, I had a natural taste for gentility. I could write and read; not perhaps so well as I ought to have done, considering the education I had received, but still quite well enough for a lord, and indeed, much better than my late master. I knew his signature well enough, although the very idea of being forced to use it made me tremble. However, the die was cast. I ought to observe that in one point we were not unlike—both had curly light hair and blue eyes; in other points there was no resemblance. I was by far the better-looking chap of the two; and as we had been up the Mediterranean for two years, I had no fear of any doubt as to my identity until I arrived in England. Well, Mr. Simple, I dressed myself very carefully, put on my chains and rings, and a little perfume on my handkerchief, and accompanied the aide-de-camp to the governor's, where I was asked after my mother, Lady ——, and my uncle, my guardian, and a hundred other questions. At first I was much confused, which was attributed to bashfulness; and so it was, but

not of the right sort. But before the day was over I had become so accustomed to be called 'my lord,' and to my situation, that I was quite at my ease, and began to watch the motions and behaviour of the company that I might regulate my comportment by that of good society. I remained at Gibraltar for a fortnight and then was offered a passage in a transport ordered to Portsmouth. Being an officer, of course, it was free to a certain extent. On my passage to England, I again made up my mind that I would put off my dress and title as soon as I could escape from observation; but I was prevented as before. The port-admiral sent off to request the pleasure of my company to dinner. I dared not refuse; and there I was, my lord as before, courted and feasted by everybody. Tradesmen called to request the honour of my lordship's custom; my table at the hotel was covered with cards of all descriptions; and, to confess the truth, I liked my situation so much, and had been so accustomed to it, that I now began to dislike the idea that one day or other I must resign it, which I determined to do as soon as I quitted the place. My bill at the hotel was very extravagant, and more than I could pay; but the master said that it was not of the least consequence; that, of course, his lordship had not provided himself with cash, just coming from foreign parts, and offered to supply me with money if I required it. This, I will say, I was honest enough to refuse. I left my cards, as they do, Mr. Simple, in all well-regulated society, and set off in the mail for London, where I fully resolved to drop my title and to proceed to Scotland to his lordship's mother with the mournful intelligence of his death—for you see, Mr. Simple, no one knew that his lordship was dead. The

captain of the transport had put him into the xebeque alive, and the vessel bound to Gibraltar had received him, as they imagined. The captain of the frigate had very soon afterwards advices from Gibraltar, stating his lordship's recovery and return to England. Well, I had not been in the coach more than five minutes when who should get in but a gentleman whom I had met at the port-admiral's; besides which, the coachman and others knew me very well. When I arrived in London (I still wore my midshipman's uniform) I went to an hotel recommended to me, as I afterwards found out, the most fashionable in town, my title still following me. I now determined to put off my uniform and dress in plain clothes—my farce was over. I went to bed that night, and the next morning made my appearance in a suit of mufti, making inquiry of the waiter which was the best conveyance to Scotland.

"'Post chay and four, my lord. At what time shall I order it?'

"'Oh,' replied I, 'I am not sure that I shall go to-morrow.'

"Just at this moment, in came the master of the hotel with the *Morning Post* in his hand, making me a low bow, and pointing to the insertion of my arrival at his hotel among the fashionables. This annoyed me; and now that I found how difficult it was to get rid of my title, I became particularly anxious to be William Chucks, as before. Before twelve o'clock three or four gentlemen were ushered into my sitting-room, who, observing my arrival in the *Morning Post*, came to pay their respects; and before the day was over I was invited and reinvited by a dozen people. I found that I could not retreat, and

I went away with the stream, as I did before at Gibraltar and Portsmouth. For three weeks I was everywhere; and if I found it agreeable at Portsmouth, how much more so in London! But I was not happy, Mr. Simple, because I was a cheat, every moment expecting to be found out, but it really was a nice thing to be a lord.

"At last the play was over. I had been enticed by some young men into a gambling-house, where they intended to fleece me; but, for the first night, they allowed me to win, I think, about £300. I was quite delighted with my success, and had agreed to meet them the next evening; but when I was at breakfast, with my legs crossed, reading the *Morning Post*, who should come to see me but my guardian uncle. He knew his nephew's features too well to be deceived; and my not recognising him proved at once that I was an imposter. You must allow me to hasten over the scene which took place—the wrath of the uncle, the confusion in the hotel, the abuse of the waiters, the police officer, and being dragged in a hackney-coach to Bow Street. There I was examined, and confessed all. The uncle was so glad to find that his nephew was really dead, that he felt no resentment towards me; and as, after all, I had only assumed a name, but had cheated nobody except the landlord at Portsmouth, I was sent on board the tender off the Tower, to be drafted into a man-of-war. As for my £300, my clothes, etc., I never heard any more of them; they were seized, I presume, by the landlord of the hotel for my bill, and very handsomely he must have paid himself. I had two rings on my fingers and a watch in my pocket when I was sent on board the tender, and I stowed them

away very carefully. I had also a few pounds in my purse. I was sent round to Plymouth, where I was drafted into a frigate. After I had been there some time, I turned the watch and rings into money and bought myself a good kit of clothes, for I could not bear to be dirty. I was put into the mizzen-top, and no one knew that I had been a lord."

III

The frigate is ordered to cruise along the French coast, with orders to intercept any convoys sent to supply the French army with stores and provisions. Terence O'Brien the master's mate, is very friendly to Peter and takes him in his own charge.

We had regained our station, and for some days had been standing off and on the coast, when one morning at daybreak, we found ourselves about four miles from the town of Cette, and a large convoy of vessels coming round a point. We made all sail in chase, and they anchored close in-shore under a battery, which we did not discover until it opened fire upon us. The shot struck the frigate two or three times, for the water was smooth and the battery nearly level with it. The captain tacked the ship and stood out again until the boats were hoisted out and all ready to pull on shore and storm the battery. O'Brien, who was the officer commanding the first cutter on service, was in his boat, and I obtained permission to smuggle myself into it.

We ran on shore amidst the fire of the gunboats who protected the convoy, by which we lost three men, and

O'BRIEN LIFTED ME ON HIS SHOULDERS

made for the battery, which we took without opposition, the French artillerymen running out as we ran in. The directions of the captain were very positive, not to remain in the battery a minute after it was taken, but to board the gunboats, leaving only one of the small boats, with the armourer, to spike the guns, for the captain was aware that there were troops stationed along the coast who might come down on us and beat us off. The first lieutenant, who commanded, desired O'Brien to remain with the first cutter, and after the armourer had spiked the guns, as officer of the boat he was to shove off immediately. O'Brien and I remained in the battery with the armourer, the boat's crew being ordered down to the boat to keep her afloat and ready to shove off at a moment's warning. We had spiked all the guns but one, when all of a sudden a volley of musketry was poured upon us, which killed the armourer and wounded me in the leg, above the knee. I fell down by O'Brien, who cried out, "By the powers! here they are, and one gun not spiked." He jumped down, wrenched the hammer from the armourer's hand, and, seizing a nail from the bag, in a few moments he had spiked the gun. At this time I heard the tramping of the French soldiers advancing, when O'Brien threw away the hammer, and, lifting me upon his shoulders, cried, "Come along, Peter, my boy," and made for the boat as fast as he could; but he was too late; he had not got half-way to the boat before he was collared by two French soldiers and dragged back to the battery. The French troops then advanced, and kept up a smart fire: our cutter escaped, and joined the other boats, which had captured the gunboats and convoy with little opposition. Our large boats had carronades mounted

in their bows, and soon returned the fire with round and grape, which drove the French troops back into the battery, where they remained, popping at our men under cover until most of the vessels were taken out: those which they could not man were burnt. In the meantime, O'Brien had been taken into the battery with me on his back; but as soon as he was there he laid me gently down, saying, "Peter, my boy, as long as you were under my charge I'd carry you through thick and thin, but now that you're under the charge of these French beggars, why let them carry you. Every man his own bundle, Peter, that's fair play, so if they think you're worth the carrying, let them bear the weight of ye."

"And suppose they do not, O'Brien, will you leave me here?"

"Will I lave you, Peter! Not if I can help it, my boy; but they won't leave you, never fear them; prisoners are so scarce with them that they would not leave the captain's monkey, if he were taken."

As soon as our boats were clear of their musketry, the commanding officer of the French troops examined the guns in the battery, with the hope of reaching them, and was very much annoyed to find that every one of them was spiked. "He'll look sharper than a magpie before he finds a clear touch-hole, I expect," said O'Brien, as he watched the officer. And here I must observe that O'Brien showed great presence of mind in spiking the last gun; for had they had one gun to fire at our boats, towing out the prizes, they must have done a great deal of mischief to them, and we should have lost a great many men; but in so doing, and in the attempt to save me, he sacrificed himself and was taken prisoner. When

the troops ceased firing, the commanding officer came up to O'Brien, and looking at him, said, "Officer?" to which O'Brien nodded his head. He then pointed to me—"Officer?" O'Brien nodded his head again, at which the French troops laughed, as O'Brien told me afterwards, because I was what they called an *enfant*, which means an infant. I was very stiff and faint, and could not walk. The officer who commanded the troops left a detachment in the battery and prepared to return to Cette, whence they came. O'Brien walked and I was carried on three muskets by six of the French soldiers—not a very pleasant conveyance at any time, but in my state excessively painful. However, I must say that they were very kind to me, and put a greatcoat or something under my wounded leg, for I was in an agony and fainted several times. At last they brought me some water to drink. O how delicious it was! I have often thought since, when I have been in company where people fond of good living have smacked their lips at their claret, that if they could only be wounded and taste a cup of water, they would then know what it is to feel a beverage grateful. In about an hour and a half, which appeared to me to be five days at the least, we arrived at the town of Cette and I was taken up to the house of the officer who commanded the troops, and who had often looked at me as I was carried there from the battery, saying, "Poor child!" I was put on a bed, where I again fainted away. When I came to my senses, I found a surgeon had bandaged my leg and that I had been undressed. O'Brien was standing by me, and I believe that he had been crying, for he thought that I was dead. When I looked him in the face, he said, "Pater, you baste, how you

frightened me; bad luck to me if ever I take charge of another youngster. What did you sham dead for?"

"I am better now, O'Brien," replied I, "how much I am indebted to you; you have been made prisoner in trying to save me."

"I have been made prisoner in doing my duty, in one shape or another. If that fool of an armourer hadn't held his hammer so tight after he was dead and it was of no use to him, I should have been clear enough, and so would you have been; but, however, this is nothing at all, Peter; as far as I can see the life of a man consists in getting into scrapes and getting out of them. We've managed the first, and we'll manage the second also; so be smart, my honey, and get well, for although a man may escape by running away on two legs, I never heard of a boy who hopped out of a French prison upon one."

IV

After a three weeks' march, Peter and O'Brien arrive at the fortress of Givet.

If I doubted the practicability of escape when I examined the exterior, when we were ushered into the interior of the fortress I felt that it was impossible, and I stated my opinion to O'Brien. We were conducted into a yard surrounded by a high wall: the buildings appropriated for the prisoners were built with lean-to roofs on one side, and at each side of the square was a sentry looking down upon us. It was very much like the dens which they now build for bears, only so much larger. O'Brien answered me with a "Pish! Peter, it's the

very security of the place which will enable us to get out of it. But don't talk, as there are always spies about who understand English."

We were shown into a room allotted to six of us; our baggage was examined and then delivered over to us. "Better and better, Peter," observed O'Brien, "they've not found it out!"

"What?" inquired I.

"Oh, only a little selection of articles which might be useful to us by-and-by."

He then showed me what I never before was aware of; that he had a false bottom to his trunk; but it was papered over like the rest, and very ingeniously concealed. "And what is there, O'Brien?" inquired I.

"Never mind; I had them made at Montpelier. You'll see by and by."

The others who were lodged in the same room then came in, and, after staying a quarter of an hour, went away at the sound of the dinner-bell. "Now, Peter," said O'Brien, "I must get rid of my load. Turn the key."

O'Brien then undressed himself, and showed me a rope of silk, with a knot at every two feet, about half an inch in size, wound round and round his body. There were about sixty feet of it altogether. As I unwound it, he, turning round and round, observed, "Peter, I've worn this rope ever since I left Montpelier, and you've no idea of the pain I have suffered; but we must go to England, that's decided upon."

When I looked at O'Brien as the rope was wound off, I could easily imagine that he had really been in great pain; in several places his flesh was quite raw from the

continual friction, and after it was all unwound and he had put on his clothes, he fainted away. I was very much alarmed, but I recollected to put the rope into the trunk and take out the key before I called for assistance. He soon came to, and on being asked what was the matter, said that he was subject to fits from his infancy. He looked earnestly at me, and I showed him the key, which was sufficient.

For some days O'Brien, who really was not very well, kept to his room. One day he said to me, "Peter, can you swim?"

"No," replied I; "but never mind that."

"But I must mind it, Peter; for observe, we shall have to cross the river Meuse, and boats are not always to be had. You observe that the fortress is washed by the river on one side; and as it is the strongest side, it is the least guarded—we must escape by it. I can see my way clear enough till we get to the second rampart on the river, but when we drop into the river, if you cannot swim, I must contrive to hold you up somehow or another."

"Are you, then, determined to escape, O'Brien? I cannot perceive how we are even to get up this wall, with four sentries staring us in the face."

"Never do you mind that, Peter, mind your own business; and first tell me, do you intend to try your luck with me?"

"Yes," replied I, "most certainly; if you have sufficient confidence in me to take me as your companion."

"To tell you the truth, Peter, I would not give a farthing to escape without you. We were taken together, and, please God, we'll take ourselves off together; but

that must not be for this month; our greatest help will be the dark nights and foul weather."

The prison was by all acounts very different from Verdun and some others. We had no parole, and but little communication with the townspeople. Some were permitted to come in and supply us with various articles; but their baskets were searched to see that they contained nothing that might lead to an escape on the part of the prisoners. Without the precautions that O'Brien had taken, any attempt would have been useless. Still, O'Brien, as soon as he left his room, did obtain several little articles—especially balls of twine—for one of the amusements of the prisoners was flying kites. This, however, was put a stop to, in consequence of one of the strings, whether purposely or not I cannot say, catching the lock of the musket carried by one of the sentries who looked down upon us, and twitching it out of his hand; after which an order was given by the commandant for no kites to be permitted. This was fortunate for us, as O'Brien, by degrees, purchased all the twine belonging to the other prisoners; and, as we were more than three hundred in number, it amounted to sufficient to enable him, by stealth, to lay it up into very strong cord, or rather, into a sort of square plait known only to sailors. "Now, Peter," said he one day, "I want nothing more than an umbrella for you."

"Why an umbrella for me?"

"To keep you from being drowned with too much water, that's all."

"Rain won't drown me."

"No, no, Peter; but buy a new one as soon as you can."

I did so. O'Brien boiled a quantity of beeswax and oil, and gave it several coats of this preparation. He then put it carefully away in the ticking of his bed. I asked him whether he intended to make known his plan to any of the other prisoners; he replied in the negative, saying that there were so many of them who could not be trusted, that he would trust no one. . . .

About a week afterwards, O'Brien came to me and said, "The new moon's quartered in with foul weather; if it holds, prepare for a start. I have put what is necessary in your little haversack; it may be to-night. Go to bed now, and sleep for a week if you can, for you'll get but little sleep, if we succeed, for the week to come."

This was about eight o'clock. I went to bed, and about twelve I was roused by O'Brien, who told me to dress myself carefully and come down to him in the yard. I did so without disturbing anybody, and found the night as dark as pitch (it was then November), and raining in torrents; the wind was high, howling round the yard and sweeping in the rain in every direction as it eddied to and fro. It was some time before I could find O'Brien, who was hard at work; and, as I had already been made acquainted with all his plans, I will now explain them. At Montpelier he had procured six large pieces of iron, about eighteen inches long, with a gimlet at one end of each and a square at the other, which fitted to a handle which unshipped. For precaution he had a spare handle, but each handle fitted to all the irons. O'Brien had screwed one of these pieces of iron between the interstices of the stones of which the wall was built, and, sitting astride on that, was fixing another about three

feet above. When he had accomplished this, he stood upon the lower iron, and, supporting himself by the second, which about met his hip, he screwed in a third, always fixing them about six inches on one side of the other, and not one above the other. When he had screwed in his six irons he was about half up the wall, and then he fastened his rope, which he had carried round his neck, to the upper iron, and, lowering himself down, unscrewed the four lower irons; then, ascending by the rope, he stood upon the fifth iron, and, supporting himself by the upper iron, recommenced his task. By these means he arrived in the course of an hour and a half to the top of the wall, where he fixed his last iron, and, making his rope fast, he came down again. "Now, Peter," said he, "there is no fear of the sentries seeing us; if they had the eyes of cats they could not until we are on the top of the wall; but then we arrive at the glacis, and we must creep to the ramparts on our stomachs. I am going up with all the materials. Give me your haversack—you will go up lighter; and recollect, should any accident happen to me, you run to bed again. If, on the contrary, I pull the rope up and down three or four times, you may sheer up it as fast as you can." O'Brien then loaded himself with the other rope, the two knapsacks, iron crows, and other implements he had procured; and, last of all, with the umbrella. "Peter, if the rope bears me with all this, it is clear it will bear such a creature as you are, therefore, don't be afraid." So whispering, he commenced his ascent; in about three minutes he was up, and the rope pulled. I immediately followed him, and found the rope very easy to climb, from the knots at every two feet which gave me a hold for my feet, and I was up

in as short a time as he was. He caught me by the collar, putting his wet hand on my mouth, and I lay down beside him while he pulled up the rope. We then crawled on our stomachs across the glacis till we arrived at the rampart. The wind blew tremendously, and the rain pattered down so fast that the sentries did not perceive us; indeed, it was no fault of theirs, for it was impossible to have made us out. It was some time before O'Brien could find out the point exactly above the drawbridge of the first ditch; at last, he did—he fixed his crowbar in and lowered down the rope. "Now, Peter, I had better go first again; when I shake the rope from below, all's right." O'Brien descended, and in a few minutes the rope again shook; I followed him, and found myself received in his arms upon the meeting of the drawbridge; but the drawbridge itself was up. O'Brien led the way across the chains and I followed him. When we had crossed the moat, we found a barrier-gate locked; this puzzled us. O'Brien pulled out his picklocks to pick it, but without success; here we were fast. "We must undermine the gate, O'Brien; we must pull up the pavement until we can creep under." "Peter, you are a fine fellow; I never thought of that." We worked very hard until the hole was large enough, using the crowbar which was left and a little wrench which O'Brien had with him. By these means we got under the gate in the course of an hour or more. This gate led to the lower rampart, but we had a covered way to pass through before we arrived at it. We proceeded very cautiously, when we heard a noise; we stopped, and found that it was a sentry, who was fast asleep and snoring. Little expecting to find one here, we were puzzled; pass him we could not well, as

he was stationed on the very spot where we required to place our crowbar to descend the lower rampart into the river. O'Brien thought for a moment. "Peter," said he, "now is the time for you to prove yourself a man. He is fast asleep, but his noise must be stopped. I will stop his mouth, but at the very moment that I do so you must throw open the pan of his musket, and then he can not fire it." "I will, O'Brien; don't fear me." We crept cautiously up to him, and O'Brien motioning me to put my thumb on the pan, I did so, and the moment that O'Brien put his hand upon the soldier's mouth, I threw open the pan. The fellow struggled, and snapped his lock as a signal, but, of course, without discharging his musket, and in a minute he was not only gagged but bound by O'Brien, with my assistance. Leaving him there, we proceeded to the rampart, and, fixing the crowbar again, O'Brien descended; I followed him, and found him in the river, hanging on to the rope; the umbrella was opened and turned upwards; the preparation made it resist the water, and, as previously explained to me by O'Brien, I had only to hold on at arm's length to two beckets which he had affixed to the point of the umbrella, which was under water. To the same part, O'Brien had a towline, which, taking in his teeth, he towed me down with the stream to about a hundred yards clear of the fortress, where we landed. O'Brien was so exhausted that for a few minutes he remained quite motionless; I also was benumbed with the cold. "Peter," said he, "thank God we have succeeded so far; now we must push on as far as we can, for we shall have daylight in two hours."

O'Brien took out his flask of spirits, and we both drank a half-tumbler at least, but we should not in our state have been affected with a bottle. We now walked along the riverside till we fell in with a small craft, with a boat towing astern. O'Brien swam to it, and, cutting the painter without getting in, towed it on shore. The oars were fortunately in the boat. I got in, we shoved off, and rowed away down the stream till the dawn of day. "All's right, Peter; now we'll land. This is the Forest of Ardennes." We landed, replaced the oars in the boat, and pushed her off into the stream, to induce people to suppose that she had broken adrift, and then hastened into the thickest of the wood. It still rained hard; I shivered and my teeth chattered with the cold, but there was no help for it. We again took a dram of spirits, and, worn out with fatigue and excitement, soon fell fast asleep upon a bed of leaves which we had collected together.

V

O'Brien and Peter have many hair-breadth escapes while making their way to Flushing, whence they finally reach England in safety.

Later on, O'Brien—now captain of the "Rattlesnake" brig, with Peter as lieutenant—sails for the West Indies.

The "Rattlesnake" is cruising off Martinique, in sight of the lights of St. Pierre. Swinburne, a former shipmate of Peter and O'Brien, is a privileged member of the crew.

One evening, being about six miles off-shore, we observed two vessels rounding Negro Point, close in-

shore. It was quite calm and the boats were towing ahead.

"It will be dark in half an hour, Peter," said O'Brien, "and I think we might get them before they anchor or, if they do anchor, it will be well outside. What do you think?"

I replied that I thought it very possible, and wished he would permit me to make the attempt, as, if I found there was much risk, I would return.

"I know that I can trust you, Peter," replied O'Brien, "and it's a great pleasure to know that you have an officer you can trust; but haven't I brought you up myself, and made a man of you, as I promised I would when you were a little spalpeen with a sniffling nose and legs in the shape of two carrots? So hoist out the launch and get the boats ready—the sooner the better. What a hot day this has been—not a cat's paw on the water and the sky all of a mist. Only look at the sun, how he goes down, puffed out to three times his size, as if he were in a terrible passion. I suspect we shall have the land breeze off strong."

In half an hour I shoved off with the boats. It was now quite dark, and I pulled towards the harbour of St. Pierre. The heat was excessive and unaccountable; not the slightest breath of wind moved in the heavens or below; no clouds to be seen, and the stars were obscured by a sort of mist; there appeared a total stagnation in the elements. The men in the boats pulled off their jackets, for, after a few moments' pulling, they could bear them no longer. As we pulled in, the atmosphere became more opaque and the darkness more intense. We supposed ourselves to be at the mouth of the harbour, but

could see nothing—not three yards ahead of the boat. Swinburne, who always went with me, was steering the boat, and I observed to him the unusual appearance of the night.

"I have been watching it, sir," replied Swinburne, "and I tell you, Mr. Simple, that if we only knew how to find the brig, that I would advise you to get on board of her immediately. She'll want all her hands this night, or I'm much mistaken."

"Why do you say so?" replied I.

"Because I think, nay, I may say that I'm sartin, we'll have a hurricane afore morning. It's not the first time I've cruised in these latitudes. I recollect in '94——"

But I interrupted him: "Swinburne, I believe that you are right. At all events, I'll turn back; perhaps we may reach the brig before it comes on. She carries a light, and we can find her out." I then turned the boat round, and steered, as near as I could guess, for where the brig was lying. But we had not pulled more than two minutes before a low moaning was heard in the atmosphere—now here, now there—and we appeared to be pulling through solid darkness, if I may use the expression. Swinburne looked around him and pointed out on the starboard bow.

"It's a-coming, Mr. Simple, sure enough; many's the living being that will not rise on its legs to-morrow. See, sir."

I looked, and, dark as it was, it appeared as if a sort of black wall was sweeping along the water right towards us. The moaning gradually increased to a stunning roar, and then at once it broke upon us with a noise to which

no thunder can bear a comparison. The oars were caught by the wind with such force that the men were dashed forward under the thwarts, many of them severely hurt. Fortunately, we pulled with tholes and pins, or the gunwales and planks of the boat would have been wrenched off, and we should have foundered. The wind soon caught the boat on her broadside, and, had there been the least sea, would inevitably have thrown her over; but Swinburne put the helm down, and she fell off before the hurricane, darting through the boiling water at the rate of ten miles an hour. All hands were aghast; they had recovered their seats, but were obliged to relinquish them and sit down at the bottom, holding on by the thwarts. The terrific roaring of the hurricane prevented any communication, except by gesture. The other boats had disappeared; lighter than ours, they had flown away faster before the sweeping element; but we had not been a minute before the wind before the sea rose in a most unaccountable manner—it appeared to be by magic. Of all the horrors that ever I witnessed, nothing could be compared to the scene of this night. We could see nothing, and heard only the wind, before which we were darting like an arrow—to where we knew not, unless it was to certain death. Swinburne steered the boat, every now and then looking back as the waves increased. In a few minutes we were in a heavy swell that at one minute bore us all aloft, and at the next almost sheltered us from the hurricane; and now the atmosphere was charged with showers of spray, the wind cutting off the summits of the waves, as if with a knife, and carrying them along with it, as it were, in its arms. The boat was filling with water, and appeared to settle down fast. The men baled

with their hats in silence, when a large wave culminated over the stern, filling us up to our thwarts. The next moment we all received a shock so violent that we were jerked from our seats. Swinburne was thrown over my head. Every timber of the boat separated at once, and she appeared to crumble from under us, leaving us floating on the raging waters. We all struck out for our lives, but with little hope of preserving them; but the next wave dashed us on the rocks, against which the boat had already been hurled. That wave gave life to some and death to others. Me, in Heaven's mercy, it preserved; I was thrown so high up that I merely scraped against the top of the rock, breaking two of my ribs. Swinburne, and eight more, escaped with me, but not unhurt; two had their legs broken, three had broken arms, and the others were more or less contused. Swinburne miraculously received no injury. We had been eighteen in the boat, of which ten escaped: the others were hurled up at our feet; and the next morning we found them dreadfully mangled. I felt that I was saved, and was grateful; but still the hurricane howled—still the waves were washing over us. I crawled further up upon the beach, and found Swinburne sitting down with his eyes directed seaward. He knew me, took my hand, squeezed it, and then held it in his. For some moments we remained in this position, when the waves, which every moment increased in volume, washed up to us, and obliged us to crawl further up. I could trace for some distance the line of the harbour from the ridge of foam upon the shore; and, for the first time, I thought of O'Brien and the brig. I put my mouth close to Swinburne's ear and cried out, "O'Brien!" Swinburne shook his head and looked up

again at the offing. I thought whether there was any chance of the brig's escape. She was certainly six, if not seven miles off, and the hurricane was not direct on the shore. She might have a drift of ten miles, perhaps; but what was that against such a tremendous power? I prayed for those on board of the brig, and returned thanks for my own preservation.

In about three hours the wind subsided. The sky cleared up, the stars again twinkled in the heavens, and we could see to a considerable distance.

"It's breaking now, sir," said Swinburne at last: "satisfied with the injury it has done—and that's no little. This is worse than '94."

"Now I'd give all my pay and prize-money if it were only daylight and I could know the fate of the poor *Rattlesnake*. What do you think, Swinburne?"

"All depends on whether they were taken unprepared, sir. Captain O'Brien is as good a seaman as ever trod a plank; but he never has been in a hurricane, and may not have known the signs and warnings which God in his mercy has vouchsafed to us. Your flush vessels fill easily—but we must hope for the best."

Most anxiously did we look out for the day, which appeared to us as if it would never break. At last the dawn appeared, and we stretched our eyes to every part of the offing as it was lighted up, but we could not see the brig. The sun rose and all was bright and clear; but we looked not around us, our eyes were directed to where we had left the brig.

"Thank God!" ejaculated Swinburne, when he had directed his eyes along the coast, "she is above water, at all events!" and, looking in the direction where he pointed,

I perceived the brig within two miles of the shore, dismantled, and tossing in the waves.

"I see her," replied I, catching my breath with joy; "but—still—I think she must go on shore."

"All depends on whether she can get a little bit of sail up to weather the point," replied Swinburne; "and depend upon it, Captain O'Brien knows that as well as we do."

We were now joined by the other men who were saved. We all shook hands. They pointed out to me the bodies of our shipmates who had perished. I directed them to haul them further up, and put them all together; and continued, with Swinburne, to watch the brig. In about half an hour we perceived a triangle raised, and in ten minutes afterwards a jury-mast abaft—a trysail was hoisted and set. Then the shears were seen forward, and in as short a time another trysail and a storm-jib were expanded to the wind.

"That's all he can do now, Mr. Simple," observed Swinburne; "he must trust to them and Providence. They are not more than a mile from the beach—it will be touch and go."

Anxiously did we watch for more than half an hour; the other men returned to us and joined in our speculations. At one time we thought it impossible—at another, we were certain she would weather the point. At last, as she neared it, she forged ahead: my anxiety became almost insupportable. I stood first on one leg and then on the other, breathless with suspense. She appeared to be on the point—actually touching the rocks —"She's struck!" said I.

"No!" replied Swinburne—and then we saw her pass on the other side of the outermost rock and disappear.

"Safe, Mr. Simple!—weathered!" cried Swinburne, waving his hat with joy.

"God be thanked!" replied I, overcome with delight.

Peter and O'Brien have many other exciting adventures. Peter is often in great danger through the scheming of a rascally uncle, who tries to rob him of his inheritance; but all comes right in the end, in which Peter, like a true Marryat hero, is left with a title and large fortune.

III. JACOB FAITHFUL

"Jacob Faithful" tells the story of a boy's struggle from poverty to success and prosperity. In this book Marryat sets his scene among the wherries and the watermen of the River Thames. Marryat was born within sight of this river, and must often have played in the surroundings which he so vividly describes. "Jacob Faithful" is famous for its humour and its figures of fun, the most notable of which is the Dominie, or schoolmaster, a character borrowed from Scott.

Jacob Faithful is born in a Thames barge, on board of which he lives with his parents until he is about eleven years old. He is then suddenly left an orphan, his mother dying in tragic circumstances, and his father being drowned in the river on the same day. The boy is befriended by a well-to-do bargemaster, Mr. Drummond, who sends him to school. When his schooldays are over, Jacob is bound apprentice by Mr. Drummond, aboard one of his own barges. Marables is the master of this barge, and a mysterious person named Fleming is the second hand. At the very start Jacob finds himself plunged into strange happenings.

I

I often went on board during the fortnight that the barge remained, and soon became very partial to Marables. There was a kindness about him that won me, and I was distressed to perceive that he was often very melancholy. What surprised me most was to find that during the first week the cabin was constantly locked, and that Marables had not the key; it appeared so strange that he, as master

of the barge, should be locked out of the cabin by his inferior.

One day I went early on board, and found not only the cabin-doors open, but the other man belonging to her walking up and down the deck with Marables. He was a well-looking, tall, active young man, apparently not thirty, with a general boldness of countenance strongly contrasted with a furtive glance of the eye. He had a sort of blue smock-frock overall, and the trousers which appeared below were of a finer texture than those usually worn by people of his condition.

"This is the lad who is bound to the barge," said Marables. "Jacob, this is Fleming."

"So, younker," said Fleming, after casting an inquiring eye upon me, "you are to sail with us, are you? It's my opinion that your room would be better than your company. However, if you keep your eyes open, I'd advise you to keep your mouth shut. When I don't like people's company I sometimes give them a hoist into the stream —so keep a sharp look-out, my joker."

Not very well pleased with this address, I answered, "I thought Marables had charge of the craft, and that I was to look to him for orders."

"Did you, indeed!" replied Fleming, with a sneer. "I say, my lad, can you swim?"

"No, I can't," replied I; "I wish I could."

"Well, then, take my advice—learn to swim as fast as you can; for I have a strong notion that one day or other I shall take you by the scruff of the neck and send you to look after your father."

"Fleming! Fleming! pray be quiet!" said Marables, who had several times pulled him by the sleeve. "He's

only joking, Jacob," continued Marables to me, as, indignant at the mention of my father's death, I was walking away to the shore over the other lighters.

"Well," replied I, turning round, "if I am to be tossed overboard, it's just as well to let Mr. Drummond know, that if I'm missing he may guess what's become of me."

"Pooh! nonsense!" said Fleming, immediately altering his manner and coming to me where I stood in the barge next to them. "Give us your hand, my boy; I was only trying what stuff you were made of. Come, shake hands; I wasn't in earnest."

I took the proffered hand, and went on shore. "Nevertheless," thought I, "I'll learn to swim; for I rather think he was in earnest." And I took my first lesson that day, and by dint of practice soon acquired that very necessary art. Had it not been for the threat of Fleming, I probably should not have thought of it; but it occurred to me that I might tumble, even if I were not thrown overboard, and that a knowledge of swimming would do no harm. . . .

It was six o'clock the next morning that we cast off our fastenings and pulled into the stream. The day was lovely, the sun had risen above the trees, which feathered their boughs down on the sloping lawns in front of the many beautiful retreats of the nobility and gentry which border the river, and the lamp of day poured a flood of light upon the smooth and rapidly ebbing river. The heavy dew which had fallen during the night studded the sides of the barge and glittered like necklaces of diamonds; the mist and the fog had ascended, except here and there, where it partially concealed the landscape; boats laden with the produce of

the market-gardens in the vicinity were hastening down with the tide to supply the metropolis; the watermen were in their wherries, cleaning and mopping them out, ready for their fares; the smoke of the chimneys ascended in a straight line to heaven; and the distant chirping of the birds in the trees added to the hilarity and lightness of heart with which I now commenced my career as an apprentice.

I was looking forward, down the river, when Marables called me to take the helm while they went to breakfast. He commenced giving me instructions, but I cut them short by proving to him that I knew the river as well as he did. Pleased at the information, he joined Fleming, who was preparing the breakfast in the cabin, and I was left on the deck by myself. There, as we glided by every object which for years I had not seen, but which was immediately recognised and welcomed as an old friend, with what rapidity did former scenes connected with them flash into my memory! There was the inn at the water-side, where my father used to replenish the stone bottle; it was just where the barge now was that I had hooked and pulled up the largest chub I had ever caught. Now I arrived at the spot where we had run foul of another craft, and my father, with his pipe in his mouth, and his "Take it coolly," which so exasperated the other parties, stood as alive before me. Here—yes, it was here—exactly here—where we anchored on that fatal night when I was left an orphan; it was here that my father disappeared; and as I looked down at the water I almost thought I could perceive it again close over him as it eddied by. The whole scene came fresh to my memory, my eyes filled with tears, and for a while I could

not see to steer. But I soon recovered myself; the freshness of the air, the bright sky overhead, the busy scene before me, and the necessity of attending to my duty, chased away my painful remembrances; and when I had passed the spot I was again cheerful and content.

In half an hour I had shot Putney Bridge, and was sweeping clear of the shallows in the reach below, when Marables and Fleming came up. "How!" exclaimed Marables; "have we passed the bridge? Why did you not call us?"

"I have shot it without help many and many a time," replied I, "when I was but ten years old. Why should I call you from your breakfast? But the tides are high now and the stream rapid; you had better get a sweep out on the bow, or we may tail on the bank."

"Well!" replied Fleming with astonishment; "I had no idea that he would have been any help to us; but so much the better." He then spoke in a low tone to Marables.

Marables shook his head. "Don't try it, Fleming, it will never do."

"So you said once about yourself," replied Fleming with a laugh.

"I did—I did!" replied Marables, clenching both his hands, which at the time were crossed on his breast, with a look of painful emotion; "but I say again, don't try it; nay, I say more, you *shall* not."

"Shall not?" replied Fleming haughtily.

"Yes," replied Marables coolly; "I say shall not, and I'll stand by my words. Now, Jacob, give me the helm, and get your breakfast."

I gave up the helm to Marables, and was about to enter the cabin, when Fleming caught me by the arm and slewed me round. "I say, my joker, we may just as well begin as we leave off. Understand me, that into that cabin you never enter; and understand further, that if ever I find you in that cabin, by day or night, I'll break every bone in your body. Your berth is forward; and as for your meals, you may either take them down there, or you may eat them on deck."

From what I had already witnessed, I knew that for some reason or another Fleming had the control over Marables; nevertheless, I replied, "If Mr. Marables says it is to be so, well and good; but he has charge of this barge." Marables made no reply; he coloured up, seemed very much annoyed, and then looked up at the sky.

"You'll find," continued Fleming, addressing me in a low voice, "that I command here—so be wise. Perhaps the day may come when you may walk in and out of the cabin as you please, but that depends upon yourself. By-and-by, when we know more of each other——"

"Never, Fleming, never!" interrupted Marables, in a firm and loud tone. "It *shall* not be."

Fleming muttered what I could not hear, and, going into the cabin, brought me out my breakfast, which I despatched with good appetite; and soon afterwards I offered to take the helm, which offer was accepted by Marables, who retired to the cabin with Fleming, where I heard them converse for a long time in a low tone.

The tide was about three-quarters ebb when the barge arrived abreast of Millbank. Marables came on deck, and, taking the helm, desired me to go forward and see the anchor clear for letting go.

FLEMING CAUGHT ME BY THE ARM

"Anchor clear!" said I. "Why, we have a good hour more before we meet the flood."

"I know that, Jacob, as well as you do; but we shall not go farther to-night. Be smart, and see all clear."

I went forward, and when the anchor and cable were ready, we let it go, and swung to the stream. I thought at the time that this was not making the best of our way, as in duty bound to our master; but as I was not aware of what Marables' orders might be, I held my tongue. Whether Fleming thought that it was necessary to blind me, or whether it was true that they were only obeying their orders, he said to Marables in my hearing, "Will you go on shore and give the letters to Mr. Drummond's correspondent, or shall I go for you?"

"You had better go," replied Marables carelessly; and shortly after they went to dinner in the cabin, Fleming bringing me mine out on deck.

The flood tide now made, and we rode to the stream. Having nothing to do, and Marables as well as Fleming appearing to avoid me, I brought the Latin Testament and amused myself with reading it. About a quarter of an hour before dusk, Fleming made his appearance to go on shore. He was genteelly, I may say fashionably, dressed in a suit of black, with a white neckcloth. At first I did not recognise him, so surprised was I at his alteration; and my thoughts, as soon as my surprise was over, naturally turned upon the singularity of a man who worked in a barge under another, now assuming the dress and appearance of a gentleman. Marables hauled up the little skiff which lay astern. Fleming jumped in and shoved off. I watched him till I perceived him land

at the stairs, and then turned round to Marables: "I can't understand all this," observed I.

"I don't suppose you can," replied Marables; "but still, I could explain it, if you will promise me faithfully not to say a word about it."

"I will make that promise, if you satisfy me that all is right," answered I.

"As to being all right, Jacob, that's as may be: but if I prove to you that there is no harm done to our master, I suppose you will keep the secret. However, I must not allow you to think worse of it than it really is; no, I'll trust to your good nature. You wouldn't harm me, Jacob?" Marables then told me that Fleming had once been well-to-do in the world, and during the long illness and subsequent death of Marables' wife had lent him money; that Fleming had been very imprudent, and had run up a great many debts, and that the bailiffs were after him. On this emergency he had applied to Marables to help him, and that in consequence he had received him on board of the barge, where they never would think of looking for him; that Fleming had friends, and contrived to go on shore at night to see them, and get what assistance he could from them in money; in the meantime, his relations were trying what they could do to arrange with the creditors. "Now," said Marables, after this narration, "how could I help assisting one who has been so kind to me? And what harm does it do Mr. Drummond? If Fleming can't do his work, or won't, when we unload, he pays another man himself; so Mr. Drummond is not hurt by it."

"That may be all true," replied I, "but I cannot imagine why I am not to enter the cabin, and why he orders about here as master."

"Why, you see, Jacob, I owe him money, and he allows me so much per week for the cabin, by which means I shall pay it off. Do you understand now?"

"Yes, I understand what you have said," replied I.

"Well, then, Jacob, I hope you'll say nothing about it. It would only harm me, and do no good."

"That depends upon Fleming's behaviour towards me," replied I. "I will not be bullied and made uncomfortable by him, depend upon it; he has no business on board the barge, that's clear, and I'm bound 'prentice to her. I don't wish to hurt you, and as I suppose Fleming won't be long on board I shall say nothing, unless he treats me ill."

Marables then left me, and I reflected upon what he had said. It appeared all very probable, but still I was not satisfied. I resolved to watch narrowly, and if anything occurred which excited more suspicions, to inform Mr. Drummond upon our return. Shortly afterwards Marables came out again, and told me I might go to bed, and he would keep the deck till Fleming's return. I assented, and went down to the cuddy; but I did not much like this permission. It appeared to me as if he wanted to get rid of me, and I laid awake, turning over in my mind all that I had heard and seen. About two o'clock in the morning I heard the sound of oars, and the skiff strike the side of the barge. I did not go up, but I put my head up the scuttle to see what was going on. It was broad moonlight, and almost as clear as day. Fleming threw up the painter of the skiff to Marables, and, as he held it, lifted out of the boat a blue bag, apparently well filled. The contents jingled as it was landed on the deck. He then put out a yellow silk hand-

kerchief full of something else, and, having gained the deck, Marables walked aft with the painter in his hand until the skiff had dropped astern, where he made it fast, and returned to Fleming, who stood close to the blue bag. I heard Fleming ask Marables, in a low voice, if I were in bed, and an answer given in the affirmative. I dropped my head immediately that I might not be discovered, and turned into my bed-place. I was restless for a long while; thought upon thought, surmise upon surmise, conjecture upon conjecture, and doubt upon doubt, occupied my brain until at last I went fast asleep —so fast, that I did not wake until summoned by Fleming. I rose, and when I came on deck, found that the anchor had been weighed more than two hours, and that we were past all the bridges. "Why, Jacob, my man, you've had a famous nap," said Fleming, with apparent good humour; "now go aft and get your breakfast, it has been waiting for you this half-hour." By the manner of Fleming, I took it for granted that Marables had acquainted him with our conversation, and indeed, from that time, during our whole trip, Fleming treated me with kindness and familiarity. The veto had not, however, been taken off the cabin, which I never attempted to enter.

II

On our arrival off the Medway, I had just gone down to bed and was undressing, when I heard Fleming come on deck and haul up the boat. I looked up the hatchway; it was very dark, but I could perceive Marables hand him

the bag and handkerchief, with which he pulled on shore. He did not return until the next morning at daylight, when I met him as he came up the side. "Well, Jacob," said he, "you've caught me. I've been on shore; but you boys ought to know nothing about these things. Make the boat fast, there's a good lad."

When we were one night discharging our cargo, which was for government, I heard voices alongside. From habit, the least noise now awoke me; a boat striking the side was certain so to do. It was then about twelve o'clock. I looked up the hatchway, perceived two men come on board and enter the cabin with packages. They remained there about ten minutes, and then, escorted to the side by Fleming, left the barge. When the barge was cleared, we hauled off to return, and in three days were again alongside of Mr. Drummond's wharf. The kindness both of Marables and Fleming had been very great. They lived in a style very superior to what they could be expected to do, and I fared well in consequence.

On our arrival at the wharf, Marables came up to me, and said, "Now, Jacob, as I have honestly told you the secret, I hope you won't ruin me by saying a word to Mr. Drummond." I had before made up my mind to say nothing to my master until my suspicions were confirmed, and I therefore gave my promise. . . .

We were soon laden with another cargo of bricks, to be delivered at the same place, and proceeded on our voyage. Marables and Fleming, finding that I had not said a word to Mr. Drummond, treated me with every kindness. Fleming once offered me money, which I refused, saying that I had no use for it. I was on the best terms with them; at the same time I took notice of

all that passed, without offering a remark to excite their suspicions. But, not to be too prolix, it will suffice to say that we made many trips during several months, and that during that time I made the following observations: that Fleming went on shore at night at certain places, taking with him bags and bundles; that he generally returned with others, which were taken into the cabin; that sometimes people came off at night, and remained some time in the cabin with him; and that all this took place when it was supposed that I was asleep. The cabin was invariably locked when the barge was lying at the wharfs, if Fleming was on shore, and at no time was I permitted to enter it. Marables was a complete cipher in Fleming's hands, who ordered everything as he pleased; and in the conversations which took place before me, with much less restraint than at first, there appeared to be no idea of Fleming's leaving us. As I felt that there was no chance of discovery without further efforts on my part, and my suspicions increasing daily, I resolved upon running some hazard. My chief wish was to get into the cabin and examine its contents; but this was not easy, and would in all probability be a dangerous attempt. One night I came on deck in my shirt. We were at anchor off Rotherhithe; it was a dark night with a drizzling rain. I was hastening below, when I perceived a light still burning in the cabin, and heard the voices of Marables and Fleming. I thought this a good opportunity, and, having no shoes, walked softly on the wet deck to the cabin door, which opened forward, and peeped through the crevices. Marables and Fleming were sitting opposite to each other at the little table. There were some papers before them, and they were dividing some

money. Marables expostulated at his share not being sufficient, and Fleming laughed and told him he had earned no more. Fearful of being discovered, I made a silent retreat, and gained my bed. It was well that I had made the resolution, for just as I was putting my head below the hatch, and drawing it over the scuttle, the door was thrown open and Fleming came out. I pondered over this circumstance, and the remark of Fleming that Marables had not earned any more, and I felt convinced that the story told me by Marables relative to Fleming was all false. This conviction stimulated me more than ever to discover the secret, and many and many a night did I watch, with a hope of being able to examine the cabin; but it was to no purpose, either Fleming or Marables was always on board.

The cabin was now the sole object of my thoughts, and many were the schemes resolved in my mind to gain an entrance. Fatima never coveted admission to the dreadful chamber of Bluebeard as I did to ascertain the secrets of this hidden receptacle. One night Fleming had quitted the barge, and I ascended from my dormitory. Marables was on deck, sitting upon the water-cask, with his elbow resting on the gunwale, his hand supporting his head, as if in deep thought. The cabin doors were closed, but the light still remained in it. I watched for some time, and, seeing that Marables did not move, walked gently up to him. He was fast asleep. I waited for some little time alongside of him. At last he snored. It was an opportunity not to be lost. I crept to the cabin door; it was not locked. Although I did not fear the wrath of Marables, in case of discovery, as I did that of Fleming, it was still with a beating heart and a tremulous

hand that I gently opened the door, pausing before I entered to ascertain if Marables were disturbed. He moved not, and I entered, closing the door after me. I caught up the light and held it in my hand as I hung over the table. On each side were the two bed-places of Marables and Fleming, which I had before then had many a partial glimpse of. In front of the bed-places were two lockers to sit down upon. I tried them—they were not fast—they contained clothes. At the after part of the cabin were three cupboards. I opened the centre one; it contained crockery, glass, and knives and forks. I tried the one on the starboard side; it was locked, but the key was in it. I turned it gently, but, being a good lock, it snapped loud. I paused in fear, but Marables still slept. The cupboard had three shelves, and every shelf was loaded with silver spoons, forks, and every variety of plate, mixed with watches, bracelets, and ornaments of every description. There was, I perceived, a label on each with a peculiar mark. Wishing to have an accurate survey, and encouraged by my discovery, I turned to the cupboard opposite, on the larboard side, and opened it. It contained silk handkerchiefs in every variety, lace veils, and various other articles of value; on the lower shelf were laid three pairs of pistols. I was now satisfied, and, closing the last cupboard, which had not been locked, was about to retreat, when I recollected that I had not relocked the first cupboard, and that they might not, by finding it open, suspect my visit, I turned the key. It made a louder snap than before. I heard Marables start from his slumber on deck; in a moment I blew out the lamp, and remained quiet. Marables got up, took a turn or two, looked at the cabin doors, which

were shut, and opened them a little. Perceiving that the lamp had, as he thought, gone out, he shut them again, and to my consternation, turned the key. There I was, locked up until the arrival of Fleming—then to be left to his mercy. I hardly knew how to act. At last I resolved upon calling to Marables, as I dreaded his anger less than Fleming's. Then it occurred to me that Marables might come in, feel for the lamp to relight it, and that as he came in on one side of the cabin, I might, in the dark, escape by the other. This all but forlorn hope prevented me for some time from applying to him. At last I made up my mind that I would, and ran from the locker to call through the door, when I heard the sound of oars. I paused again—loitered—the boat was alongside, and I heard Fleming jump upon the deck.

"Quick," said he to Marables, as he came to the cabin door and tried to open it; "we've no time to lose—we must get up the sacks and sink everything. Two of them have peached and the fence will be discovered."

He took the key from Marables and opened the door; I had replaced the lamp upon the table. Fleming entered, took a seat on the locker on the larboard side, and felt for the lamp. Marables followed him and sat down on the starboard locker—escape was impossible. With a throbbing heart I sat in silence, watching my fate. In the meantime, Fleming had taken out of his pocket his phosphorus match box. I heard the tin top pulled open—even the slight rustling of the one match selected was perceived. Another second it was withdrawn from the bottle, and a wild flame of light illumined the deck cabin, and discovered me to their view. Staggered at my appearance, the match fell from Fleming's hand,

and all was dark as before; but there was no more to be gained by darkness—I had been discovered.

"Jacob!" cried Marables.

"Will not live to tell the tale," added Fleming, with a firm voice as he put another match into the bottle and then relighted the lamp. "Come," said Fleming fiercely; "out of the cabin immediately."

I prepared to obey him. Fleming went out, and I was following him round his side of the table, when Marables interposed.

"Stop, Fleming, what is that you mean to do?"

"Silence him!" retorted Fleming.

"But not murder him, surely?" cried Marables, trembling from head to foot. "You will not, dare not, do that."

"What is it that I dare not do, Marables? But it is useless to talk; it is now his life or mine. One must be sacrificed, and I will not die yet to please him."

"You shall not Fleming, you shall not!" cried Marables, seizing hold of my other arm and holding me tight.

I added my resistance to that of Marables; when Fleming, perceiving that we should be masters, took a pistol from his pocket and struck Marables a blow on the head which rendered him senseless. Throwing away the pistol, he dragged me out of the cabin. I was strong, but he was very powerful; my resistance availed me nothing. By degrees he forced me to the side of the barge, and, lifting me up in his arms, dashed me into the dark and rapidly flowing water. It was fortunate for me that the threat of Fleming, upon our first meeting, had induced me to practise swimming, and still more fortunate that I was not encumbered with any more

clothes than my shirt, in which I had come on deck. As it was I was carried away by the tide for some time before I could rise, and at such a distance that Fleming, who probably watched, did not perceive that I came up again. Still, I had but little hopes of saving myself on a dark night and at nearly a quarter of a mile from shore. I struggled to keep myself afloat, when I heard the sound of oars; a second or two more and I saw them over my head. I grasped at and seized the last, as the others passed me, crying, "Help!"

"Oars, my men; here's somebody overboard," cried the man whose oar I had seized.

They stopped pulling; he dragged in his oar till he could lay hold of me, and then they hauled me into the boat. I was exhausted with cold and my energetic struggles in the water; and it was not until they had wrapped me up in a greatcoat, and poured some spirits down my throat, that I could speak. They inquired to which of the craft I belonged.

"The *Polly* barge."

"The very one we are searching for. Where about is she, my lad?"

I directed them; the boat was a large wherry, pulling six oars, belonging to the river police. The officer in the stern-sheets, who steered her, then said, "How came you overboard?"

"I was thrown overboard," replied I, "by a man called Fleming."

"The name he goes by," cried the officer. "Give way, my lads. There's murder, it appears, as well as other charges."

In a quarter of an hour we were alongside; the officer

and four men sprang out of the boat, leaving the other two, with directions for me to remain in the boat. Cold and miserable as I was, I was too much interested in the scene not to rise up from the stern-sheets and pay attention to what passed. When the officer and his men gained the deck, they were met by Fleming in the advance, and Marables about a yard or two behind.

"What's all this?" cried Fleming boldly. "Are you river pirates, come to plunder us?"

"Not exactly," replied the officer; "but we are just come to overhaul you. Deliver up the key of your cabin," continued he, after trying the door and finding it locked.

"With all my heart, if you prove yourselves authorised to search," replied Fleming; "But you'll find no smuggled spirits here, I can tell you. Marables, hand them the key; I see that they belong to the river guard."

Marables, who had never spoken, handed the key to the officer, who, opening a dark lanthorn, went down into the cabin and proceeded in his search, leaving two of the men to take charge of Fleming and Marables. But his search was in vain; he could find nothing, and he came out on the deck.

"Well," said Fleming sarcastically, "have you made a seizure?"

"Wait a little," said the officer; "how many men have you in this barge?"

"You see them," replied Fleming.

"Yes; but you have a boy—where is he?"

"We have no boy," replied Fleming; "two men are quite enough for this craft."

"Still, I ask you, what has become of the boy? for a boy was on your decks this afternoon."

"If there was one, I presume he has gone on shore again."

"Answer me another question: which of you threw him overboard?"

At this query of the officer Fleming started, while Marables cried out, "It was not I; I would have saved him. Oh, that the boy were here to prove it!"

"I am here, Marables," said I, coming on the deck, "and I am witness that you tried to save me, until you were struck senseless by that ruffian Fleming, who threw me overboard that I might not give evidence as to the silver and gold which I found in the cabin; and which I overheard him tell you must be put into sacks and sunk, as two of the men had peached."

Fleming, when he saw me, turned round, as if not to look at me. His face I could not see; but, after remaining a few seconds in that position, he held out his hands in silence for the handcuffs, which the officer had already taken out of his pocket. Marables, on the contrary, sprang forward as soon as I had finished speaking, and caught me in his arms.

"My fine honest boy! I thank God—I thank God! All that he has said is true, sir. You will find the goods sunk astern, and the buoy-rope to them fastened to the lower pintle of the rudder. Jacob, thank God you are safe! I little thought to see you again. There, sir," continued he to the officer, holding out his hands, "I deserve it all. I had not strength enough of mind to be honest."

The handcuffs were put on Marables as well as on Fleming, and the officer, allowing me time to go down and put on my clothes, hauled up the sacks containing the valuables, and, leaving two hands in charge of the barge, rowed ashore with us all in the boat. It was then about three o'clock in the morning, and I was very glad when we arrived at the receiving-house and I was permitted to warm myself before the fire. As soon as I was comfortable I laid down on a bench and fell fast asleep.

III

I did not awake the next morning till roused by the police, who brought us up before the magistrates. The crowd that followed appeared to make no distinction between the prisoners and the witness, and remarks not very complimentary, and to me very annoying, were liberally made. "He's a young hand for such work," cried one. "There's gallows marked in his face," observed another, to whom, when I turned round to look at him, I certainly could have returned the compliment. The station was not far from the magistrate's office, and we soon arrived. The principal officer went into the inner room, and communicated with the magistrates before they came out and took their seats on the bench.

"Where is Jacob Faithful? My lad, do you know the nature of an oath?"

I answered in the affirmative; the oath was administered, and my evidence was taken down. It was then read over to the prisoners, who were asked if they had

anything to say in their defence. Fleming, who had sent for his lawyer, was advised to make no answer. Marables quietly replied that all the boy had said was quite true.

"Recollect," said the magistrate, "we cannot accept you as King's evidence; that of the boy is considered sufficient."

"I did not intend that you should," replied Marables. "I only want to ease my conscience, not to try for my pardon."

They were then committed for trial and led away to prison. I could not help going up to Marables and shaking his hand before he was led away. He lifted up his two arms, for he was still handcuffed, and wiped his eyes, saying, "Let it be a warning to you, Jacob—not that I think you need it; but still I once was honest as yourself—and look at me now." And he cast his eyes down sorrowfully upon his fettered wrists. They quitted the room, Fleming giving me a look which was very significant of what my chance would be if ever I fell into his clutches.

"We must detain you, my lad," observed one of the magistrates, "without you can procure a sufficient bail for your appearance as witness on the trial."

I replied that I knew of no one, except my master, Mr. Drummond, and my schoolmaster, and had no means of letting them know of my situation.

The magistrate then directed the officer to go down by the first Brentford coach, acquaint Mr. Drummond with what had passed, and that the lighter would remain in charge of the river police until he could send hands on board of her; and I was allowed to sit down on a bench

behind the bar. It was not until past noon that Mr. Drummond made his appearance. To save time the magistrates gave him my depositions to read; he put in bail, and I was allowed to leave the court.

Marables and Fleming are brought to trial.

It was on the 7th of November, if I recollect rightly, that Fleming and Marables were called up to trial at the Old Bailey, and I was in the court with Mr. Drummond soon after ten o'clock. After the judge had taken his seat, as their trial was first on the list, they were ushered in. They were both clean and well dressed. In Fleming I could perceive little difference—he was pale, but resolute; but when I looked at Marables I was astonished. Mr. Drummond did not at first recognise him; he had fallen away from seventeen stone to, at the most, thirteen —his clothes hung loosely about him—his ruddy cheeks had vanished—his nose was becoming sharp, and his full round face had been changed to an oblong. Still there remained that natural good-humoured expression in his countenance, and the sweet smile played upon his lips. His eyes glanced fearfully round the court—he felt his disgraceful situation—the colour mounted to his temples and forehead, and he then became again as pale as a sheet, casting down his eyes, as if desirous to see no more.

After the indictment had been read over, the prisoners were asked by the clerk whether they pleaded guilty or not guilty. "Not guilty," replied Fleming, in a bold voice. "John Marables—guilty or not guilty?" "Guilty," replied Marables, "guilty, my lord"; and he covered up his face with his hands.

Fleming was indicted on three counts: an assault, with intent to murder; having stolen goods in his possession; and for a burglary in a dwelling-house, on such a date; but I understand that they had nearly twenty more charges against him, had these failed. Marables was indicted for having been an accessory to the last charge, as receiver of stolen goods. The counsel for the crown, who opened the trial, stated that Fleming, *alias* Barkett, *alias* Wenn, with many more *aliases*, had for a long while been at the head of the most notorious gang of thieves which had infested the metropolis for many years; that justice had long been in search of him, but that he had disappeared, and it had been supposed that he had quitted the kingdom to avoid the penalties of the law, to which he had subjected himself by his enormities. It appeared, however, that he had taken a step which not only blinded the officers of the police, but at the same time had enabled the gang to carry on their depredations with more impunity than ever. He had concealed himself in a lighter on the river, and, appearing in her as one diligently performing his duty, and earning his livelihood as an honest man, had by such means been enabled to extend his influence, the number of his associates, and his audacious schemes. The principal means of detection in cases of burglary was by advertising the goods, and the great difficulty on the part of such miscreants was to obtain a ready sale for them—the receivers of stolen goods being aware that the thieves were at their mercy, and must accept what was offered. Now, to obviate these difficulties, Fleming had, as we before observed, concealed himself from justice on board of a river barge, which was made the receptacle for stolen

goods; those which had been nefariously obtained at one place, being by him and his associates carried up and down the river in the craft, and disposed of at a great distance, by which means the goods were never brought to light, so as to enable the police to recognise or trace them. This system had now been carried on with great success for upwards of twelve months, and would in all probability have not been discovered even now, had it not been that a quarrel as to profits had taken place, which had induced two of his associates to give information to the officers; and these two associates had also been permitted to turn King's evidence in a case of burglary in which Fleming was a principal, provided that it was considered necessary. But there was a more serious charge against the prisoner—that of having attempted the life of a boy, named Jacob Faithful, belonging to the lighter, and who it appeared had suspicions of what was going on, and in duty to his master had carefully watched the proceedings, and given notice to others of what he had discovered from time to time. The lad was the chief evidence against the prisoner Fleming, and also against Marables, the other prisoner, of whom he could only observe that circumstances would transpire during the trial in his favour, which he had no doubt would be well considered by his lordship. He would not detain the gentlemen of the jury any longer, but at once call on his witnesses.

I was then summoned, again asked the same questions as to the nature of an oath, and, the judge being satisfied with my replies, I gave my evidence as before; the judge, as I perceived, carefully examining my previous deposition, to ascertain if anything I now said was at

variance with my former assertions. I was then cross-examined by the counsel for Fleming, but he could not make me vary in my evidence. I did, however, take the opportunity whenever I was able of saying all I could in favour of Marables. At last, the counsel said he would ask me no more questions. I was dismissed; and the police-officer who had picked me up, and other parties who identified the various property as their own, and told the manner in which they had been robbed of it, were examined. The evidence was too clear to admit of doubt. The jury immediately returned a verdict of guilty against Fleming and Marables, but strongly recommended Marables to the mercy of the crown. The judge rose, put on his black cap, and addressed the prisoners as follows. The court was so still that a pin falling might have been heard:—

"You, William Fleming, have been tried, by a jury of your countrymen, upon the charge of receiving stolen goods, to which you have added the most atrocious crime of intended murder. You have had a fair and impartial trial, and have been found guilty; and it appears that, even had you escaped in this instance, other charges, equally heavy, and which would equally consign you to condign punishment, were in readiness to be preferred against you. Your life has been one of guilt, not only in your own person, but also in abetting and stimulating others to crime; and you have wound up your shameful career by attempting the life of a fellow-creature. To hold out to you any hope of mercy is impossible. Your life is justly forfeited to the offended laws of your country, and your sentence is that you be removed from this court to the place from whence you came, and from thence to

the place of execution, there to be hanged by the neck till you are dead; and may God, in His infinite goodness, have mercy on your soul!

"You, John Marables, have pleaded guilty to the charges brought against you; and it has appeared, during the evidence brought out in the trial, that although you have been a party to these nefarious transactions, you are far from being hardened in your guilt." ("No, no!" exclaimed Marables.) "I believe sincerely that you are not, and much regret that one who, from the evidence brought forward, appears to have been, previously to this unfortunate connection, an honest man, should now appear in so disgraceful a situation. A severe punishment is, however, demanded by the voice of justice, and by that sentence of the law you must now be condemned; at the same time I trust that an appeal to the mercy of your sovereign will not be made in vain."

The judge then passed the sentence upon Marables, the prisoners were led out of court, and a new trial commenced; while Mr. Drummond conducted me home. About a week after the trial, Fleming suffered the penalty of the law; while Marables was sentenced to transportation for life, which, however, previous to his sailing, was commuted to seven years.

The "Polly" barge is henceforward in charge of an ex-Naval man and his son, known as "the two Toms." These are among Marryat's best characters, and Jacob has some very jolly times in their company. He later leaves Mr. Drummond and becomes a Thames waterman, thereby meeting many other amusing people, and having a good many exciting adventures of one kind and another.

At last, Jacob and "Young Tom" find themselves aboard a man-of-war. Jacob, however, does not stay very long in the Navy. While his ship is in Halifax he receives a letter from a lawyer stating that he, Jacob, has been left a fortune of £30,000. This naturally makes a very pleasant ending to a story which has always been one of the most popular of Marryat's tales.

IV. MR. MIDSHIPMAN EASY

This is perhaps the best and most famous of all Marryat's novels. Like "Peter Simple" it is the story of a boy's adventures in the Navy, but it has the advantage of a definite humorous theme. Jack Easy, son of a Hampshire country gentleman, has been taught by his father to believe in the equality of all men and their common right to equal possession of all property. In everyday practice this theory gives rise to many comical situations. Fortunately, Marryat troubles very little about the rights or wrongs of the theory and is concerned only with the comical situations, and he carries us along with him on a wave of laughter. Our sympathy is always with Jack, who is a plucky boy and has at least the courage of his father's convictions. The following incident occurs while Jack is home from school on his holidays.

I

Nothing pleased Mr. Easy so much as Jack's loquacity. "That's right; argue the point, Jack—argue the point boy," would he say, as Jack disputed with his mother. And then, rubbing his hands, he would turn and observe, "Depend upon it, Jack will be a great, a very great man." And then he would call Jack and give him a guinea for his cleverness; and at last Jack thought it a very clever thing to argue. In short, at the time we now speak of, which was at the breaking up of the Midsummer holidays, Jack was as full of argument as he was fond of it. He would argue the point to the point of a needle, and he would divide that point into as many as there were days

of the year, and argue upon each. In short, there was no end to Jack's arguing the point, although there seldom was point to his argument.

Jack had been fishing in the river, without any success, for a whole morning, and observed a large pond which had the appearance of being well stocked. He cleared the park palings and threw in his line. He had pulled up several fine fish, when he was accosted by the proprietor, accompanied by a couple of keepers.

"May I request the pleasure of your name, young gentleman?" said the proprietor to Jack.

Now Jack was always urbane and polite.

"Certainly, sir; my name is Easy, very much at your service."

"And you appear to me to be taking it very easy," replied the gentleman. "Pray, sir, may I inquire whether you are aware that you are trespassing?"

"The word trespass, my dear sir," replied Jack, "will admit of much argument, and I will divide it into three heads. It implies, according to the conventional meaning, coming without permission upon the land or property of another. Now, sir, the question may all be resolved in the following. Was not the world made for all? and has anyone, or any portion of its inhabitants, an exclusive right to claim any part of it as his property? If you please, I have laid down the proposition, and we will now argue the point."

The gentleman who had accosted Jack had heard of Mr. Easy and his arguments; he was a humorist, and more inclined to laugh than to be angry, at the same time that he considered it necessary to show Jack that under existing circumstances they were not tenable.

"But, Mr. Easy, allowing the trespass on the property to be venial, you surely do not mean to say that you are justified in taking my fish; I bought the fish, and stocked the pond, and have fed them ever since. You cannot deny but that they are private property, and that to take them is a theft?"

"That will again admit of much ratiocination, my dear sir," replied Jack; "but, I beg your pardon, I have a fish." Jack pulled up a large carp, much to the indignation of the keepers, and to the amusement of their master, unhooked it, placed it in his basket, renewed the bait with the greatest coolness, and then, throwing in his line, resumed his discourse. "As I was observing, my dear sir," continued Jack, "that will admit of much ratiocination. All the creatures of the earth were given to man for his use—man means mankind—they were never intended to be made a monopoly of. Water is also the gift of heaven, and meant for the use of all. We now come to the question how far the fish are your property. If the fish only bred on purpose to please you and make you a present of their stock, it might then require a different line of argument; but as in breeding they only acted in obedience to an instinct with which they are endowed on purpose that they may supply man, I submit to you that you cannot prove these fish to be yours more than mine. As for feeding with the idea that they were your own, that is not an unusual case in this world. Further—but I have another bite—I beg your pardon, my dear sir—Ah! he's off again——"

"Then, Mr. Easy, you mean to say that the world and its contents are made for all?"

"Exactly, sir, that is my father's opinion, who is a very great philosopher."

"How then does your father account for some possessing property and others being without it?"

"Because those who are the strongest have deprived those who are weaker."

"But would not that be always the case, even if we were in that state of general inheritance which you have supposed. For instance, allowing two men to chase the same animal and both to come up to it at the same time, would not the stronger bear it off?"

"I grant that, sir."

"Well, then, where is your equality?"

"That does not disprove that men were not intended to be equal; it only proves that they are not so. Neither does it disprove that everything was not made for the benefit of all, it only proves that the strong will take advantage of the weak, which is very natural."

"Oh! you grant that to be very natural. Well, Mr. Easy, I am glad to perceive that we are of one mind, and I trust we shall continue so. You'll observe that I and my keepers being three, we are the strong party in this instance, and, admitting your argument, that the fish are as much yours as mine, still I take advantage of my strength to repossess myself of them, which is, as you say, very natural—James, take those fish."

"If you please," interrupted Jack, "we will argue that point——"

"Not at all; I will act according to your own arguments. I have the fish, but I now mean to have more—that fishing-rod is as much mine as yours, and, being the

stronger party, I will take possession of it. James, William, take that fishing-rod; it is ours."

"I presume that you will first allow me to observe," replied Jack, "that although I have expressed my opinion that the earth and the animals on it were made for us all, that I never yet have asserted that what a man creates by himself, or has created for him for a consideration, is not his own property."

"I beg your pardon; the trees that that rod was made from were made for us all, and if you, or anyone for you, have thought proper to make it into a rod, it is no more my fault than it is that I have been feeding the fish, with the supposition that they were my own. Everything being common, and it being but natural that the strong should take advantage of the weak, I must take that rod as my property, until I am dispossessed by one more powerful. Moreover, being the stronger party, and having possession of this land, which you say does not belong to me more than to you, I shall also direct my keepers to see you off this property. James, take the rod, see Mr. Easy over the park palings. Mr. Easy, I wish you a good morning."

"Sir, I beg your pardon; you have not yet heard all my arguments," replied Jack, who did not approve of the conclusions drawn.

"I have no time to hear more, Mr. Easy; I wish you a good morning." And the proprietor departed, leaving Jack in company with the keepers.

"I'll trouble you for that rod, master," said William. James was very busy stringing the fish through the gills upon a piece of osier.

"At all events *you* will hear reason," said Jack. "I have arguments——"

"I never heard no good arguments in favour of poaching," interrupted the keeper.

"You're an insolent fellow," replied Jack. "It is by paying such vagabonds as you that people are able to be guilty of injustice."

"It's by paying us that the land an't poached—and if there be some excuse for a poor devil who is out of work, there be none for you, who call yourself a gentleman."

"According to his 'count, as we be all equal, he be no more a gentleman than we be."

"Silence, you blackguard! I shall not condescend to argue with such as you; if I did, I could prove that you are a set of base slaves, who had just as much right to this property as your master or I have."

"As you have, I dare say, master."

"As I have, you scoundrel! This pond is as much my property, and so are the fish in it, as they are of your master, who has usurped the right."

"I say, James, what do you say, shall we put the young gentleman in possession of his property?" said William, winking to the other.

James took the hint; they seized Jack by the arms and legs and soused him into the pond. Jack rose after a deep submersion, and floundered on shore blowing and spluttering. But in the meantime the keepers had walked away, carrying with them the rod and line, fish and tin can of bait, laughing loudly at the practical joke which they had played our hero.

"Well," thought Jack, "either there must be some mistake in my father's philosophy, or else this is a very wicked world. I shall submit this case to my father."

II

Convinced by this and similar experiments that "people on shore seemed not to listen to reason or argument," Jack decides to go to sea. As he explains to his father: "It is only upon the ocean that I am likely to find that equality and rights of man which we are so anxious to establish on shore; and therefore I have resolved not to go to school again, which I detest, but to go to sea and propagate our opinions as much as I can." So Jack becomes a midshipman in H.M.S. "Harpy," where his opinions, freely expressed, earn for him one or two friends, a good many enemies, and the nickname "Equality Jack."

One of his friends is a negro cook, Mephistopheles Faust (generally called "Mesty"), an ex-Ashanti chief who had been brought to America and there sold as a slave, afterwards escaping and joining the English Navy. Mesty learnt English from Irish emigrant labourers in New York, and his speech is an amusing mixture—broken English delivered with an Irish brogue.

While cruising off the Spanish coast, the "Harpy" engages an enemy convoy. During the action, Jack, Mesty, and the crew of the "Harpy's" cutter capture a small vessel, but are separated from their ship in the process. The "Harpy" makes signals of recall, but Jack is persuaded by Mesty to take a cruise on their own. Their first step is to attempt the capture of another larger vessel which is anchored off the shore.

About twelve o'clock there came on a mizzling, heavy rain, which was very favourable for our hero's operations. But as it promised soon to clear up, by Mesty's advice they did not delay any longer. They crept softly into the boat, and with two oars to steer her, dropped under the bows of the vessel, climbed up the fore-chains, and found the deck empty. "Take care not fire pistol," said Mesty to the men as they came up, putting his finger to their lips to impress them with the necessity of silence, for Mesty had been an African warrior, and knew the advantage of surprise. All the men being on deck, and the boat made fast, Jack and Mesty led the way aft; not a soul was to be seen; indeed, it was too dark to see anybody, unless they were walking the deck. The companion-hatch was secured, and the gratings laid on the after hatchways, and then they went aft to the binnacle again, where there was a light burning. Mesty ordered two of the men to go forward to secure the hatches, and then to remain there on guard—and then the rest of the men and our hero consulted at the wheel.

"By the powers, we 'ab the ship!" said Mesty, "but must manage plenty yet. I tink der some lazy rascal sleep 'tween the guns. A lilly while it no rain, and den we see better. Now keep all quiet."

"There must be a great many men in this ship," replied our hero; "she is very large and has twelve or fourteen guns—how shall we manage to secure them?"

"All right," replied Mesty, "manage all dat by and by. Don't care how soon daylight come."

"It has left off raining already," observed Easy; "there is a candle in the binnacle, suppose we light it and look round the decks."

"Yes," replied Mesty, "one man sentry over cabin-hatch, and another over after-hatch. Now den we light candle, and all the rest go round the deck. Mind you leave all your pistols on capstern."

Jack lighted the candle, and they proceeded round the decks; they had not walked far, when, between two of the guns, they discovered a heap covered with boat-cloaks. "There de *watch*," whispered Mesty; "all fast—not ready for dem yet."

Mesty blew out the candle, and they all retreated to the binnacle, where Mesty took out a coil of the ropes about the mizzen-mast, and, cutting it into lengths, gave them to the other men to unlay. In a few minutes they had prepared a great many seizings to tie the men with.

"Now den we light candle again, and make sure of them lazy hounds," said Mesty; "very much oblige to dem, all de same; they let us take de ship—mind now wake one at a time, and shut him mouth."

"But suppose they get their mouths free and cry out?" replied Jack.

"Den, Mr. Easy," replied Mesty, changing his countenance to an expression almost demoniacal—"there no help for it,"—and Mesty showed his knife, which he held in his right hand.

"Oh no! do not let us murder them."

"No, massa—suppose can help it; but suppose they get upper hand, what become of us? Spaniards hab knives, and use dem too, by de power!"

The observation of Mesty was correct, and the expression of his countenance when he showed his knife proved what a relentless enemy he could be if his blood was

once roused; but Mesty had figured in the Ashantee wars in former days, and after that the reader need not be surprised. They proceeded cautiously to where the Spaniards lay. The arrangements of Mesty were very good. There were two men to gag them, while the others were to tie their limbs. Mesty and Easy were to kneel by them with the candle with raised knives to awe them into silence, or to strike home, if their own safety required it.

The boatcloaks were removed off the first man, who opened his eyes at the sight of the candle, but the coxswain's hand was on his mouth; he was secured in silence. The other two men were awakened, and threw off their coverings; but they were also secured without there being occasion to resort to bloodshed.

"What shall we do now, Mesty?"

"Now, sar," said Mesty, "open the after-hatch and watch; suppose more men come up, we make them fast; suppose no more come up, we wait till daylight, and see what take place."

Mesty then went forward to see if the men were watchful on the forecastle; and, having again gone the round of the whole deck to see if there were any more men on it, he blew out the candle and took his station with the others at the after-hatchway.

It was just at break of day that the Spaniards who had to keep the morning watch, having woke up, as people generally do at that hour at which they expect to be called, dressed themselves and came on deck, imagining, and very truly, that those of the middle watch had fallen asleep, but little imagining that the deck was in possession of Englishmen. Mesty and the others retreated, to allow

them all to come up before they could perceive them, and, fortunately, this was accomplished. Four men came on the deck, looked round them, and tried to make out in the dark where their shipmates might be. The grating was slapped on again by Jack, and, before they could well gain their eyesight, they were seized and secured, not, however, without a scuffle and some noise.

By the time that these men were secured and laid between the guns it was daylight; and they now perceived what a fine vessel they had fairly taken possession of; but there was much to be done yet. There was, of course, a number of men in the ship, and moreover they were not a mile from a battery of ten guns. Mesty, who was foremost in everything, left four men abaft and went forward on the forecastle, examined the cable, which was *coir* rope, and therefore easily divided; and then directed the two men forward to coil a hawser upon the foregrating, the weight of which would make all safe in that quarter, and afterwards to join them on the quarter-deck.

"Now, Mr. Easy, the great ting will be to get hold of captain; we must get him on deck. Open cabin-hatch now, and keep the after-hatch fast. Two men stay there, the others all come aft."

"Yes," replied Jack, "it will be a great point to secure the captain; but how are we to get him up?"

"You no know how to get captain up? By de holy, I know very well."

And Mesty took up the coils of rope about the mizzen-mast, and threw them upon deck, one after another, making all the noise possible. In a short time, there

was a violent pull of a bell at the cabin-door, and in a minute afterwards a man in his shirt came up the cabin-hatchway, who was immediately secured.

"Dis de captain's servant," said Mesty; "he come say no make such confounded noise. Stop a little; captain get in passion, and come up himself."

And Mesty renewed the noise with the ropes over the cabin. Mesty was right; in a few minutes the captain himself came up boiling with indignation. At the sound of the cabin-door opening, the seamen and our hero concealed themselves behind the companion-hatch, which was very high, so as to give the captain time to get fairly on deck. The men already secured had been covered over with the boatcloaks. The captain was a most powerful man, and it was with difficulty that he was pinioned; and then not without his giving the alarm, had there been anyone to assist him, but as yet no one had turned out of his hammock.

"Now we all right," said Mesty, "and soon 'ab de ship; but I must make him 'fraid."

The captain was seated on the deck against one of the guns, and Mesty, putting on the look of a demon, extended above him his long nervous arm, with the sharp knife clutched, as if ready every instant to strike it into his heart. The Spanish captain felt his situation anything but pleasant. He was then interrogated as to the number of men in the ship, officers, etc., to all of which questions he answered truly: he cast his eyes at the firm and relentless countenance of Mesty, who appeared but to wait the signal.

"I tink all pretty safe now," said Mesty. "Mr. Easy, we now go down below, and beat all men into the hold."

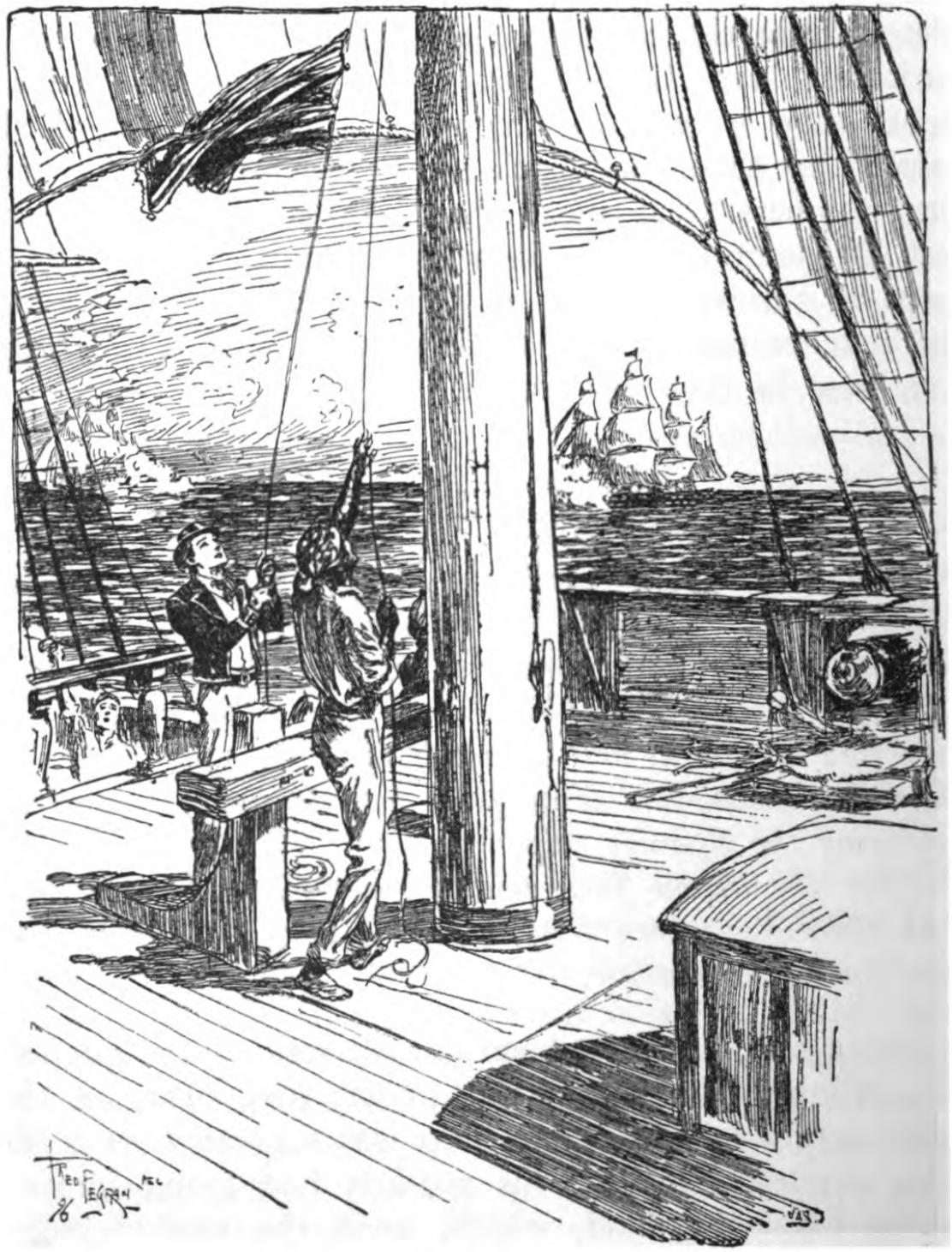
Our hero approved of this suggestion. Taking their pistols from the capstern, they rushed down with their cutlasses; and, leaving two men to guard the cabin-door, they were soon among the crew, who were all asleep in their hammocks; the resistance, although the numbers were more than double of the English, was of course trifling. In a few minutes the Spaniards were all thrown down into the hold of the vessel, and the hatches placed over them. Every part of the ship was now in their possession.

III

After an exciting cruise in the captured vessel, Jack sights his ship, the "Harpy," just as she is about to engage a Spanish man-of-war. Jack has no English colours, so at Mesty's suggestion he hoists a very gay petticoat which they find on board, and with this temporary flag flying he joins the action, and is of great help to the "Harpy" in capturing the Spanish ship.

After the action Jack rejoins the "Harpy." He finds that there have been few changes among the officers and crew during his absence.

There had, however, been one alteration; the gunner, Mr. Minus, who had charge of the first cutter in the night action in which our hero was separated from his ship, carelessly loading his musket, had found himself minus his right hand, which, upon the musket going off as he rammed down, had gone off, too. He was invalided and sent home during Jack's absence, and another had been appointed, whose name was Tallboys.



HE HOISTS A PETTICOAT

Mr. Tallboys was a stout, dumpy man, with red face, and still redder hands; he had red hair and red whiskers, and he had read a great deal—for Mr. Tallboys considered that the gunner was the most important personage in the ship. He had once been a captain's clerk, and having distinguished himself very much in cutting-out service, had applied for and received his warrant as a gunner. He had studied "The Art of Gunnery," a part of which he understood, but the remainder was above his comprehension; he continued, however, to read it as before, thinking that by constant reading he should understand it at last. He had gone through the work from the title-page to the finis at least forty times, and had just commenced it over again. He never came on deck without this gunner's guide in his pocket, with his hand always upon it to refer to it in a moment.

But Mr. Tallboys had, as we observed before, a great idea of the importance of a gunner, and, among other qualifications, he considered it absolutely necessary that he should be a navigator. He had at least ten instances to bring forward of actions in which the captain and all the commissioned officers had been killed or wounded, and the command of the ship had devolved on the gunner.

"Now, sir," would he say, "if the gunner is no navigator, he is not fit to take charge of His Majesty's ships. The boatswain and carpenter are merely practical men; but the gunner, sir, is, or ought to be, scientific. Gunnery, sir, is a science—we have our disparts and our lines of sight—our windage and our parabolas and projectile forces—and our point blank, and our reduction of powder

on a graduated scale. Now, sir, there's no excuse for a gunner not being a navigator; for knowing his duty as a gunner, he has the same mathematical tools to work with." Upon this principle, Mr. Tallboys had added John Hamilton Moore to his library, and had advanced about as far into navigation as he had in gunnery, that is, to the threshold, where he stuck fast, with all his mathematical tools, which he did not know how to use. To do him justice, he studied for two or three hours every day, and it was not his fault if he did not advance —but his head was confused with technical terms; he mixed all up together, and disparts, sines and cosines, parabolas, tangents, windage, seconds, lines of sight, logarithms, projectiles, and traverse sailing, quadrature and Gunter's scale, were all crowded together in a brain which had not capacity to receive the rule of three. "Too much learning," said Festus to the apostle, "hath made thee mad." Mr. Tallboys had not wit enough to go mad, but his learning lay like lead upon his brain; the more he read, the less he understood, at the same time that he became more satisfied with his supposed acquirements, and could not speak but in "mathematical parables."

"I understand, Mr. Easy," said the gunner to him one day after they had sailed for Malta, "that you have entered into the science of navigation—at your age it was high time."

"Yes," replied Jack, "I can raise a perpendicular, at all events, and box the compass."

"Yes, but you have not yet arrived to the dispart of the compass."

"Not come to that yet," replied Jack.

"Are you aware that a ship sailing describes a parabola round the globe?

"Not come to that yet," replied Jack.

"And that any propelled body striking against another flies off at a tangent?"

"Very likely," replied Jack; "that's a *sine* that he don't like it."

"You have not yet entered into *acute* trigonometry?"

"Not come to that yet," replied Jack.

"Then you will require very sharp attention."

"I should think so," replied Jack.

"You will then find out how your parallels of longitude and latitude meet."

"Two parallel lines, if continued to infinity, will never meet," replied Jack.

"I beg your pardon," said the gunner.

"I beg yours," said Jack.

Whereupon, Mr. Tallboys brought up a small map of the world, and showed Jack that all the parallels of latitude met at a point at the top and the bottom.

"Parallel lines never meet," replied Jack, producing Hamilton Moore.

Whereupon, Jack and the gunner argued the point, until it was agreed to refer the case to Mr. Jolliffe, the master's mate, who asserted with a smile, "That those lines were parallels and not parallels."

As both were right, both were satisfied.

At Malta, Jack comes into conflict with two of his greatest enemies: Mr. Biggs, the boatswain, and Easthupp, the purser's steward. Easthupp, who had been a common pick-pocket before he joined the Navy, had tried to take advantage

of Jack's notions of equality and been badly snubbed for his pains. Mr. Biggs had been the victim of one of Jack's practical jokes, the latter having on a former occasion concealed the boatswain's trousers, thereby causing that gentleman to appear trouserless on deck. Gascoigne, Jack's friend, is a fellow midshipman.

But at Malta Jack got into another scrape. The parties in this instance were the boatswain and the purser's steward. Jack still continued his forecastle conversations with Mesty; and the boatswain and purser's steward, probably from their respective ill-will towards our hero, had become great allies. Mr. Easthupp now put on his best jacket to walk the dog-watches with Mr. Biggs, and they took every opportunity to talk at our hero.

"It's my peculiar hopinion," said Mr. Easthupp one evening, pulling at the frill of his shirt, "that a gentleman should behave as a gentleman, and that if a gentleman professes hopinions of hequality and such liberal sentiments, that he is bound as a gentleman to hact up to them."

"Very true, Mr. Easthupp, he is bound to act up to them; and not because a person, who was a gentleman as well as himself, happens not to be on the quarter-deck, to insult him because he only has perfessed opinions like his own."

Hereupon, Mr. Biggs struck his rattan against the funnel, and looked at our hero.

"Yes," continued the purser's steward, "I should like to see the fellow who would have done so on shore; however, the time will come when I can hagain pull

hon my plain coat, and then the hinsult shall be vashed hout in blood, Mr. Biggs."

"And I'll be hanged if I don't some day teach a lesson to the blackguard who stole my trousers."

"Vas hall your money right, Mr. Biggs?" inquired the purser's steward.

"I didn't count," replied the boatswain, magnificently.

"No—gentleman are habove that," replied Easthupp; "but there are many light-fingered gentry habout. The quantity of vatches and harticles of value vich vere lost ven I valked Bond Street in former times is incredible."

"I can say this, at all events," replied the boatswain, "that I should be always ready to give satisfaction to any person beneath me in rank, after I had insulted him. I don't stand upon my rank, although I don't talk about equality, hang me—no, nor consort with niggers."

All this was too plain for our hero not to understand, so Jack walked up to the boatswain, and, taking his hat off, with the utmost politeness, said to him:

"If I mistake not, Mr. Biggs, your conversation refers to me."

"Very likely it does," replied the boatswain. "Listeners hear no good of themselves."

"It happears that gentlemen can't converse without being vatched," continued Mr. Easthupp, pulling up his shirt-collar.

"It is not the first time that you have thought proper to make very offensive remarks, Mr. Biggs; and, as you appear to consider yourself ill-treated, I can only say," continued our hero, with a very polite bow, "that shall be most happy to give you satisfaction."

"I am your superior officer, Mr. Easy," replied the boatswain.

"Yes, by the rules of the service; but you just now asserted that you would waive your rank—indeed, I dispute it on this occasion; I am on the quarter-deck, and you are not."

"This is the gentleman whom you have insulted, Mr. Easy," replied the boatswain, pointing to the purser's steward.

"Yes, Mr. Heasy, quite as good a gentleman as yourself, although I 'ave 'ad misfortunes—I ham of as hold a family as hany in the country," replied Mr. Easthupp, now backed by the boatswain; "many the year did I valk Bond Street, and I 'ave as good blood in my weins as you, Mr. Heasy, halthough I 'ave been misfortunate —I've had hadmirals in my family."

"You have grossly insulted this gentleman," said Mr. Biggs, in continuation; "and not withstanding all your talk of equality, you are afraid to give him satisfaction —you shelter yourself under the quarter-deck."

"Mr. Biggs," replied our hero, who was now very wroth, "I shall go on shore directly we arrive at Malta. Let you and this fellow put on plain clothes, and I will meet you both—and then I'll show you whether I am afraid to give satisfaction."

"One at a time," said the boatswain.

"No, sir, not one at a time, but both at the same time —I will fight both or none. If you are my superior officer, you must *descend*," replied Jack, with an ironical sneer, "to meet me, or I will not descend to meet that fellow, whom I believe to have been little better than a pickpocket."

This accidental hit of Jack's made the purser's steward turn pale as a sheet, and then equally red. He raved and foamed amazingly, although he could not meet Jack's indignant look, who then turned round again.

"Now, Mr. Biggs, is this to be understood, or do you shelter yourself under your *forecastle?*"

"I'm no dodger," replied the boatswain, "and we will settle the affair at Malta."

At which reply Jack returned to Mesty.

"Massa Easy, I look at um face dat fello, Eastop, he no like it. I go shore wid you, see fair play, anyhow—suppose I can?"

Mr. Biggs having declared that he would fight, of course, had to look out for a second, and he fixed upon Mr. Tallboys, the gunner, and requested him to be his friend. Mr. Tallboys, who had been latterly very much annoyed by Jack's victories over him in the science of navigation, and therefore felt ill-will towards him, consented; but he was very much puzzled how to arrange that *three* were to fight at the same time, for he had no idea of there being two duels; so he went to his cabin and commenced reading. Jack, on the other hand, could confide in no one but Gascoigne; he therefore went to him, and although Gascoigne thought it was excessively beneath Jack's dignity to meet even the boatswain, as the challenge had been given there was no retracting: he therefore consented, like all midshipmen, anticipating fun, and quite thoughtless of the consequences.

The second day after they had been anchored in Valette harbour, the boatswain and gunner, Jack and Gascoigne, obtained permission to go on shore. Mr. Easthupp, the purser's steward, dressed in his best blue coat with

brass buttons and velvet collar, the very one in which he had been taken up when he had been vowing and protesting that he was a gentleman, at the very time that his hand was abstracting a pocket-book, went up on the quarter-deck and requested the same indulgence, but Mr. Sawbridge, the first lieutenant, refused, as he required him to return staves and hoops at the cooperage. Mesty, also, much to his mortification, was not to be spared.

This was awkward, but it was got over by proposing that the meeting should take place behind the cooperage at a certain hour, on which Mr. Easthupp might slip out and borrow a portion of the time appropriated to his duty to heal the breach in his wounded honour. So the parties all went on shore, and put up at one of the small inns to make the necessary arrangements.

Mr. Tallboys then addressed Mr. Gascoigne, taking him apart while the boatswain amused himself with a glass of grog, and our hero sat outside, teasing a monkey.

"Mr. Gascoigne," said the gunner, "I have been very much puzzled how this duel should be fought, but I have at last found it out. You see that there are *three* parties to fight; had there been two or four there would have been no difficulty, as the right line or square might guide us in that instance; but we must arrange it upon the *triangle* in this."

Gascoigne stared; he could not imagine what was coming.

"Are you aware, Mr. Gascoigne, of the properties of an equilateral triangle?"

"Yes," replied the midshipman, "it has three equal sides—but what has that to do with the duel?"

"Everything, Mr. Gascoigne," replied the gunner; "it has resolved the great difficulty: indeed, the duel between three can only be fought upon that principle. You observe," said the gunner, taking a piece of chalk out of his pocket and making a triangle upon the table, "in this figure we have three points, each equi-distant from each other; and we have three combatants—so that, placing one at each point, it is all fair play for the three: Mr. Easy, for instance, stands here, the boatswain here, and the purser's steward at the third corner. Now, if the distance is fairly measured, it will be all right."

"But then," replied Gascoigne, delighted at the idea, "how are they to fire?"

"It certainly is not of much consequence," replied the gunner, "but still, as sailors, it appears to me that they should fire with the sun: that is, Mr. Easy fires at Mr. Biggs, Mr. Biggs fires at Mr. Easthupp, and Mr. Easthupp fires at Mr. Easy, so that you perceive that each party has his shot at one, and at the same time receives the fire of another."

Gascoigne was in ecstasies at the novelty of the proceeding, the more so as he perceived that Easy obtained every advantage by the arrangement.

"Upon my word, Mr. Tallboys, I give you great credit; you have a profound mathematical head, and I am delighted with your arrangement. Of course, in these affairs, the principals are bound to comply with the arrangements of the seconds, and I shall insist upon Mr. Easy consenting to your excellent and scientific proposal."

Gascoigne went out, and pulling Jack away from the monkey, told him what the gunner had proposed, at which Jack laughed heartily.

The gunner also explained it to the boatswain, who did not very well comprehend, but replied:

"I dare say it's all right—shot for shot, and hang all favours."

The parties then repaired to the spot with two pairs of ship's pistols, which Mr. Tallboys had smuggled on shore; and, as soon as they were on the ground, the gunner called Mr. Easthupp out of the cooperage. In the meantime, Gascoigne had been measuring an equilateral triangle of twelve paces, and marked it out. Mr. Tallboys, on his return with the purser's steward, went over the ground, and finding that it was "equal angles subtended by equal sides," declared that it was all right. Easy took his station, the boatswain was put into his, and Mr. Easthupp, who was quite in a mystery, was led by the gunner to the third position.

"But, Mr. Tallboys," said the purser's steward, "I don't understand this—Mr. Easy will first fight Mr. Biggs, will he not?"

"No," replied the gunner, "this is a duel of three. You will fire at Mr. Easy, Mr. Easy will fire at Mr. Biggs, and Mr. Biggs will fire at you. It is all arranged, Mr. Easthupp."

"But," said Mr. Easthupp, "I do not understand it. Why is Mr. Biggs to fire at me? I have no quarrel with Mr. Biggs."

"Because Mr. Easy fires at Mr. Biggs, and Mr. Biggs must have his shot as well."

"If you have ever been in the company of gentlemen, Mr. Easthupp," observed Gascoigne, "you must know something about duelling."

"Yes, yes, I've kept the best company, Mr. Gascoigne, and I can give a gentleman satisfaction; but——"

"Then, sir, if that is the case, you must know that your honour is in the hands of your second, and that no gentleman appeals."

"Yes, yes, I know that, Mr. Gascoigne, but still I've no quarrel with Mr. Biggs, and therefore, Mr. Biggs, of course, you will not aim at me."

"Why, you don't think that I'm going to be fired at for nothing," replied the boatswain; "no, no, I'll have my shot anyhow."

"But at your friend, Mr. Biggs?"

"All the same, I shall fire at somebody; shot for shot, and hit the luckiest."

"Vel, gentlemen, I purtest against these proceedings," replied Mr. Easthupp; "I came here to have satisfaction from Mr. Easy, and not to be fired at by Mr. Biggs."

"Don't you have satisfaction when you fire at Mr. Easy," replied the gunner; "what more would you have?"

"I purtest at Mr. Biggs firing at me."

"So you would have a shot without receiving one!" cried Gascoigne. "The fact is that this fellow's a confounded coward, and ought to be kicked into the cooperage again."

At this affront Mr. Easthupp rallied, and accepted the pistol offered by the gunner.

"You 'ear those words, Mr. Biggs; pretty language to use to a gentleman. You shall 'ear from me, sir, as soon as the ship is paid off. I purtest no longer, Mr. Tallboys, death before dishonour—I'm a gentleman, hang me!"

At all events, the swell was not a very courageous gentleman, for he trembled exceedingly as he pointed his pistol.

The gunner gave the word as if he were exercising the great guns on board ship.

"Cock your locks!—Take good aim at the object!—Fire!—Stop your vents!"

The only one of the combatants who appeared to comply with the latter supplementary order was Mr. Easthupp, who gave a loud yell, and then dropped down. Jack's shot had also taken effect, having passed through both the boatswain's cheeks, without further mischief than extracting two of his best upper double teeth. As for Mr. Easthupp's ball, as he was very unsettled and shut his eyes before he fired, it had gone, no one knew where.

The purser's steward lay on the ground and screamed; the boatswain got rid of his double teeth, and then threw down his pistol in a rage.

"A pretty business," sputtered he; "he's put my pipe out. How am I to pipe to dinner when I'm ordered, all my wind 'scaping through the cheeks?"

The onlookers, going to the assistance of Easthupp, find that he has received a flesh wound which, though slight, prevents him from walking. He is more frightened than hurt.

"Hold your confounded bawling," cried the gunner, "or you'll have the guard down here: you're not hurt."

"Han't Hi!" roared the steward. "Oh, let me die, let me die; don't move me!"

"Nonsense," cried the gunner, "you must get up and walk down to the boat; if you don't, we'll leave you—hold your tongue, confound you. You won't? Then I'll give you something to halloo for."

Whereupon, Mr. Tallboys commenced cuffing the poor wretch right and left, who received so many swinging boxes on the ear that he was soon reduced to merely pitiful plaints of "Oh dear!—such inhumanity—I purtest—oh dear! must I get up? I can't, indeed."

"I do not think he can move, Mr. Tallboys," said Gascoigne; "I should think the best plan would be to call up two of the men from the cooperage, and let them take him at once to the hospital."

The gunner went down to the cooperage to call the men. Mr. Biggs, who had bound up his face as if he had toothache, for the bleeding had been very slight, came up to the purser's steward.

"What are you making such a howling about? Look at me, with two holes shot through my figure-head. I wish I could change with you, by heavens! for I could use my whistle then. Now if I attempt to pipe, there will be such a wasteful expenditure of His Majesty's stores of wind that I shall never get out a note. A wicked shot of yours, Mr. Easy."

"I really am very sorry," replied Jack, with a polite bow, "and I beg to offer my best apology."

During this conversation the purser's steward felt very faint, and thought he was going to die.

"Oh dear! oh dear! what a fool I was! I never was a gentleman—only a swell: I shall die; I never will pick a pocket again—never—never. God forgive me!"

"Why, confound the fellow!" cried Gascoigne, "so you were a pickpocket, were you?"

"I never will again," replied the fellow in a faint voice; "Hi'll hamend, and lead a good life. A drop of water—oh! *lagged* at last!"

IV

Jack and Gascoigne join the "Aurora," commanded by Captain Wilson. While cruising off the Corsican coast, the "Aurora" falls in with a mysterious ship.

It was sunset before the *Aurora* had arrived within two miles of the vessel; the private signal had been thrown out, but had not been answered, either because it was too dark to make out the colours of the flags, or that these were unknown to an enemy. The stranger had hoisted the English colours, but that was no satisfactory proof of her being a friend; and just before dark she had put her head to the *Aurora*, who had now come stem down to her. The ship's company of the *Aurora* were all at their quarters, as a few minutes would now decide whether they had to deal with a friend or foe.

There is no situation perhaps more difficult, and demanding so much caution, as the occasional meeting with a doubtful ship. On the one hand, it being necessary to be fully prepared and not allow the enemy the advantage which may be derived from your inaction; and, on the other, the necessity of prudence, that you may not assault your friends and countrymen. Captain Wilson had hoisted the private night-signal, but here

again it was difficult, from his sails intervening, for the other ship to make it out. Before the two frigates were within three cables' length of each other, Captain Wilson, determined that there should be no mistake from any want of precaution on his part, hauled up his courses and brailed up his driver, that the night-signal might be clearly seen.

Lights were seen abaft on the quarter-deck of the other vessel, as if they were about to answer, but she continued to keep the *Aurora* to leeward at about half a cable's length, and as the foremost guns of each vessel were abreast of each other, hailed in English.

"Ship ahoy! What ship's that?"

"His Majesty's ship *Aurora*," replied Captain Wilson, who stood on the hammocks. "What ship's that?"

By this time the other frigate had passed half her length clear of the beam of the *Aurora*, and at the same time that a pretended reply of 'His Majesty's ship——' was heard, a broadside from her guns, which had been trained aft on purpose, was poured into the *Aurora*, and, at so short a distance, doing considerable execution. The crew of the *Aurora*, hearing the hailing in English, and the vessel passing them apparently without firing, had imagined that she had been one of their own cruisers. The captains of the guns had dropped their lanyards in disappointment, and the silence which had been maintained as the two vessels met, was just breaking up in various ways of lamentation at their bad luck, when the broadside was poured in, thundering in their ears, and the ripping and tearing of the beams and planks astonished their senses. Many were carried down below, but it was difficult to say whether indignation at the enemy's

ruse, or satisfaction at discovering that they were not called to quarters in vain, most predominated. At all events, it was answered by three voluntary cheers, which drowned the cries of those who were being assisted to the cockpit.

"Man the larboard guns and about ship!" cried Captain Wilson, leaping off the hammocks. "Look out, my lads, and rake her in stays! We'll pay him off for that foul play before we've done with him. Look out, my lads, and take good aim as she pays round."

The *Aurora* was put about, and her broadside poured into the stern of the Russian frigate—for such she was. It was almost dark, but the enemy, who appeared as anxious as the *Aurora* to come to action, hauled up her courses to await her coming up. In five minutes the two vessels were alongside, exchanging murderous broadsides at little more than pistol shot—running slowly in for the land, then not more than five miles distant. The skin-clad mountaineers of Corsica were aroused by the furious cannonading, watching the incessant flashing of the guns, and listening to their reverberating roar.

After half an hour's fierce combat, during which the fire of both vessels was kept up with undiminished vigour, Captain Wilson went down on the main deck, and himself separately pointed each gun after it was loaded; those amidships being direct for the main channels of the enemy's ship, while those abaft the beam were gradually trained more and more forward, and those before the beam more and more aft, so as to throw all their shot nearly into one focus, giving directions that they were all to be fired at once, at the word of command. The enemy, not aware of the cause of the delay, imagined that the fire of the

Aurora had slackened, and loudly cheered. At the word given, the broadside was poured in, and, dark as it was, the effects from it were evident. Two of the midships ports of the antagonist were blown into one, and her main-mast was seen to totter, and then to fall over the side. The *Aurora* then set her courses, which had been hauled up, and, shooting ahead, took up a raking position, while the Russian was still hampered with her wreck, and poured in grape and canister from her upper deck carronades to impede their labours on deck, while she continued her destructive fire upon the hull of the enemy from the main deck battery.

The moon now burst out from a low bank of clouds, and enabled them to accomplish their work with more precision. In a quarter of an hour the Russian was totally dismasted, and Captain Wilson ordered half of his remaining ship's company to repair the damages, which had been most severe, whilst the larboard men at quarters continued the fire from the main deck. The enemy continued to return the fire from four guns, two on each of her decks, which she could still make bear on the *Aurora;* but after some time even these ceased, either from the men having deserted them, or from their being dismounted. Observing that the fire from her antagonist had ceased, the *Aurora* also discontinued, and the jolly boat being astern still uninjured, the second lieutenant was deputed to pull alongside of the frigate to ascertain if she had struck.

The bright beams of the moon silvered the rippling water as the boat shoved off; and Captain Wilson and his officers who were still unhurt leant over the shattered sides of the *Aurora*, waiting for a reply; suddenly the

silence of the night was broken by a loud splash from the bows of the Russian frigate, then about three cables' length distant.

"What could that be?" cried Captain Wilson. "Her anchor's down. Mr. Jones, a lead over the side, and see what water we have."

Mr. Jones had long been carried down below, severed in two with a round shot—but a man leaped into the chains, and, lowering down the lead, sounded in seven fathoms.

"Then I suspect he will give us more trouble yet," observed Captain Wilson; and so indeed it proved, for the Russian captain, in reply to the second lieutenant, had told him in English, "that he would answer that question with his broadside," and before the boat was dropped astern, he had warped round with the springs on his cable, and had recommenced his fire upon the *Aurora*.

Captain Wilson made sail upon his ship, and sailed round and round the anchored vessel, so as to give her two broadsides to her one, and from the slowness with which she worked at her springs upon her cables, it was evident that she must be now very weak-handed. Still, the pertinacity and decided courage of the Russian captain convinced Captain Wilson that in all probability he would sink at his anchor before he would haul down his colours; and not only would he lose more of the *Aurora's* men, but also the Russian vessel, without he took a more decided step. Captain Wilson, therefore, resolved to try her by the board. Having poured in a raking fire, he stood off for a few moments, during which he called the officers and men on deck, and stated his intention. He then went about, and himself conning the *Aurora*,

ran her on board the Russian, pouring in his reserved broadside as the vessels came into collision, and heading his men as they leaped on the enemy's decks.

Although, as Captain Wilson had imagined, the Russian frigate had not many men to oppose to the *Aurora's*, the deck was obstinately defended, the voice and the arm of the Russian captain were to be heard and seen everywhere, and his men, encouraged by him, were cut down in numbers where they stood.

Our hero, who had the good fortune to be still unhurt, was for a little while close to Captain Wilson when he boarded, and was about to oppose his unequal force against that of the Russian captain, when he was pulled back by the collar by Mr. Hawkins, the chaplain, who rushed in advance with a sabre in his hand. The opponents were well matched, and it may be said that with little interruption, a hand-to-hand conflict ensued, for the moon lighted up the scene of carnage, and they were well able to distinguish each other's faces. At last, the chaplain's sword broke; he rushed in, drove the hilt into his antagonist's face, closed with him, and they both fell down the hatchway together. After this, the deck was gained, or rather cleared, by the crew of the *Aurora*, for few could be said to have resisted, and in a minute or two the frigate was in their possession.

V

Easy and Gascoigne become close friends of a Sicilian nobleman, Don Rebiera, between whom and another member of the Rebiera family—Don Silvio—a blood-feud exists. Silvio, for a crime he has committed, is sentenced to the

galleys, but is wrecked only a few miles from the house of Don Rebiera. At the head of 150 *galley-slaves Silvio marches to attack Rebiera's house. Jack, Gascoigne and Mesty gallop from Palermo to warn the Rebiera family of the approach of the galley-slaves, and stay to assist in the defence of the house. The defending party consists of Don Rebiera and his two sons, Philip and Martin, and Easy, Gascoigne, Mesty and six servants—twelve in all. The difficulties of the defence are increased by the presence of two ladies—Don Rebiera's wife and his daughter, Agnes.*

The house was barricaded as well as circumstances would permit; the first storey was also made a fortress by loading the landing-place with armoires and chests of drawers. The upper storey, or attic, if it might be so called, was defended in the same way, that they might retreat from one to the other if the doors were forced.

It was eight o'clock in the evening before all was ready, and they were still occupied with the last defence, under the superintendence of Mesty, who showed himself an able engineer, when they heard the sound of an approaching multitude. They looked out of one of the windows and perceived the house surrounded by the galley-slaves, in number, apparently, about a hundred. They were all dressed in a most fantastic manner with whatever they could pick up; some had fire-arms, but the most of them were supplied with only swords or knives. With them came also their plunder: carts of various descriptions loaded with provisions of all sorts, and wine; sails from the vessels and boats to supply them with covering in the mountains, hay and straw and mattresses. Their plunder appeared to be well-chosen for their exigencies. To the

carts were tied a variety of cattle, intended to accompany them to their retreat. They all appeared to be under a leader who was issuing directions—that leader was soon recognised by those in the house to be Don Silvio. . . .

The galley-slaves appeared to be very anxious to surround the house that no one should escape, and Don Silvio was arranging the men.

"Ned," said Jack, "let us show him that we are here. He said that he would acquaint Don Rebiera with our arrival—let us prove to him that he is too late."

"It would not be a bad plan," replied Gascoigne; "if it were possible that these fellows had any gratitude among them, some of them might relent at the idea of attacking those who saved them."

"Not a bit; but it will prove to them that there are more in the house than they think for; and we can frighten some of them by telling them that the soldiers are near at hand."

Jack immediately threw up the casement and called out in a loud voice, "Don Silvio! galley-slave! Don Silvio!"

The party hailed turned round and beheld Jack, Gascoigne, and Mesty standing at the window of the upper floor.

"We have saved you the trouble of announcing us," called out Gascoigne. "We are here to receive you."

"And in three hours the troops will be here, so you must be quick, Don Silvio," continued Jack.

The window was then immediately closed. The appearance of our heroes, and their communication of the speedy arrival of the troops, was not without effect. The criminals trembled at the idea; Don Silvio was mad with

rage—he pointed out to the men the necessity of immediate attack—the improbability of the troops arriving so soon, and the wealth which he expected was locked up by Don Rebiera in his mansion. This rallied them, and they advanced to the doors, which they attempted to force without success, losing several men from the occasional fire from those within the house. Finding their efforts, after half an hour's repeated attempts, to be useless, they retreated, and then, bringing up a long piece of timber, which required sixty men to carry it, they ran with it against the door, and the weight and impetus of the timber drove it off its hinges, and an entrance was obtained; by this time it was dark, the lower storey had been abandoned, but the barricade at the head of the stairs opposed their progress. Convenient loop-holes had been prepared by the defenders, who now opened a smart fire upon the assailants, the latter having no means of returning it effectually had they had ammunition for their muskets, which, fortunately, they had not been able to procure. The combat now became fierce, and the galley-slaves were several times repulsed with great loss during a contest of two hours; but, encouraged by Don Silvio, and refreshed by repeated draughts of wine, they continued by degrees removing the barriers opposed to them.

"We shall have to retreat!" exclaimed Don Rebiera; "very soon they will have torn down all. What do you think, Signor Easy?"

"Hold this as long as we can. How are we off for ammunition?"

"Plenty as yet—plenty to last for six hours, I think."

"What do you say, Mesty?"

"I say hold out here—they got no fire-arms—and we ab um at arm-length."

This decision was the occasion of the first defence being held for two hours more, an occasional relief being afforded by the retreat of the convicts to the covered carts.

At last it was evident that the barricade was no longer tenable, for the heavy pieces of furniture they had heaped up to oppose entrance were completely hammered to fragments by poles brought up by the assailants, and used as battering-rams. The retreat was sounded; they all hastened to the other storey, where the ladies were already placed, and the galley-slaves were soon in possession of the first floor—exasperated by the defence, mad with wine and victory, but finding nothing.

Again the attack was made upon the second landing, but, as the stairs were now narrower, and their defences stronger in proportion, they, for a long while, gained no advantage. On the contrary, many of their men were wounded and taken down below.

The darkness of the night prevented both parties from seeing distinctly, which was rather in favour of the assailants. Many climbed over the fortress of piled-up furniture, and were killed as soon as they appeared on the other side, and at last, the only ammunition used was against those who made this rash attempt. For four long hours did this assault and defence continue, until daylight came, and then the plan of assault was altered; they again brought up the poles, hammered the pieces of furniture into fragments, and gained ground. The defendants were worn out with fatigue, but flinched not; they knew that their lives, and the lives of those dearest to them were at stake, and they never relaxed their exertions; still the criminals,

with Silvio at their head, progressed, the distance between the parties gradually decreased, and there was but one massive chest of drawers now defending the landing-place, and over which there was a constant succession of blows from long poles and cutlasses, returned with the bullets from their pistols.

"We must now fight for our lives," exclaimed Gascoigne to Easy, "for what else can we do?"

"Do? Get on the roof and fight there, then," replied Jack.

"By-the-by, that's well thought of, Jack," said Gascoigne. "Mesty, up and see if there is any place we can retreat to in case of need."

Mesty hastened to obey, and soon returned with a report that there was a trap-door leading into the loft under the roof, and that they could draw the ladder up after them.

"Then we may laugh at them," cried Jack. "Mesty, stay here while I and Gascoigne assist the ladies up," explaining to the Rebieras and to their domestics why they went.

Easy and Gascoigne hastened to the signora and Agnes, conducted them up the ladder into the loft, and requested them to have no fear; they then returned to the defences on the stairs and joined their companions. They found them hard pressed, and that there was little chance of holding out much longer; but the stairs were narrow, and the assailants could not bring their force against them. But now, as the defences were nearly destroyed, although the convicts could not reach them with their knives, they brought up a large supply of heavy stones, which they threw with great force and execution. Two

of Don Rebiera's men and Don Martin were struck down, and this new weapon proved most fatal.

"We must retreat, Jack," said Gascoigne; "the stones can do no harm where we are going to. What think you, Don Philip?"

"I agree with you; let those who are wounded be first carried up, and then we will follow."

This was effected; and as soon as the wounded men were carried up the ladder, and the arms taken up to prevent their falling into the hands of the assailants, for they were now of little use to them, the ammunition being exhausted, the whole body went into the large room which contained the trap-door of the loft, and, as soon as they were up, they drew the ladder after them. They had hardly effected this, when they were followed with the yells and shoutings of the galley-slaves, who had passed the last barriers, and thought themselves sure of their prey; but they were disappointed; they found them more secure than ever.

Nothing could exceed the rage of Don Silvio at the protracted resistance of the party and the security of their retreat. To get at them was impossible, so he determined to set fire to the room and suffocate them if he could do no otherwise. He gave his directions to his men, who rushed down for straw; but in so doing, he carelessly passed under the trap-door, and Mesty, who had carried up with him two or three of the stones, dashed one down on the head of Don Silvio, who fell immediately. He was carried away, but his orders were put in execution; the room was filled with straw and fodder, and lighted. The effects were soon felt; the trap-door had been shut, but the heat and smoke burst through; after a time, the

planks and rafters took fire, and their situation was terrible. A small trap-window in the roof in the side of the house was knocked open, and gave them a temporary relief; but now the rafters burned and crackled, and the smoke burst on them in thick columns. They could not see, and with difficulty could breathe. Fortunately, the room below that which had been fired was but one out of four in the attics, and, as the loft they were in spread over the whole of the roof, they were able to remove far from it. The house was slated with massive slates of some hundredweight each, and it was not found possible to remove them so as to give air, although frequent attempts were made.

Donna Rebiera and Agnes are overcome by the smoke.

"Massa Easy, help me here. Massa Gascoigne, come here. Now heab wid all your might; when we get one off we get plenty."

Summoned by Mesty, Jack and Gascoigne put their shoulders to one of the lower slates; it yielded, was disengaged, and slid down with a loud rattling below. The ladies were brought to it, and their heads put outside; they soon recovered, and, now that they had removed one, they found no difficulty in removing others. In a few minutes they were all with their heads in the open air, but still the house was on fire below, and they had no chance of escape. It was while they were debating upon this point, and consulting as to their chance of safety, that a breeze of wind wafted the smoke that issued from the roof away from them, and they beheld the detachment of troops making up to the house; a loud

cheer was given, and attracted the notice of the soldiers. They perceived Easy and his companions; the house was surrounded and entered in an instant.

The galley-slaves, who were in the house searching for the treasure reported by Don Silvio to be concealed, were captured or killed, and in five minutes the troops had possession. But how to assist those above was the difficulty. The room below was in flames, and burning fiercely. There were no ladders that could reach so high, and there were no means of getting them. The commandant made signs from below, as if to ask what he was to do.

"I see no chance," observed Don Philip, mournfully. "Easy, my dear fellow, and you, Gascoigne, I am sorry that the feuds of our family should have brought you to such a dreadful death; but what can be done?"

"I don't know," replied Jack, "unless we could get ropes."

"You quite sure, Massa Easy, that all galley-rascals below gone?" asked Mesty.

"Yes," replied Easy, "you may see that; look at some of them bound there under charge of the soldiers."

"Den, sar, I tink it high time we go too."

"So do I, Mesty; but how?"

"How? Stop a little."

"Come, help me, Massa Easy; dis board" (for the loft was floored) "is loose; come help, all of you."

They all went, and with united strength, pulled up the board.

"Now strike!—and drive down de plaster," said Mesty, commencing the operation.

In a few minutes they had beaten an opening into one of the rooms below not on fire, pulled up another board, and Mesty, having fetched the ladder, they all descended in safety, and to the astonishment of the commandant of the troops, walked out of the door of the house.

Jack is eventually recalled home by the illness of his father. After the latter's death, "Equality Jack" marries Agnes Rebiera and settles down in England with the faithful Mesty as his butler and right-hand man.

V. JAPHET IN SEARCH OF A FATHER

While this novel was running serially in the "Metropolitan Magazine," an English ship met an American vessel in the Atlantic. The American ran up an urgent signal, which eventually proved to be the burning question: "Has Japhet found his father yet?" The incident gives some idea of the popularity which this story gained in England and America. It was a merited popularity, for "Japhet," although it never comes within sight of the sea, is one of the liveliest of Marryat's tales. This fact is particularly interesting, since it proves that the sea owes more to Marryat than he owed to the sea.

The very human hero of this story, Japhet Newland, while yet an infant has been left by his parents in a basket (which also contains a £50 banknote) at the door of the Foundling Hospital. He remains in the care of the Hospital until reaching the age of fourteen, when he is apprenticed to an apothecary, Mr. Phineas Cophagus.

I

Mr. Phineas Cophagus might have been about forty-five years of age when I first had the honour of an introduction to him in the receiving-room of the Foundling Hospital. He was of the middle height, his face was thin, his nose very much hooked, his eyes small and peering, with a good-humoured twinkle in them, his mouth large and drawn down at one corner. He was stout in his body, and carried a considerable protuberance before him, which he was in the habit of patting with his

left hand very complacently; but although stout in his body, his legs were mere spindles, so that, in his appearance, he reminded you of some bird of the crane species. Indeed, I may say that his whole figure gave you just such an impression as an orange might do, had it taken to itself a couple of pieces of tobacco-pipes as vehicles of locomotion. He was dressed in a black coat and waistcoat, white cravat and high collar to his shirt, blue cotton net pantaloons and Hessian boots, both fitting so tight that it appeared as if he were proud of his spindle shanks. His hat was broad-brimmed and low, and he carried a stout black cane with a gold top in his right hand, almost always raising the gold top to his nose when he spoke, just as we see doctors represented at a consultation in the caricature prints. But if his figure was strange, his language and manners were still more so. He spoke, as some birds fly, in jerks, intermixing his words—for he never completed a whole sentence—with *um—um*, and ending it with "so on," leaving his hearers to supply the context from the heads of his discourse. Almost always in motion, he generally changed his position as soon as he had finished speaking, walking to any other part of the room, with his cane to his nose, and his head cocked on one side, with a self-sufficient tiptoe-gait. When I was ushered into his presence, he was standing with two of the governors. "This is the lad," said one of them; "his name is *Japhet*."

"Japhet," replied Mr. Cophagus; "um, scriptural—Shem, Ham, *um*—and so on. Boy reads?"

"Very well, and writes a very good hand. He is a very good boy, Mr. Cophagus."

"Read—write—spell—good, and *so on*. Bring him up—rudiments, spatula—write labels—um—M.D. one of these days—make a man of him, and so on," said this strange personage, walking round and round me with his cane to his nose, and scrutinising my person with his twinkling eyes. I was dismissed after this examination and approval, and the next day, dressed in a plain suit of clothes, was delivered by the porter at the shop of Mr. Phineas Cophagus, who was not at home when I arrived.

A tall, fresh-coloured, but hectic-looking young man stood behind the counter making up prescriptions, and a dirty lad, about thirteen years old, was standing near with his basket to deliver the medicines to the several addresses as soon as they were ready. The young man behind the counter, whose name was Brookes, was within eighteen months of serving his time, when his friends intended to establish him on his own account, and this was the reason which induced Mr. Cophagus to take me, in order that I might learn the business, and supply his place when he left. Mr. Brookes was a very quiet amiable person, kind to me and the other boy who carried out the medicines, and who had been taken by Mr. Cophagus for his food and raiment. The porter told Mr. Brookes who I was, and left me. "Do you think that you will like to be an apothecary?" said Mr. Brookes to me, with a benevolent smile.

"Yes; I do not see why I should not," replied I.

"Stop a moment," said the lad who was waiting with the basket, looking archly at me, "you haven't got through your *rudimans* yet."

"Hold your tongue, Timothy," said Mr. Brookes. "That you are not very fond of the rudiments, as Mr.

Cophagus calls them, is very clear. Now walk off as fast as you can with these medicines, sir—14 Spring Street; 16 Cleaver Street, as before; and then to John Street, 55, Mrs. Smith's. Do you understand?"

"To be sure I do—can't I read? I reads all the directions and all your Latin stuff into the bargain. I mean to set up for myself one of these days."

"I'll knock you down one of these days, Mr. Timothy, if you stay so long as you do, looking at the print-shops—that you may depend upon."

"I keep up all my learning that way," replied Timothy, walking off with his load, turning his head round and laughing at me as he quitted the shop. Mr. Brookes smiled, but said nothing.

As Timothy went out, in came Mr. Cophagus. "Heh! Japhet—I see," said he, putting up his cane, "nothing to do—bad—must work—um—and so on. Mr. Brookes—boy learn rudiments—good—and so on." Hereupon, Mr. Cophagus took his cane from his nose, pointed to the large iron mortar, and then walked away into the back-parlour. Mr. Brookes understood his master, if I did not. He wiped out the mortar, threw in some drugs, and, showing me how to use the pestle, left me to my work. In half an hour I discovered why it was that Timothy had such an objection to what Mr. Cophagus facetiously termed the *rudiments* of the profession. It was dreadfully hard work for a boy; the perspiration ran down me in streams, and I could hardly lift my arms. When Mr. Cophagus passed through the shop and looked at me as I continued to thump away with the heavy iron pestle, "Good," said he; "by-and-by M.D.—and so on." I thought it was a very rough road to such preferment,

and I stopped to take a little breath. "By-the-bye—Japhet—Christian name—and so on—surname—heh?"

"Mr. Cophagus wishes to know your other name," said Mr. Brookes, interpreting.

I have omitted to acquaint the reader that surnames, as well as Christian names, are always given to the children at the Foundling, and in consequence of the bank-note found in my basket, I had been named after the celebrated personage whose signature it bore. "Newland is my other name, sir," replied I.

"Newland—heh! Very good name—everybody likes to see that name—and have plenty of them in his pockets, too—um—very comfortable—and so on," replied Mr. Cophagus, leaving the shop.

I resumed my thumping occupation when Timothy returned with his empty basket. He laughed when he saw me at work. "Well, how do you like the rudimans—and so on—heh?" said he, mimicking Mr. Cophagus.

"Not overmuch," replied I, wiping my face.

"That was my job before you came. I have been more than a year, and have never got out of those rudimans yet, and I suppose I never shall."

Mr. Brookes, perceiving that I was tired, desired me to leave off—an order which I gladly obeyed, and I took my seat in a corner of the shop.

Dinner being ready, and Mr. Cophagus having returned, he and Mr. Brookes went into the back parlour, leaving Timothy and me in the shop to announce customers. And I shall take this opportunity of introducing Timothy more particularly, as he will play a conspicuous part in this narrative. Timothy was short in stature for his age, but very strongly built. He had an oval face, with

a very dark complexion, grey eyes flashing from under their long eye-lashes, and eyebrows nearly meeting each other. He was marked with the smallpox, not so much as to disfigure him, but still it was very perceptible when near to him. His countenance was always lighted up with merriment; there was such a happy devil-may-care expression in his face that you liked him the first minute that you were in his company, and I was intimate with him immediately.

"I say, Japhet," said he, "where did you come from?"

"The Foundling," replied I.

"Then you have no friends or relations?"

"If I have I do not know where to find them," replied I, very gravely.

"Pooh! don't be grave upon it. I haven't any either. I was brought up by the parish, in the workhouse. I was found at the door of a gentleman's house, who sent me to the overseers. I was about a year old then. They call me a foundling, but I don't care what they call me so long as they do not call me too late for dinner. Father and mother, whoever they were, when they ran away from me, didn't run away with my appetite. I wonder how long master means to play with his knife and fork? As for Mr. Brookes, what he eats wouldn't physic a snipe. What's your other name, Japhet?"

"Newland."

"Newland? Now you shall have mine in exchange; Timothy Oldmixon, at your service. They christened me after the workhouse pump, which had 'Timothy Oldmixon, fecit,' on it, and the overseers thought it as good a name to give me as any other; so I was christened after the pump-maker, with some of the pump-water.

As soon as I was big enough, they employed me to pump all the water for the use of the workhouse. I worked at my *papa*, as I called the pump, all day long. Few sons worked their father more, or disliked him so much; and now, Japhet, you see, from habit, I'm pumping you."

"You'll soon pump dry, then, for I've very little to tell you," replied I; "but tell me, what sort of a person is our master?"

"He's just what you see him—never alters, hardly ever out of humour, and when he is he's just as odd as ever. He very often threatens me, but I've never had a blow yet, although Mr. Brookes has complained once or twice."

"But surely Mr. Brookes is not cross?"

"No, he is a very good gentleman; but sometimes I carry on my rigs a little too far, I must say that. For, as Mr. Brookes says, people may die for want of the medicines, because I put down my basket to play. It's very true; but I can't give up 'peg in the ring' on that account. But then I only get a box on the ear from Mr. Brookes, and that goes for nothing. Mr. Cophagus shakes his stick, and says, 'Bad boy—big stick—*um*—won't forget—next time—and so on," continued Timothy, laughing; "and it is *so on* to the end of the chapter."

By this time, Mr. Cophagus and his assistant had finished their dinner, and came into the shop. The former looked at me, put his stick to his nose. "Little boys—always hungry—um—like good dinner—roast beef—Yorkshire pudding—and so on." And he pointed with his stick to the back-parlour. Timothy and I understood him very well this time; we went into the parlour, when the housekeeper sat down with us and helped us. She was

a terribly cross little old woman, but as honest as she was cross, which is all that I can say in her favour. Timothy was no favourite, because he had such a good appetite; and it appeared that I was not very likely to stand well in her good opinion, for I also ate a great deal, and every extra mouthful I took I sank in her estimation, till I was nearly at the zero, where Timothy had long been for the same offence; but Mr. Cophagus would not allow her to stint him, saying, "Little boys must eat—or won't grow—and so on."

I soon found that we were not only well fed, but in every other point well treated, and I was very comfortable and happy. Mr. Brookes instructed me in the art of labelling and tying-up, and in a very short time I was very expert; and, as Timothy predicted, the rudiments were once more handed over to him. Mr. Cophagus supplied me with good clothes, but never gave me any pocket money, and Timothy and I often lamented that we had not even a halfpenny to spend.

II

Timothy encounters a rival.

But two streets—two very short streets—from our own, was situated the single-fronted shop of Mr. Ebenezer Pleggit. Thank Heaven, it was only single-fronted; there, at least, we had the ascendency over them. Upon other points our advantages were more equally balanced. Mr. Pleggit had two large coloured bottles in his windows more than we had; but then we had two horses, and he had only one. He tied over the corks of his bottles with

red-coloured paper; we covered up the lips of our vials with delicate blue. It certainly was the case—for though an enemy, I'll do him justice—that, after Mr. Brookes had left us, Mr. Pleggit had two shopmen, and Mr. Cophagus only one; but then that one was Mr. Japhet Newland; besides, one of his assistants had only one eye, the other squinted horribly, so if we measured by eyes, I think the advantage was actually on our side, and, as far as ornament went, most decidedly; for who would not prefer putting on his chimney-piece one handsome, elegant vase, than two damaged, ill-looking pieces of crockery? Mr. Pleggit had certainly a gilt mortar and pestle over his door, which Mr. Cophagus had omitted when he furnished his shop; but then the mortar had a great crack down the middle, and the pestle had lost its knob. And let me ask those who have been accustomed to handle it, what is a pestle without a knob? On the whole, I think, with the advantage of having two fronts, we had the best of the comparison; but I shall leave the impartial to decide.

All I can say is that the feuds of the rival houses were most bitter—the hate intense—the mutual scorn immeasurable. Did Mr. Ebenezer Pleggit meet Mr. Phineas Cophagus in the street, the former immediately began to look as if he had swallowed some of his own vile adulterated drugs; and in rejoinder, Mr. Cophagus immediately raised the cane from his nose high above his forehead in so threatening an attitude as almost to warrant the other swearing the peace against him, muttering, "Ugly puppy —knows nothing—um—patients die—and so on."

It may be well supposed that this spirit of enmity extended through the lower branches of the rival houses

—the assistants and I were at deadly feud; and this feud was even more deadly between the boys who carried out the medicines, and whose baskets might, in some measure, have been looked upon as the rival ensigns of the parties, they themselves occupying the dangerous and honourable post of standard-bearers.

Timothy, although the kindest-hearted fellow in the world, was as good a hater as Dr. Johnson himself could have wished to meet with; and sometimes, when his basket was not so well filled as usual, he would fill it up with empty bottles below, rather than the credit of the house should be suspected, and his deficiencies create a smile of scorn in the mouth of his red-haired antagonist when they happened to meet going their rounds. As yet, no actual collision had taken place between either the principals or the subordinates of the hostile factions; but it was fated that this state of quiescence should no longer remain.

Homer has sung the battles of gods, demigods, and heroes; Milton, the strife of angels. Swift has been great in his Battle of the Books; but I am not aware that the battle of the vials has as yet been sung; and it requires a greater genius than was to be found in those who portrayed the conflicts of heroes, demigods, gods, angels, or books, to do adequate justice to the mortal strife which took place between the lotions, potions, draughts, pills, and embrocations. I must tell the story as well as I can, leaving it as an outline for a future epic.

Burning with all the hate which infuriated the breasts of the two houses of Capulet and Montague, hate each day increasing from years of "biting thumbs" at each other, and yet no excuse presenting itself for an affray,

GREAT WAS THE CONCUSSION

Timothy Oldmixon—for on such an occasion it would be a sin to omit his whole designation—Timothy Oldmixon, I say, burning with hate and eager with haste, turning a corner of the street, with his basket well filled with medicines hanging on his left arm, encountered, equally eager in his haste and equally burning in his hate, the red-haired messenger of Mr. Ebenezer Pleggit. Great was the concussion of the opposing baskets, dire was the crash of many of the vials, and dreadful was the mingled odour of the abominations which escaped and poured through the wicker interstices. Two ladies from Billingsgate, who were near, indulging their rhetorical powers, stopped short; two tom-cats, who were on an adjacent roof, just fixing their eyes of enmity, and about to fix their claws, turned their eyes to the scene below; two political antagonists stopped their noisy arguments; two dustmen ceased to ring their bells; and two little urchins, eating cherries from the crowns of their hats, lost sight of their fruit, and stood aghast with fear. They met, and met with such violence that they each rebounded many paces; but like stalwart knights, each kept his basket and his feet. A few seconds to recover breath; one withering, fiery look from Timothy, returned by his antagonist, one flash of the memory in each to tell them that they each had the *la* on their side, and "Take that!" was roared by Timothy, planting a well-directed blow with his dexter and dexterous hand upon the sinister and sinistrous eye of his opponent. "Take that!" continued he, as his adversary reeled back; "take that, and be hanged to you for running against a *gentleman!*"

He of the rubicund hair had retreated, because so violent was the blow he could not help so doing, and we

all must yield to fate. But it was not from fear. Seizing a vile potation that was labelled "To be taken immediately," and hurling it with demoniacal force right on the chops of the courageous Timothy, "Take that!" cried he, with a rancorous yell. This well-directed missile came full upon the bridge of Timothy's nose, and the fragile glass shivering, inflicted divers wounds upon his physiognomy, and at the same time poured forth a dark burnt-sienna-coloured balsam to heal them, giving pain unutterable. Timothy, disdaining to lament the agony of his wounds, followed the example of his antagonist, and, hastily seizing a similar bottle of much larger dimensions, threw it with such force that it split between the eyes of his opponent. Thus with these dreadful weapons did they commence the mortal strife.

The lovers of *good order*, or at least of fair play, gathered round the combatants, forming an almost impregnable ring, yet of sufficient dimensions to avoid the missiles. "Go it, red-head!" "Bravo, white apron!" resounded on every side. Draughts now met draughts in their passage through the air, and exploded like shells over a besieged town. Boluses were fired with the precision of cannon-shot, pill-boxes were thrown with such force that they burst like grape and canister, while acids and alkalies hissed, as they neutralised each other's power, with all the venom of expiring snakes. "Bravo! white apron!" "Red-head for ever!" resounded on every side as the conflict continued with unabated vigour. The ammunition was fast expending on both sides, when Mr. Ebenezer Pleggit, hearing the noise, and perhaps smelling his own drugs, was so unfortunately rash and so unwisely foolhardy as to break through the sacred ring, advancing from

behind with uplifted cane to fell the redoubtable Timothy, when a mixture of his own, hurled by his own red-haired champion, caught him in his open mouth, breaking against his only two remaining front teeth and extracting them. He fell, was taken away on a shutter, and it was some days before he was again to be seen in his shop, dispensing those mixtures which, on this fatal occasion, he would but too gladly have dispensed with.

Reader, have you not elsewhere read in the mortal fray between knights, when the casque had been beaten off, the shield lost, and the sword shivered, how they have resorted to closer and more deadly strife with their daggers raised on high? Thus it was with Timothy; his means had failed, and, disdaining any longer to wage a distant combat, he closed vigorously with his panting enemy, overthrew him in the first struggle, seizing from his basket the only weapons which remained, one single vial, and one single box of pills. As he sat upon his prostrate foe, first he forced the box of pills into his gasping mouth, and then, with the lower end of the vial, he drove it down his throat, as a gunner rams home the wad and shot into a thirty-two-pound carronade. Choked with the box, the fallen knight held up his hands for quarter; but Timothy continued, until the end of the vial breaking out the top and bottom of the pasteboard receptacle, forty-and-eight of antibilious pills rolled in haste down Red-head's throat. Timothy then seized his basket, and, amid the shouts of triumph, walked away. His crestfallen adversary got rid of the remnants of the pasteboard, once more breathed, and was led disconsolate to the neighbouring pump; while Timothy regained our shop with his blushing honours thick upon him.

III

Mr. Cophagus sells his business, and Japhet, accompanied by Timothy, sets out on his great quest to discover his father. The two boys have many strange adventures, living among gipsies, travelling with a quack doctor, and other similar experiences. Eventually, they arrive in London, where Japhet has a brief career as a young man of fashion, but in the end he finds himself once more penniless. Without telling Timothy where he intends to go, Japhet sets out alone to repair his fortunes. The devoted Timothy, finding Japhet gone, immediately starts in search of him. In the following passage, Timothy, having succeeded at last in finding Japhet, is entertaining him with an account of some of his own adventures on the road.

"I used to lie in bed, Japhet," said Timothy, "and think upon the best method of proceeding. At last I agreed to myself that to look for you as you had looked after your father would be a wild-goose chase, and that my money would soon be gone; so I reflected whether I might not take up some roving trade which would support me, and at the same time enable me to proceed from place to place. What do you think was my first speculation? Why, I saw a man with a dog harnessed in a little cart, crying dog's meat and cat's meat, and I said to myself, 'Now, there's the very thing—there's a profession—I can travel and earn my livelihood.' I entered into conversation with him, as he stopped at a low public-house, treating him to a pot of beer; and, having gained all I wanted as to the mysteries of the profession, I called for another pot, and proposed that

I should purchase his whole concern, down to his knife and apron. The fellow agreed, and after a good deal of bargaining I paid him three guineas for the *set out* or *set up*, which you please. He asked me whether I meant to hawk in London or not, and I told him no, that I should travel the country. He advised the western road, as there were more populous towns in it. Well, we had another pot to clench the bargain, and I paid down the money and took possession, quite delighted with my new occupation, and away I went to Brentford, selling a bit here and there by the way.

"For three days I had done very well in Brentford. On the third evening I had just come back, it was nearly dusk, and I took my seat on a bench, thinking of you. My dog, rather tired, was lying down before the cart, when all of a sudden I heard a sharp whistle. The dog sprang on his legs immediately, and ran off several yards before I could prevent him. The whistle was repeated, and away went the dog and cart like lightning. I ran as fast as I could, but could not overtake him; and I perceived that his old master was running ahead of the dog as hard as he could, and this was the reason why the dog was off. Still, I should, I think, have overtaken him, but an old woman coming out of a door with a saucepan to pour the hot water into the gutter, I knocked her down, and tumbled right over her into a cellar without steps. There I was; and before I could climb out again, man, dog, cart, cat's meat and dog's meat had all vanished, and I have never seen them since. The rascal got clear off, and I was a bankrupt. So much for my first set up in business."

"You forgot to purchase the *goodwill* when you made your bargain, Timothy, for the stock in trade."

"Very true, Japhet. However, after receiving a very fair share of abuse from the old woman, and a plaster of hot greens in my face—for she went supperless to bed, rather than not have her revenge—I walked back to the inn and sat down in the tap. The two men next to me were hawkers; one carried a large pack of dimities and calicoes, and the other a box full of combs, needles, tapes, scissors, knives, and mock-gold trinkets. I entered into conversation with them, and, as I again stood treat, I soon was very intimate. They told me what their profits were, and how they contrived to get on, and I thought for a rambling life it was by no means an unpleasant one; so, having obtained all the information I required, I went back to town, took out a hawker's license, for which I paid two guineas, and, purchasing at a shop, to which they gave me a direction, a pretty fair quantity of articles in the tape and scissors line, off I set once more on my travels. I took the north road this time, and picked up a very comfortable subsistence, selling my goods for a few half-pence here, and a few half-pence there, at the cottages as I passed by; but I soon found out that without a newspaper I was not a confirmed hawker, and the more radical the newspaper the better. A newspaper will pay half the expenses of a hawker, if he can read. At every house, particularly every small hedge alehouse, he is received and placed in the best corner of the chimney, and has his board and lodging, with the exception of what he drinks, gratis, if he will pull out the newspaper and read it to those around him who cannot read, particularly if he can explain what is unintelligible. Now I became a great politician, and, moreover, a great Radical, for such were the politics of all the lower classes. I lived well, slept

well, and sold my wares very fast. I did not take more than three shillings in the day, yet, as two out of the three were clear profit, I did pretty well. However, a little accident happened which obliged me to change my profession, or at least the nature of the articles which I dealt in."

"What was that?"

"A mere trifle. I had arrived late at a small alehouse, had put up my pack, which was in a painted deal box, on the table in the taproom, and was very busy, after reading a paragraph in the newspaper, making a fine speech, which I always found was received with great applause and many shakes of the hand, as a prime good fellow—a speech about community of rights and the propriety of an equal distribution of property, proving that, as we were all born alike, no one had a right to have more property than his neighbour. The people had all gathered round me, applauding violently, when I thought I might as well look after my pack, which had been for some time hidden from my sight by the crowd, when, to my mortification, I found that my earnest assertions on the propriety of community of property had such an influence upon some of my listeners that they walked off with my pack and its contents. Unfortunately, I had deposited in my boxes all my money, considering it safer there than in my pockets, and had nothing left but about seventeen shillings in silver, which I had received within the last three days. Everyone was very sorry, but no one knew anything about it; and when I challenged the landlord as answerable, he called me a Radical blackguard, and turned me out of the door."

"If you had looked a little more after your own property,

and interfered less with that of other people, you would have done better, Tim," observed I, laughing.

"Very true; but at all events, I have never been a Radical since," replied Tim. "But to go on. I walked off to the nearest town, and I commenced in a more humble way. I purchased a basket, and then, with the remainder of my money, I bought the commonest crockery ware, such as basins, jugs, mugs, and, putting them on my head, off I went again upon my new speculation. I wandered about with my crockery, but it was hard work. I could not reap the profits which I did as a hawker and pedlar. I averaged, however, from seven to nine shillings a week, and that was about sufficient for my support. Sometimes a cook replaced a basin she had broken, by giving me as much meat as had cost her mistress five shillings, and thus avoided a scolding for an article which was worth only twopence. At other times a cottager would give me a lodging, and would consider himself rewarded with a mug that cost me only one penny. I was more than three months employed carrying crockery in every direction, and never during the whole time broke one article, until one day, as I passed through Eton, there was a regular smash of the whole concern."

"Indeed, how was that?"

"I met about a dozen of the Eton boys, and they proposed a cockshy, as they called it; that is, I was to place my articles on the top of a post, and they were to throw stones at them at a certain distance, paying me a certain sum for each throw. Well, this I thought a very good bargain, so I put up a mug (worth one penny) at one penny a throw. It was knocked down at the second shot, so it was just as well to put the full price upon them at

once, they were such remarkably good aimers at anything. Each boy had a stick, upon which I notched off their throws, and how much they would have to pay when all was over. One article after another was put on the post until my basket was empty, and then I wanted to settle with them, but as soon as I talked about that they all burst out into a loud laugh and took to their heels. I chased them, but one might as well have chased eels. If I got hold of one, the others pulled me behind until he escaped, and at last they were all off, and I had nothing left."

"Not your basket?"

"No, not even that; for while I was busy after some that ran one way, the others kicked my basket before them like a football, until it was fairly out of sight. I had only eightpence in my pocket, so you perceive, Japhet, how I was going down in the world."

"You were indeed, Tim."

IV

"Well, I walked away, confounding all the Eton boys and all their tutors, who did not teach them honesty as well as Latin and Greek, and put up at a very humble sort of abode, where they sold small beer and gave beds at twopence a night. There I fell in with some ballad-singers and mumpers, who were making very merry, and who asked me what was the matter. I told them how I had been treated, and they laughed at me, but gave me some supper, so I forgave them. An old man, who governed the party, then asked me if I had any money. I produced my enormous capital of eightpence. 'Quite enough, if you are clever,' said he; 'quite enough—many a man with

half that sum has ended in rolling in his carriage. A man with thousands has only the advance of you a few years. You will pay for your lodging, and then spend this sixpence in matches, and hawk them about the town. If you are lucky, it will be a shilling by to-morrow night. Besides, you go down into areas, and sometimes enter a kitchen when the cook is above stairs. There are plenty of things to be picked up.' 'But I am not dishonest,' said I. 'Well, then, every man to his liking; only if you were you would ride in your coach the sooner.' 'And suppose I should lose all this, or none would buy my matches, what then?' replied I; 'I shall starve.' 'Starve—no, no—no one starves in this country; all you have to do is to get into gaol—committed for a month—you will live better, perhaps, than you ever did before. I have been in every gaol in England, and I know the good ones, for even in gaols there is a great difference. Now the one in this town is one of the best in all England, and I patronises it during the winter.' I was much amused with the discourse of this mumper, who appeared to be one of the merriest old vagabonds in England. I took his advice, bought sixpennyworth of matches, and commenced my new vagrant speculation.

"The first day I picked up threepence for one quarter of my stock, and returned to the same place where I had slept the night before, but the fraternity had quitted on an expedition. I spent my twopence in bread and cheese, and paid one penny for my lodging, and again I started the next morning. But I was very unsuccessful; nobody appeared to want matches that day, and after walking from seven o'clock in the morning to past seven in the evening without selling one farthing's worth, I sat down at the

porch of a chapel, quite tired and worn out. At last I fell asleep; and how do you think I was awoke? By a strong sense of suffocation, and up I sprang, coughing, and nearly choked, surrounded with smoke. Some mischievous boys, perceiving that I was fast asleep, had set fire to my matches, as I held them in my hand between my legs, and I did not wake until my fingers were severely burnt. There was an end of my speculation in matches, because there was an end of all my capital."

"My poor Timothy, I really feel for you."

"Not at all, my dear Japhet; my miseries were trifles to be laughed at. However, I felt very miserable at the time, and walked off, thinking about the propriety of getting into gaol as fast as I could, for the beggar had strongly recommended it. I was at the outskirts of the town, when I perceived two men tussling with one another, and I walked towards them. 'I say,' says one, who appeared to be a constable, 'you must come along with I. Don't you see that 'ere board? All wagrants shall be taken up, and dealt with according to *la*.' 'Now an't I a sailor—and an't I a wagrant by profession, and all according to law?' 'That won't do,' says the other; 'I commands you, in the King's name, to let me take you to prison, and I commands you also, young man,' says he—for I had walked up to them—'I commands you, as a lawful subject, to assist me.' 'What will you give the poor fellow for his trouble?' said the sailor. 'It's his duty, as a lawful subject, and I'll give him nothing; but I'll put him in prison if he don't.' 'Then, you old rhinoceros, I'll give him five shillings if he'll help me, and so now he may take his choice.' At all events, thought I, this will turn out lucky one way or the other, but I will support the man

who is most generous; so I went up to the constable, who was a burly sort of a fellow, and tripped up his heels, and down he came on the back of his head. You know my old trick, Japhet?"

"Yes, I never knew you to fail at that."

"'Well,' the sailor says to me, 'I've a notion you've damaged his upper works, so let us start off, and clap on all sail for the next town. I know where to drop an anchor. Come along with me, and as long as I've a shot in the locker I'll share it with one who has proved a friend in need.' The constable did not come to his senses; he was very much stunned, but we loosened his neckcloth and left him there, and started off as fast as we could. My new companion, who had a wooden leg, stopped by a gate and clambered over it. 'We must lose no time,' said he; 'and I may just as well have the benefit of both legs.' So saying, he took off his wooden stump and let down his real leg. I made no comments; but off we set, and at a good round pace gained a village about five miles distant. 'Here we will put up for the night; but they will look for us to-morrow at daylight, or a little after, therefore, we must be starting early. I know the law-beggars well; they won't turn out afore sunrise.' He stopped at a paltry alehouse, where we were admitted, and soon were busy with a much better supper than I had ever imagined they could have produced; but my new friend ordered right and left, with a tone of authority, and everybody in the house appeared at his beck and command. After a couple of glasses of grog, we retired to our beds.

"The next morning we started before break of day, on our road to another town, where my companion said the

constables would never take the trouble to come after him. On our way, he questioned me as to my mode of getting my livelihood, and I narrated how unfortunate I had been. 'One good turn deserves another,' replied the sailor: 'and now I'll set you up in trade. Can you sing? Have you anything of a voice?' 'I can't say that I have,' replied I. 'I don't mean whether you can sing in tune, or have a good voice, that's no consequence; all I want to know is, have you a good loud one?' 'Loud enough, if that's all.' 'That's all that's requisite; so long as you can make yourself heard—you may then howl like a jackal, or bellow like a mad buffalo, no matter which—as many pay us for to get rid of us, as out of charity: and so long as the money comes, what's the odds? Why, I once knew an old chap, who could only play one tune on the clarionet, and that tune out of all tune, who made his fortune in six or seven streets, for every one gave him money and told him to go away. When he found out that, he came every morning as regular as clock-work. Now there was one of the streets which was chiefly occupied by music-sellers and Italian singers—for them foreigners always herd together—and this tune, "which the old cow died of," as the saying is, used to be their horror, and out came the half-pence to send him away. There was a sort of club also in that street, of larking sort of young men; and when they perceived that the others gave the old man money to get rid of his squeaking, they sent him out money, with orders to stay and play to them; so then the others sent out more for him to go away, and between the two the old fellow brought home more money than all the cadgers and mumpers in the district. Now if you have a loud voice, I can provide you with all the rest.' 'Do you gain

your livelihood by that?' 'To be sure I do; and I can tell you, that of all the trades going, there is none equal to it. You see, my hearty, I have been on board of a man-of-war—not that I'm a sailor, or was ever bred to the sea—but I was shipped as a landsman, and did duty in the waist and afterguard. I know little or nothing of my duty as a seaman, nor was it required in the station I was in, so I never learnt, although I was four years on board; all I learnt was the lingo and slang—and that you must contrive to learn from me. I bolted, and made my way good to Lunnon, but I should soon have been picked up and put on board the tender again if I hadn't got this wooden stump made which I now carry in my hand. I had plenty of songs, and I commenced my profession, and a real good 'un it is, I can tell you. Why, do you know that a'ter a good victory, I have sometimes picked up as much as two pounds a day for weeks running; as it is, I averages from fifteen shillings to a pound. Now, as you helped me away from that land-shark, who would soon have found out that I had two legs, and have put me into limbo as an impostor, I will teach you to earn your livelihood after my fashion. You shall work with me until you are fit to start alone, and then there's plenty of room in England for both of us; but mind, never tell anyone what you pick up, or every mumper in the island will put on a suit of sailor's clothes, and the thing will be blown upon.' Of course, this was too good an offer to be rejected, and I joyfully acceded. At first, I worked with him as having only one arm, the other being tied down to my side, and my jacket sleeve hanging loose and empty, and we roared away right and left, so as to bring down a shower of coppers wherever we went. In about three

weeks, my friend thought I was able to start by myself; and, giving me half of the ballads and five shillings to start with, I shook hands and parted with, next to you, the best friend that I certainly ever had. Ever since, I have been crossing the country in every direction, with plenty of money in my pocket, and always with one eye looking sharp out for you. My beautiful voice fortunately attracted your attention, and here I am, and at an end of my history; but if ever I am away from you, and in distress again, depend upon it I shall take to my wooden leg and ballads for my support."

Japhet's search for his father is successful in the end. Thereafter, his and Timothy's trials are over, for Japhet's father proves to be a man of great wealth, and Japhet inherits it all. As Mr. Cophagus would say "Japhet—um—very lucky—finds father—marries—plenty of money—um—and so on."

VI. POOR JACK

In its theme, "Poor Jack" bears a certain resemblance to "Jacob Faithful." Tom Saunders's father is a boatswain's mate in the Navy. His mother, a former "lady's ladies'-maid," who has social ambitions worthy of Mr. Chucks himself, does not show any particular fondness for her son. Left to look out for himself, Tom spends his time in helping the wherrymen at every kind of odd job, and in "mudlarking" along the riverside, thus earning his nickname, "Poor Jack of Greenwich." When Marryat wrote this book, he was drawing on his recollections of the Thames and the English Channel, and the story does not travel very far from home waters. Perhaps because of this, and also because it has not very much plot, "Poor Jack" is not very widely read nowadays; but it remains a vivid tale of the Thames and its queer riverside dwellers, of old Greenwich Hospital and the naval pensioners. It is full of excellent character studies and stories, funny or tragic, of the sea and the old type of sailor. The following story of "Old Duty" is one of these "yarns." It is a good example of Marryat's gift for sketching lifelike characters with a few masterly strokes of the pen. The story is told by Tom's father.

I

"When I was a quartermaster on board of the *Melpomene*, we had an old chap for first lieutenant whose name was Fletcher. He was a kind-hearted man enough, as he never worried the ship's company when there was no occasion; but at the same time he was what you call a

great stickler for duty—made no allowances for neglect or disobedience of orders, although he would wink at any little skylarking, walking aft, shutting his eyes, and pretending not to see or hear it. His usual phrase was, 'My man, you've got your duty to do, and I've got mine.' And this he repeated fifty times a day; so at last he went by the name of 'Old Duty.' I think I see him now, walking up and down with his spy-glass under his left arm, and the hand of the other pushed into his breast. His hat was always split and worn in the front, from constantly taking it off, instead of touching it, when he came on the quarter-deck; and as soon as it was gone too far in the front to raise the purchase off his head, he used to shift it end for end, bringing the back part in front, and then he would wear it until, as the Yankees say, it was in 'tater-ations altogether,' and he was forced to bend a new one.

"Now, we had a boy on board, who entered one day when the captain landed at Torquay to dine with a friend. His name was Jack Jervis; his father and his whole tribe had been fishermen for as long as could be remembered; and Jack himself had been drafted out of his cradle into a boat; and there he had continued, day and night, from one year's end to another, helping his father to fish. So, you see, it had become second nature to him; and after he came on board, his liking for his former calling still remained with him, and he never was so happy as when his line was overboard, or when he was fastening a hook in some corner or another. He went by the name of Jack the Fisherman; and a smart, active, willing lad he was, sure enough.

"Now, there was a little difficulty between Old Duty and Jack the Fisherman. Old Duty would not allow the

lines to be overboard when the ship was in harbour, as he said it was untidy in appearance, and that there was always plenty of work, and no time for fishing. So Jack hadn't pulled up his line ten or a dozen times before he was pulled up himself. 'Whose line's that?' says Old Duty. 'Mine, sir,' says Jack, touching his hat. 'I don't allow fishing, young man,' said the first lieutenant. 'You understand me?—I don't allow fishing. You've your duty to do, sir, and I've got mine.'

"Jack, who had only been two or three days on board, and who, I believe, would never have entered had he known that there would have been such a '*weto*,' as the boatswain used to call it, looked quite astonished, and said:

"'What, mayn't I fish, sir?'

"'No, my man, you must not fish without permission, and that I never give in harbour. If I catch you fishing again, you get two dozen at the gun, recollect that. You've got your duty to do, and I've got mine.'

"Well, Jack could not give up his habit, so he used to fish at night, and all night long, out of the fore-chains; but it so happened that the ship's corporal caught Jack in the middle watch, and reports him to the first lieutenant.

"'So you've been fishing again, sir,' says Old Duty. 'No, sir,' replied Jack, 'not fishing—only laying night lines.'

"'Oh! that's it,' replied the first lieutenant; 'only laying night lines! Pray, what's the difference?' 'Please, sir,' said Jack, touching his hat, 'the difference is—that it's not the same thing.'

"'Well, sir, I see but one difference, and I'll meet it accordingly. You've your duty to do, and I've got mine.'

"The boys' heads and ears having been pulled about and examined by the master-at-arms, they were dismissed; and Jack thought that he had got off—but he was mistaken.

"After the hammocks had been piped down, and it was dark, the boys were ordered up by the master-at-arms; Jack was tied to the gun, and had his two dozen. 'There, sir,' said Old Duty, as they cast the lashings off, 'if fishing at night is not fishing, punishment at night is not punishment. Now we're quits. You've your duty to do, and I've got mine.'

"I don't think that Jack perceived any more difference in the two dozen at night-time than the first lieutenant did between day and night fishing; however, Jack did not fish for some time afterwards. But it so happened that the first lieutenant was asked on shore to dine with the port-admiral; and, although he seldom left the ship, he could not refuse such a compliment, and so he went. As soon as it was dark, Jack thought his absence too good an opportunity not to have a fish; so he goes into the mizzen-chains and drops his line. Well, he fished (but I don't know whether he caught any) till the boat was hailed in which the first lieutenant was coming on board, and then Jack thought it time to haul in his line; but just at that moment there was a jerk; and Jack, who knew that fish was at the bait, could not for the life of him pull up his line—for, you see, he was a fisherman heart and soul; so Jack trusted to Providence and the first lieutenant's going down below as soon as he came on deck.

"Now you see, the ship was lying at the time 'cross the tide, the wind blowing against the current; the starboard side (being to leeward as to the wind, but to wind-

ward as to the tide) had been cleared away and manned for the boat, and Jack made sure that the first lieutenant would pull to that side; but he was mistaken. Whether it was that the first lieutenant wished to have a look round the ship or not I do not know, but he pulled across the bows and went round the stern, passing the larboard side. As he passed, Jack shrunk under the lee of the lanyards, hoping he might not be seen: but the first lieutenant, having the clear horizon on the other side, perceived the line which Jack had half hauled up, and, having an eye like a cat, makes out Jack also.

"'I see you, sir—I see you, Mr. Jervis, fishing again, sir. Very well,' cried the first lieutenant, from the stern-sheets of the boat, as he passed. 'You've your duty to do, and I've got mine.' 'That's as good as two dozen to-morrow morning at muster,' thought Jack, who cursed his luck and, in a very melancholy mood, began to haul up his line, which, as soon as he had been discovered, he had let go down to the bottom again. Now, it so happened, that as Old Duty went up the other side his foot slipped; and how it was I can't tell, for they say he wasn't the least groggy, but down he fell between the boat's gunnel and the ship's side, just like a deep-sea lead, and disappeared. There being so few men on deck, there was not much of a bustle. There was a dive or two for him with the boat-hook, but all in vain—Old Duty was gone.

"In the meantime, Jack, on the other side, was slowly hauling up his line; but he had not got it half-way up when he felt a heavy strain, and he thought that a large conger eel had followed the bait up, as they do sometimes, and he hauled and hauled with all his might. At last, who should he bring to the surface of the water but Old Duty,

who had been sucked under the ship's bottom by the tide, and had been hooked by Jack as he was pulling up. When Jack saw it was the first lieutenant, as he told me, his first idea was to let him down again; but that was only for a moment. The words of the first lieutenant still rang in his ears, 'You've your duty to do, and I've got mine'—so Jack did his duty. He holloas out that he had caught Old Duty, and the boat shifted round and took him on board. The old fellow was quite senseless; but, as he had been but a short time in the water, he was put to bed, and brought round by the surgeon. The next morning he was all just as if nothing had happened, walking the deck with his right hand in his breast, and his spy-glass under his left arm as usual.

"Well, we all told Jack that he was safe this time; but Jack seemed to think otherwise. He shook his head; and now you'll learn who was right.

"When the boys were all mustered next morning, toeing a line and holding out their paws, the first lieutenant turns round, and says, 'Jervis, you were fishing last night, against my orders.' 'Yes, sir,' said Jervis, 'and I catched a first lieutenant'; for Jack had a good deal of fun in him. 'Yes, sir, and queer fishes they are sometimes,' replies Old Duty; 'but you forget that you have also catched two dozen. You have your duty to do, and I've got mine.'

"Well, as you may suppose, there were many of us looking abaft, just to see what would take place, and were not a little astonished at the idea of his rewarding Jack with two dozen for saving his life; however, of course, we were mum. Jack was tied up; and the first lieutenant whispered a word in the ear of his master-at-arms, who

again whispered to Williams, the boatswain's mate; and the effect of that whisper was that the cat was laid on so lightly that Jack hardly felt it—so lightly, indeed, that the first lieutenant walked away aft, that he might not appear to be a party in the consarn, and Jack was cast off without having half a tear in either eye when Old Duty went up to him.

"'You fished last night against orders, and therefore you have received your punishment. You saved my life last night, and therefore it is my duty to reward you. I could not let you off this punishment, as it would be making the King pay you for me, instead of my paying you myself. I'm not a rich man, but here's ten guineas for your purse, and here's my gold watch. Spend the first usefully, and keep the other; and observe, Jack Jervis, if ever you are again caught fishing in harbour, you will as surely get two dozen for your pains. *You've your duty to do, and I've got mine.*'"

II

Tom Saunders soon becomes discontented with "mud-larking" along the riverside, and he tries hard to get something more worth while. He wants to become a pilot, and at last enters that service as an assistant to Philip Bramble, a Channel and river pilot. Bramble sends word to Tom to join him on board a West Indiaman, which he is piloting down the river. Tom goes on board when the ship is off Greenwich, is received by Bramble, and, having learned something of his duties, goes into the fo'c'stle, where the seamen are at their favourite game of "spinning yarns."

I went and joined the men, who were getting their supper forward. I was soon on good terms with them; and after supper, as it was cold, they went down to the fore-peak, got out some beer and grog, and we sat round in a circle, with the bottles and mugs and a farthing candle in the centre. Being right in the *eyes* of her, as it is termed, we could plainly hear the water slapping against the bends outside of her, as it was divided by the keelson and borne away by the strong flood tide. It was a melancholy sound; I had never heard it before; and during a pause, as I listened to it, one of the men observed, "Queer sound, boy, ain't it? You'd think that the water was lapping in right among us. But noises aboard ship don't sound as they do on shore; I don't know why." No more did I at the time; the fact is that nothing conveys sound better than wood, and every slight noise is magnified in consequence on board of a vessel.

"I recollect when I was on a Mediterranean voyage how we were frightened with noises, sure enough," observed one of the men.

"Come, that's right, Dick, give us a yarn," said the others.

"Yes," replied Dick, "and it's a true yarn, too, and all about a ghost."

"Well, stop a moment," said one of the men, "and let us top this glim a bit before you begin, for it seemed to get dimmer the moment you talked about a ghost."

Dick waited till a little more light was obtained, and then commenced. "I had shipped on board of a vessel bound for Smyrna, now about seven years ago. We had gone down to Portsmouth, where we waited for one of the partners of the house by which we had been freighted,

TOM GOES ON BOARD

and who was going out as a passenger. We were a man short, and the captain went on shore to get one from the seamen's lodging-houses, and they promised to send one on board the next morning. Well, sure enough, a wherry came off with him just before break of day, and he and his traps were taken on board; but it was not perceived at the time what he had in his arms under his boat cloak, and what do you think it proved to be at daylight? Why, a large black tom cat."

"What, a black one?"

"Yes, as large as the enemy himself. The fellow came down forward with it, and so says I, 'Why, messmate, you're not going to take that animal to sea with us?'

"'Yes, I am,' said he, very surlily; 'it's an old friend of mine, and I never parts with him.'

"'Well,' said I, 'you'll find the difference when the captain hears on it, I can tell you; and, for the matter of that, I won't promise you that it will be very safe if it comes near me when I've a handspike in my hand.'

"'I tell you what,' says he, 'it ain't the taking of a cat on board what brings mischief, but it's turning one out of a ship what occasions ill-luck. No cat ever sunk a ship till the animal was hove overboard and sunk first itself, and then it does drag the ship down after it.'

"Well, one of the boys who did not care about such things, for he was young and ignorant, put his hand to the cat's head to stroke it, and the cat bit him right through the fingers, at which the boy gave a loud cry.

"'Now, that will teach you to leave my cat alone,' said the man. 'He won't come near nobody but me, and he bites everybody else, so I give you fair warning.'

"And sure enough the brute, which was about as big as

two common cats, was just as savage as a tiger. When the first mate called the man on deck, the fellow left his cat behind him in the fore-peak, just as if it were now here, and it got into a dark corner, growling and humping its back, with its eyes flashing fire at every one of us as we came anigh it. 'Oh!' says we, 'this here won't never do; wait till the captain comes on board, that's all.' Well, the hatches were off, and we were busy re-stowing the upper tier of the cargo, which we had thrown in very carelessly in our hurry to get down the river; just putting the bales in order, and we were at it all day. At last, towards evening, the captain comes on board with the gentleman passenger, a mighty timorsome sort of young chap he appeared for to be, and had never before set his foot upon the plank of a vessel. So as soon as the captain was on deck, we all broke off our work and went to him to tell him about this cat, and the captain he gets into a great rage as soon as he hears on it, and orders the man to send the cat on shore, or else he'd throw it overboard. Well, the man, who was a sulky, saucy sort of chap, and no seaman, I've a notion, gives cheek, and says he won't send his cat on shore for no man, whereupon the captain orders the cat to be caught, that he might send it in the boat; but nobody dared to catch it, for it was so fierce to everybody but its master. The second mate tried, and he got badly bitten, and came up from the fore-peak without the cat, looking very blue indeed. And then the first mate went down, and he tried; but the cat flew at him, and he came up as white as a sheet. And then the cat became so savage that it stood at the foot of the ladder, all ready to attack whoever should come down, and the man laughed heartily, and told us to fetch the cat. 'Well,' says the first

mate, 'I can't touch the cat, but I can you, you beggar, and I will, too, if it costs me twenty pounds'; so he ups with a handspike and knocks the fellow down senseless on the deck, and there he laid. And it sarved him right.

"Well, then the captain thought to shoot the cat, for it was for all the world like a wild beast, and one proposed one thing and one another; at last, Jim, the cabin-boy, comes forward with some brimstone matches in a pan, and he lights them and lowers them down into the fore-peak by a rope-yarn, to smother it out. And so it did sure enough, for all of a sudden the cat made a spring up to the deck, and then we all chased it here and there, until at last it got out to the end of the flying jib-boom, and then Jim, the cabin-boy, followed it out with a handspike, and poked at it as hard as he could, until at last it lost its hold, and down it went into the water, and Jim and the handspike went along with it, for Jim, in his last poke at the cat, lost his balance, so away they went together. Well, there was a great hurry in manning the boat and picking up poor Jim and the handspike; but the cat we saw no more, for it was just dark at the time. Well, when it was all over, we began to think what we had done, and as soon as we had put on the hatches and secured the hold, we went down below into the fore-peak, where the smell of brimstone did not make us feel more comfortable, I can tell you, and we began to talk over the matter, for you see the cat should not have been thrown overboard, but put on shore; but we were called away to man the boat again, for the fellow had come to his senses, and swore that he would not stay in the ship, but go on shore and take the law of the first mate, and the first mate and captain thought the sooner he was out of the ship the better, for we were

to sail before daylight, and there might not be a wherry for him to get into; so the fellow took his kit, and we pulled him on shore and landed him on Southsea beach, he swearing vengeance the whole way; and as he stepped out on the beach he turned round to us and said, as he shook his fist. 'You've thrown overboard a *black tom cat*, recollect that! and now you'll see the consequence; a pleasant voyage to you. I wouldn't sail in that vessel if you were to offer her to me as a present as soon as she got to Smyrna; because why, you've thrown overboard a *black tom cat*, and you'll never get there—*never!*' cried he again, and off he ran with his bundle.

"Well, we didn't much like it, and if the second mate hadn't been in the boat, I'm not sure that we shouldn't all have gone on shore rather than sail in the vessel; but there was no help for it. The next morning before daylight we started, for the captain wouldn't wait to get another hand, and we were soon out of soundings, and well into the Bay of Biscay.

"We had just passed Cape Finisterre, when Jim, the cabin-boy, says one morning, 'I'm blest if I didn't hear that cat last night, or the ghost on it!" So we laughed at him; for, you see, he slept abaft, just outside the cabin-door, close to the pantry, and not forward with the rest of us.

"'Well,' says he, 'I heard her miaw, and when I awoke I think I seed two eyes looking at me.'

"'Well, Jim,' said I, for we had got over our fears, 'it was you who knocked her overboard, so it's all right that she should haunt you and nobody else.' Jim, however, could not laugh, but looked very grave and unhappy. A few days afterwards, the captain and passenger com-

plained that they could not sleep for the noise and racket that was kept up all night between the timbers and in the run aft. They said it was as if a whole legion of devils were broken loose and scampering about; and the captain was very grave; and as for the passenger, he was frightened out of his wits. Still we laughed, because we had heard nothing ourselves, and thought that it must only be fancy on their parts, particularly as the captain was given to drinking every night. Well, all went on very well; we arrived at the Rock, got our fresh provisions and vegetables, and then made sail again. The captain complained of no more noises, and Jim of no more eyes, and the whole matter was almost forgotten.

"Well, we were abreast of Malta, when the weather, which had hitherto on the voyage been very fine, changed. The clouds hung down very heavy, and there was every symptom of a fierce gale; and sure enough, a worse gale I never was in than came on that night—and such a sea!—the ship rolled gunnel under, for the gale was fair, but the sea ran so high and so fast that we expected to be pooped every minute. It was about midnight when the rain came on in torrents, and the wind blew fiercer than ever. I was on deck, and so was the first mate and another man at the helm, for we were flying right before it and she was hard to steer.

"'We shall have it worse yet,' said the captain.

"'*Miaw!*' was the reply, so clear, so loud, we could not tell where it came from. I thought it came from the main-top.

"'Mercy on us! what was that?' said the first mate, the light from the binnacle showing his face as pale as a sheet.

"'*Miaw!*' was the reply from somewhere.

"'The black cat, by all that's blue!' cried the captain.

"'We're all gone!' said the mate, clasping his hands. To clasp his hands, of course, he let go the wheel; and the other man, who was equally frightened, had not strength to hold it. Away he went, right over the wheel, knocking down the mate on the other side; and the ship taking a heavy lurch, they both went into the scuppers together. The ship broached-to, and our main-mast and mizzen-mast went over the side."

"Do top that glim, Bill," said one of the men, in a tremulous voice.

Dick paused while the snuff was taken off the candle; and the water went tap, tap, against the bends with a most melancholy sound. I really did feel rather queer myself.

Dick continued. "Well, all hands were on deck immediately, and it was a good two hours before we could clear the wreck, for the men were disheartened. They had heard the loud '*miaw*' when in the fore-peak, and declared that it was close to them; and the passenger and Jim came out, frightened out of their wits. They had heard the '*miaw*,' and said that it was from under the cabin-table. At last, we were clear of the wreck, and the wind roared louder than ever.

"The captain was a stout-hearted fellow, and as the men were collected under the bulwark, he said, 'Well, this breeze will shorten our distance, at any rate, and if it holds we shall soon be at Smyrna.'

"'We shall never see Smyrna!' replied the second mate, his teeth chattering.

"'No, never!' cried the seamen.

"The captain sent Jim down for his rum-bottle, and gave every man a stiff glass of liquor, and that made them

feel more comfortable for a time; when there was a sort of lull, and again the low '*miaw*' was repeated.

"'There it is,' cried the men: but they hardly had time to say so when the ship was pooped with a tremendous sea, washing away the stern and quarter boats, and sending all the men swimming forward. So loaded was the ship with water that she stopped, and appeared as if she was settling down. At last, she rolled heavy to port and discharged it, and away we went before the wind, faster than ever. Well, there was some talk among the seamen of throwing poor Jim overboard to appease the ghost of the cat, for it was he who had thrown the cat overboard. But the captain heard what the men were saying, and he swore that he would knock the brains out of the first man who laid hold of the boy; and he sent Jim below out of harm's way. Poor Jim! how bitterly he cried, poor boy, when he heard what was going on!

"Well, it's a long lane that has no turning, and no gale lasts for ever; the next day it moderated, and the day after, the weather was quite fine, and the sea had gone down. We recovered our spirits, the more so as we heard no more of the cat; and, having jury-rigged her aft, we steered our course with a light breeze. We were now but a short distance from Smyrna, and hoped to be there by the next day; but the second mate shook his head; he said, 'The cat has not done with us, for it was a *black tom* cat.'

"The fourth day the captain came on deck and said, 'I heard a great washing of water in the run last night, as I thought; have you sounded the well lately?'

"'No,' replied the first mate. 'I left that to the carpenter.'

"'Well, then, ask him.' Well, the carpenter had not sounded the well, as it appeared; and so he sounded it immediately, and found that we had *six feet water in the hold*.

"'I knowed we were doomed,' said the second mate; 'we'll never get at port'; and so thought the men; but the captain said—

"'Why, the fact is, my lads, we must have sprung a leak in the gale, and no wonder, beating against the wreck so as we did when the masts went over the side. Come, rig the pumps and we shall soon clear her. The tom cat has nothing to do with this, at all events.'

"Now, you see, our bottom cargo consisted of two or three tiers of crates of crockery, which would not spoil by being wet; but the upper part of the cargo was bales of dry goods and linen; so the captain was very anxious that they should work the pumps before the water got higher. The weather was very fine, the sea smooth, and the wind, although fair, was light. Well, the seamen were terrified, and thought they were lost; they asked for liquor, and refused to work at the pumps; they said it was no use, the ship was doomed. Well, the captain he got very angry; he went down into the cabin, loaded his double-barrelled gun, and swore that he would shoot the first man through the head who refused to work at the pumps. The men knew that he was in earnest, for he was a violent sort of fellow, and so they set to. We didn't gain much upon her; I thought we did a little, but the men said no. The captain declared that we did gain considerably, but it was supposed that he only said so to encourage the people. Well, the captain ordered the mate to take up the hatches, that they might see the state of the cargo. This was done; the dry

goods, as far as we could make out, were not injured, and the men pumped spell and spell until the evening, when the captain gave them a good allowance of grog, and an hour to rest themselves. It was a beautiful moonlight night; the sails were just asleep and no more; but the vessel was heavy from the water in her, and we dragged slowly along. The captain, who had gone down below with the first mate, came up from the cabin and said to the men, 'Now, my lads, we'll set to again'; when suddenly there was a loud, melancholy '*miaw!*' which terrified us all. We looked from whence the sound appeared to come, and there, on the launch turned over amidships, we beheld the ghost of the black tom cat, so large, so black, with the broad moonlight shining on it; and so thin, it was the skeleton of the cat, only it was as black as ever; its back was humped up and its tail curved; and as it stood out in the broad moonlight, it did look twice as big as the original cat, which was the biggest I ever saw. Well, the men actually screamed; they ran aft, upsetting the captain and mate, and rolling over them and hiding their faces, with, 'Oh! we're lost, we're lost!' and every sort of crying and groaning that could be thought of. At last, the captain gets up from under them in a great rage and looks forward to see what was the matter, and there he sees the ghost of the tom-cat standing just in the same place; and it gave another miserable '*miaw!*' 'Why,' cried the captain (who had his grog on board and was as brave as brass), 'it is the cussed cat himself. Stop a moment.' Down he goes to the cabin, reels up the hatchway again with his double-barrelled gun, and lets fly at it"—(here Dick lowered his voice to almost a whisper)—"the cat gave a shriek—and then——"

Here, during the pause, Bill put out his finger and thumb to snuff the candle, but his hand shook—he snuffed it out, and we were all left in darkness. I can hardly describe the feeling which appeared to pervade the whole of our party. Every one was shuffling and crowding with their shoulders, but still no one moved from his place.

"Well," said Dick, the narrator, in a quiet, subdued voice, "why don't one of you go and fetch a light? Come, jump up, Bill, you topped it out."

"Ay, ay," replied Bill, evidently shaking; "where's the candle?"

"Here," said one of the boys, handing it to him.

"Well, then, jump up yourself, you young whelp; you're younger than me."

"I didn't put it out," replied the boy, whining.

"Up immediately, or I'll break every rib in your body," replied Bill.

The boy, who was terribly frightened, got up at this threat, and began to ascend the ladder. He was about three steps up, when we heard from the deck a horrible '*miaw!*' The boy gave a scream of terror and fell down on his back among us all, smashing the glass and flattening the tin cans against the men's legs, who halloed with pain. At last there was a dead silence again, and I could plainly hear the loud throbbing of more than one heart.

"Come," said Dick again, "what was the fool frightened about? Look for the candle, some of you."

At last, Bill found it in his breast, broke in two and half-melted away, and was proceeding for a light, when the carpenter stepped to the hatch with his lantern, and said, "Why, you're all in the dark there, shipmates! Here, take my lantern."

I may as well here observe that the carpenter had been listening to the story as he sat by the hatchway on deck, and it was he who had favoured us with the '*miaw!*' which had so frightened the boy. As soon as the lantern had been received and the candle relighted, Dick recommenced.

"Well, my lads, I said that the captain went down below, brought up his gun, and let fly at the cat, and then—well, and then—the cat gave a loud shriek, and falls down upon the deck. The captain walks forward to it, takes it up by the tail, brings it aft, and shies it among the men.

"'There, you fools,' said he, 'it is the cat himself; will you believe your own eyes?'

"And sure enough, so it was; for, you see, when Jim tumbled overboard, it being then dark, and we so busy with Jim, we did not look after the cat, and so it must have crawled up the cable and run down into the hold while the hatches were off; and all that noise heard aft must have been the brute chasing the rats, I suppose. Jim may have heard, but he could not have seen, the cat; that was all fancy and fright. You know how long a cat will live without much food, and so the animal was pretty quiet after it had killed all the rats. Then, when the gale came on, and the upper part of the cargo fetched away a little, for it was loosely stowed, we suppose that it got jammed now and then with the rolling, and that made it miaw; and then, when we took off the hatches to look at the cargo, after we had sprung the leak, the cat, o' course, came out, and a pretty skeleton it was, as you may suppose. Now, do you understand the whole of it?"

"Yes, that's all clear," replied Bill; "and it was no ghost, after all? But still, the cat did do mischief, for if the mate had not been frightened by it he wouldn't have

let go the wheel, and the masts would not have gone by the lee."

"That's true enough, and he might have done more mischief still if the captain had not shot him, for the men would never have gone to the pumps again; but when they found out that it was nothing but the cat himself, then they set to, and before the next evening the vessel was clear, and only required pumping out every two hours, for the leak wasn't great after all. So there's a ghost story for you; and I believe that all others will be found, like mine, to end in moonshine."

These are only two short "yarns" from a book which is full of good stories, incidents and characters. To make the acquaintance of "Poor Jack" himself, and of such splendidly drawn characters as Jack's parents, Old Nanny, Ben the Whaler, Spicer the pirate, and a host of others, you must read the book itself.

VII. MASTERMAN READY

Marryat wrote this book at the request of his children, who wished him "to continue a work called the 'Swiss Family Robinson.'" "Masterman Ready," however, is far from being a mere sequel to another book. It owes something to the "Swiss Family Robinson," and still more to "Robinson Crusoe," but it owes most to its own author. During many years it was the most widely read book of its kind in English, and it remains a classic.

The Seagrave family consists of Mr. and Mrs. Seagrave and their children, William, Tommy, Caroline and Albert. With their coloured maid, Juno, they are passengers aboard the ship "Pacific," bound for Australia. The ship is wrecked, and the Seagraves become castaways on a desert island. In their solitude they are accompanied by Masterman Ready, an old sailor, whose loyalty, unassuming good qualities and practical way of "making the best of things," help the castaways to live contentedly on their island. Most of the book is taken up with absorbing accounts of the island, and the various experiments made by the shipwrecked family to provide a home and food for their support. There is also some lively action, of which the following selection is a specimen. The castaways, expecting an attack from some hostile savages, have left their first house, and are occupying a stronger one which they have built inside a stout stockade.

I

The next morning, just before the day dawned, Ready and William unfastened the door of the stockade, and

went down to the beach. The wind was still to the eastward, and blowing rather fresh, and the sky was cloudy. As the sun rose, Ready, as usual, had his telescope with him, and looked through it at the offing to the eastward. As he kept the spy-glass to his eye for some time without speaking, William said—

"Do you see anything, Ready, that you look so long in that direction?"

"Either my old eyes deceive me, or I fear that I do," replied Ready, "but a few minutes more will decide."

There was a bank of clouds on the horizon to the eastward, but as soon as the sun had risen above them, Ready, who had the telescope fixed in the same direction, said—

"Yes, Master William, I am right. I thought that those dark patches I saw were their brown grass sails."

"Sails of what, Ready?" said William hastily.

"Of the Indian canoes, Master William; I knew that they would come. Take the glass and look yourself, Master William; my eye is quite dim from straining it so long."

"Yes, I have them now," replied William, with his eye to the glass; he at last said—

"Why, there are twenty or thirty of them, Ready, at least."

"And each with twenty or thirty men in them, too, Master William."

"Good heaven! What must we do, Ready? How frightened my poor mother will be. I'm afraid we can do nothing against such a number."

"Yes, William, we can do a great deal, and we must do a great deal. That there are hundreds of savages, there is no doubt; but recollect that we have a stockade,

which they cannot easily climb over, and plenty of fire-arms and ammunition, so that we can make a good fight of it, and perhaps beat them off, for they have nothing but clubs and spears."

"How fast they come down, Ready; why, they will be here in an hour."

"No, sir, nor in two hours, either; those are very large canoes. However, there is no time to be lost. While I watch them for a few minutes till I make them more clearly out, do you run up to the house and beckon your father to come down to me; and then, Master William, get all the muskets ready, and bring the casks of powder and of made-up cartridges from the old house into the stockade. Call Juno, and she will help you. We shall have time enough to do everything. After you have done that, you had better come down and join us."

In a very few minutes after William ran up to the house, Mr. Seagrave made his appearance.

"Ready, there is danger, I'm sure; William would not tell me, I presume because he was afraid of alarming his mother. What is it?"

"It is, Mr. Seagrave, that the savages are now coming down upon us in large force; perhaps five or six hundred of them; and that we shall have to defend ourselves with all our might and main."

"Do you think we have any chance against such a force?"

"Yes, sir, with God's help, I have no doubt but that we shall beat them off: but we must fight hard, and for some days, I fear."

Mr. Seagrave examined the fleet of canoes with the glass. "It is, indeed, dreadful odds to contend against."

"Yes, sir, but three muskets behind a stockade are almost a match for all their clubs and spears, provided none of us is wounded. . . . I think we had better not wait here any more, as we have not long to prepare for them. We have only to fix up some of our strong deal planks on the inside of the stockade for us to stand upon when we are attacked, that we may see what the enemy is about, and be able to fire upon them. But first, we had better go to the old house, and take out what provisions and other articles we shall most want, and roll the casks into the stockade, for to the old house they will go first, and perhaps destroy everything in it. The casks they certainly will, for the sake of the iron hoops. An hour's work will do a great deal, for the distance is not very great. I believe we have everything we want in the stockade; Juno has her fuel, the large butt of water will last us two or three weeks at least, and if we have time we will spear a couple of turtles for fresh provisions."

"We hardly need think of turtle just now, Ready."

"Why not, sir? It's as well to have them as to leave them for the savages to eat for us. I will get up all I can, even if we do not eat them; they will live for weeks on their back in the shade."

This conversation passed as they walked up to the house. As soon as they arrived, they found William and Juno had just brought in the powder and cartridges. Mr. Seagrave went in to break the matter to his wife, who, he feared, would be much alarmed.

"I was told that I had to expect this, my dear," replied Mrs. Seagrave, "so that it has not come upon me altogether unawares, and anything that a poor weak woman can do,

I will. I feel that I have no want of courage to defend my children."

"I am indeed greatly relieved," said Mr. Seagrave, "by finding you thus prepared and supported. I shall feel no anxiety—but we have work to be done."

"Then I must help; and what I want in strength, I must make up in energy."

Mr. and Mrs. Seagrave then joined William, Ready, and Juno, who had already proceeded to the old house. The children were all still in bed and asleep, so that there was no occasion for any one to watch them.

II

As they could have a very good view of the canoes from where the old house stood, Ready examined them with his glass every time that he returned from rolling up a cask to the stockade. Every one worked hard; even Mrs. Seagrave did all she could, either assisting in rolling the casks, or carrying up what she was able to lift. In an hour they had got into the stockade all that they most cared for, and the canoes were still about six or seven miles off.

"We have a good hour before they arrive, sir," said Ready; "and even then the reefs will puzzle them not a little; I doubt if they are disembarked under two hours. We have plenty of time for all we wish to do. William, come down with the spear, and we will have some of the turtle into the stockade. Mr. Seagrave, I do not require your assistance, so if you will have the kindness to get out the muskets and examine the flints, it will be as well."

"Yes, and then you have to load them," replied Mrs. Seagrave. "Juno and I can do that, at all events, ready for you to fire them."

They then rolled the casks and upheaded them by the sides of the stockade, and fixed up deal planks to stand upon, just high enough to enable them to see over the top of the palisades and to fire at the enemy. Mrs. Seagrave had been shown how to load a musket, and Juno was now taught the same.

"Now, sir, we are all prepared," said old Ready, "and madam and Juno can go and look a little after the children and get breakfast."

"Breakfast all ready. Kettle boil long time," said Juno.

As soon as the children were dressed, Mr. Seagrave called Ready, who was outside watching the canoes, and they went to their morning devotions and prayed heartily for succour in this time of need. They then breakfasted in haste; for, as may be supposed, they were almost too anxious to eat. Mrs. Seagrave pressed her children in her arms, but kept up her spirits wonderfully.

"This suspense is worse than all," said she at last. "I wish now that they were come."

"Shall I go to Ready and hear his report, my dear? I will not be away three minutes."

In a short time Mr. Seagrave returned, saying that the canoes were close to the beach, that the savages evidently had a knowledge of the passages through the reefs, as they had steered right in and had lowered their sails; that Ready and William were on the look-out, but concealed behind the cocoa-nut trees.

"I hope they will not stay out too long."

"No fear of that, my dear; but they had better watch their motions to the last minute."

During this conversation between Mr. and Mrs. Seagrave within the stockade, William and Ready were watching the motions of the savages, a large portion of whom had landed out of ten of the canoes, and the others were following their example as fast as they could, forcing their way through the reefs. The savages were all painted, with their war-cloaks and feathers on, and armed with spears and clubs, evidently having come with no peaceable intentions. At first, they occupied themselves with beaching the canoes, and as they were very large and heavy, this was a work of some few minutes' employment for the whole of them.

William, who had taken the telescope to examine them more minutely, said to Ready, "What a fierce, cruel set of wretches they appear to be; if they overpower us they will certainly kill us."

"Of that there is no doubt, Master William; but we must fight hard and not let them overpower us. Kill us they certainly will, and I am not sure that they may not eat us afterwards, but that is of little consequence."

William shuddered at the idea, and then replied in a determined tone, "I'll fight as long as I have breath in my body; but, Ready, they are coming up as fast as they can."

"Yes, sir; right up to the old house; we must wait no longer Come, Master William."

"I thought I saw another vessel under sail, out away by the garden point, Ready, just as we turned away."

"Very likely, sir, a canoe which has separated from the others during the night. Come, quick, Master William, they have begun to yell."

Another half-minute and they arrived at the door of the stockade; they entered, shut the door, and then barricaded it with the cocoa-nut poles which they had fitted to the inner door-posts.

"That is sure enough," observed Ready, "and now we must trust to Heaven and our own exertions."

III

The loud yells of the savages struck terror into the heart of Mrs. Seagrave; it was well that she had not seen their painted bodies and fierce appearance, or she would have been much more alarmed. Little Albert and Caroline clung round her neck with terror in their faces; they did not cry, but looked round and round to see from whence the horrid noise proceeded, and then they clung faster to their mother. Master Tommy was very busy, finishing all the breakfast that had been left, for there was no one to check him as usual; Juno was busy outside, and was very active and courageous. Mr. Seagrave had been employed making the holes between the palisades large enough to admit the barrels of the muskets, so that they could fire at the savages without being exposed; while William and Ready, with their muskets loaded, were on the look-out for their approach.

"They are busy with the old house just now, sir," observed Ready, "but that won't detain them long."

"Here they come," replied William.

"Ah! they have stopped; they did not expect the stockade, that is clear, and it has puzzled them; see how they are all crowding together and talking; they are holding a council of war how to proceed; that tall

man must be one of their chiefs. Now, Master William, although I intend to fight as hard as I can, yet I always feel a dislike to begin first; I shall therefore show myself over the palisades, and if they attack me, I shall then fire with a quiet conscience."

"But take care they don't hit you, Ready."

"No great fear of that, Master William. Here they come."

Ready now stood upon the plank within, so as to show himself to the savages, who gave a tremendous yell, and, as they advanced, a dozen spears were thrown at him with so true an aim that, had he not instantly dodged behind the stockade, he must have been killed. Three or four spears remained quivering in the palisades, just below the top; the others went over it, and fell down inside of the stockade, at the further end.

"Now, Master William, take good aim;" but before William could fire, Mr. Seagrave, who had agreed to be stationed at the corner, so that he might see if the savages went round to the other side, fired his musket, and the tall chief fell to the ground.

Ready and William also fired, and two more of the savages were seen to drop, amidst the yells of their companions. Juno handed up the other muskets which were ready loaded, and took those discharged, and Mrs. Seagrave, having desired Caroline to take care of her little brother, and Tommy to be very quiet and good, came out, turned the key of the door upon them, and hastened to assist Juno in reloading the muskets.

The spears now rushed through the air, and it was well that they could fire from the stockade without exposing

MRS. SEAGRAVE AND JUNO RELOADED THE MUSKETS

their persons, or they would have had but little chance. The yells increased, and the savages now began to attack on every quarter; the most active, who climbed like cats, actually succeeded in gaining the top of the palisades, but, as soon as their heads appeared above, they were fired at with so true an aim that they dropped down dead outside. This combat lasted for more than an hour, when the savages, having lost a great many men, drew off from the assault, and the parties within the stockade had time to breathe.

"They have not gained much in this bout, at all events," said Ready; "it was well fought on our side, and, Master William, you certainly behaved as if you had been brought up to it; I don't think you ever missed your man once."

"Do you think they will go away now?" said Mrs. Seagrave.

"Oh no, madam, not yet; they will try us every way before they leave us. You see these are very brave men, and it is clear that they know what gunpowder is, or they would have been more astonished."

"I should think so, too," replied Mr. Seagrave; "the first time that savages hear the report of firearms, they are usually thrown into great consternation."

"Yes, sir; but such has not been the case with these people, and therefore I reckon it is not the first time that they have fought with Europeans."

"Are they all gone, Ready?" said William, who had come down from the plank to his mother.

"No, sir, I see them between the trees now; they are sitting round in a circle, and, I suppose, making speeches; it's the custom of these people."

"Well, I'm very thirsty, at all events," said William; "Juno, bring me a little water."

Juno went to the water-tub to comply with William's request, and in a few moments afterwards came back in great consternation.

"Oh, massa! Oh, missy! no water; water all gone."

"Water all gone!" cried Ready and all of them in a breath.

"Yes; not one little drop in the cask."

"I filled it up to the top!" exclaimed Ready very gravely; "the tub did not leak, that I am sure of; how can this have happened?"

"Missy, I tink I know now," said Juno; "you remember you send Massa Tommy, the two or three days we wash, to fetch water from the well in little bucket. You know how soon he come back, and how you say what good boy he was, and how you tell Massa Seagrave when he come to dinner. Now, Missy, I quite certain Massa Tommy no take trouble go to well, but fetch water from tub all the while, and so he empty it."

"I'm afraid you're right, Juno," replied Mrs. Seagrave. "What shall we do?"

"I go speak Massa Tommy," said Juno, running to the house.

"This is a very awkward thing, Mr. Seagrave," observed Ready gravely.

Mr. Seagrave shook his head.

The fact was that they all perceived the danger of their position: if the savages did not leave the island, they would perish of thirst or have to surrender; and in the latter case, all their lives would most certainly be sacrificed.

Juno now returned; her suspicions were but too true. Tommy, pleased with the praise of being so quick in bringing the water, had taken out the spigot of the cask, and drawn it all off. He was now crying, and promising not to take the water again.

"His promise comes too late," observed Mr. Seagrave; "well, it is the will of Heaven that all our careful arrangements and preparations against this attack should be defeated by the idleness of a child, and we must submit."

"Very true, sir," replied Ready; "all our hopes now are that the savages may be tired out and leave the island."

"If I had but a little for the children, I should not care," observed Mrs. Seagrave; "but to see those poor things suffer—is there not a drop left, Juno, anywhere?"

Juno shook her head. "All gone, Missy; none nowhere."

Mrs. Seagrave said she would go and examine, and went away into the house, accompanied by Juno.

"This is a very bad business, Ready," observed Mr. Seagrave. "What would we give for a shower of rain now, that we might catch the falling drops!"

"There are no signs of it, sir," replied Ready; "we must, however, put our confidence in One who will not forsake us."

"I wish the savages would come on again," observed William, "for the sooner they come, the sooner the affair will be decided."

"I doubt if they will to-day, sir; at night-time I think it very probable, and I fear the night attack more than the day. We must make preparations for it."

"Why, what can we do, Ready?"

"In the first place, sir, by nailing planks from cocoa-nut tree to cocoa-nut tree above the present stockade, we may make a great portion of it much higher, and more difficult to climb over. Some of them were nearly in this time. If we can do that, we shall not have so large a space to watch over and defend; and then we must contrive to have a large fire ready for lighting, that we may not have to fight altogether in the dark. It will give them some advantage in looking through the palisades, and seeing where we are, but they cannot well drive their spears through, so it is no great matter. We must make the fire in the centre of the stockade, and have plenty of tar in it, to make it burn bright, and we must not, of course, light it until after we are attacked. We shall then see where they are trying for an entrance, and where to aim with our muskets."

"The idea is very good, Ready," said Mr. Seagrave; "if it had not been for this unfortunate want of water, I really should be sanguine of beating them off."

"We may suffer very much, Mr. Seagrave, I have no doubt; but who knows what the morrow may bring forth?"

"True, Ready. Do you see the savages now?"

"No, sir; they have left the spot where they were in consultation, and I do not even hear them; I suppose they are busy with their wounded and their dead."

As Ready had supposed, no further attack was made by the savages on that day, and he, William, and Mr. Seagrave were very busy making their arrangements; they nailed the planks on the trunks of the trees above

the stockade, so as to make three sides of the stockade at least five feet higher, and almost impossible to climb up; and they prepared a large fire in a tar-barrel full of cocoa-nut leaves mixed with wood and tar, so as to burn fiercely. Dinner or supper they had none, for there was nothing but salt pork and beef and live turtle, and, by Ready's advice, they did not eat, as it would only increase their desire to drink.

The poor children suffered much; little Albert wailed and cried for "water, water"; Caroline knew that there was none, and was quiet, poor little girl, although she suffered much; as for Tommy, the author of all this misery, he was the most impatient, and roared for some time, till William, quite angry at his behaviour, gave him a smart box on the ear, and he reduced his roar to a whimper, from fear of receiving another. Ready remained on the look-out; indeed, everything was so miserable inside of the house, that they were all glad to go out of it; they could do no good, and poor Mrs. Seagrave had a difficult and most painful task to keep the children quiet under such severe privation, for the weather was still very warm and sultry.

IV

Another attack by the savages is again beaten off.

The second day was passed in keeping a look-out upon the savages, and awaiting a fresh attack. They could perceive from the look-out, in the top of the cocoa-nut tree, that the savages held a council of war in the forenoon, sitting round in a large circle, while one got up in the centre and made a speech, flourishing his club and spear while he spoke. In the afternoon the council broke up, and the savages were observed to be very busy in all directions, cutting down the cocoa-nut trees and collecting all the brushwood.

Ready watched them for a long while, and at last came down a little before sunset. "Mr. Seagrave," said he, "we shall have, in my opinion, no attack this night, but to-morrow we must expect something very serious; the savages are cutting down the trees and making large faggots; they do not get on very fast, because their hatchets are made of stone and don't cut very well, but perseverance and numbers will effect everything, and I daresay that they will work all night till they have obtained as many faggots as they want."

"But what do you imagine to be their object, Ready, in cutting down trees and making the faggots?"

"Either, sir, to pile them up outside the palisades, so large as to be able to walk up upon them, or else to pile them up to set fire to them, and burn us out."

"Do you think they will succeed?"

"Not without very heavy loss; perhaps we may beat them off, but it will be a hard fight; harder than

we have had yet. We must have the women to load the muskets, so that we may fire as fast as we can. I should not think much of their attempts to burn us, if it were not for the smoke. Cocoa-nut wood, especially with the bark on, as our palisades have, will char a long while, but not burn easily when standing upright; and the fire, when the faggots are kindled, although it will be fierce, will not last long."

"But suffering as we are now, Ready, for want of water, how can we possibly keep up our strength to meet them in a suffocating smoke and flame? We must drop with sheer exhaustion."

"We must hope for the best, and do our best, Mr. Seagrave," replied Ready; "and recollect that should anything happen to me during the conflict, that if there is any chance of your being overpowered, you must take advantage of the smoke to escape into the woods. I have no doubt that you will be able to do that; of course, the attack will be to windward, if they use fire, and you must try and escape to leeward; I have shown William how to force a palisade if necessary. The savages, if they get possession, will not think of looking for you at first, and, perhaps, when they have obtained all that the house contains, not even afterwards."

"Why do you say if any accident happens to you, Ready?" said William.

"Because, Master William, if they place the faggots so as to be able to walk to the top of the palisades, I may be wounded or killed, and so may you."

"Of course," replied William; "but they are not in yet, and they shall have a hard fight for it."

Ready then told Mr. Seagrave that he would keep the

watch, and call him at twelve o'clock. During these two days they had eaten very little; a turtle had been killed, and pieces fried, but eating only added to their thirst, and even the children refused the meat. Their sufferings were now really dreadful, and poor Mrs. Seagrave was almost frantic.

As soon as Mr. Seagrave had gone into the house, Ready called William, and said, "Master William, water we must have. I cannot bear to see the agony of the poor children, and the state of mind which your poor mother is in; and more, without water we never shall be able to beat off the savages to-morrow. We shall literally die of choking in the smoke, if they use fire. Now, William, I intend to take one of the seven-gallon barricos, and go down to the well for water. I may succeed, and I may not, but attempt it I must, and if I fall it cannot be helped."

"Why not let me go, Ready?" replied William.

"For many reasons, William," said Ready; "and the chief one is that I do not think that you would succeed so well as I shall. I shall put on the war-cloak and feathers of savage who fell dead inside of the stockade, and that will be a disguise, but I shall take no arms except his spear, as they would only be in my way and increase the weight I have to carry. Now observe, you must let me out of the door, and when I am out, in case of accident, put one of the poles across it inside; that will keep the door fast, if they attack it, until you can secure it with the others. Watch my return, and be all ready to let me in. Do you understand me?"

"Yes, perfectly, Ready; but I am now, I must confess, really frightened; if anything were to happen to you what a misery it would be."

"There is no help for it, William. Water must, if possible, be procured, and now is a better time to make the attempt than later, when they may be more on the watch; they have left off their work, and are busy eating; if I meet anyone, it will only be a woman."

Ready went for the barrico, a little cask which held six or seven gallons of water. He put on the head-dress and war-cloak of the savage; and, taking the barrico on his shoulder and the spear in his hand, the poles which barred the door were softly removed by William, and after ascertaining that no one was concealed beneath the palisades, Ready pressed William's hand, and set off across the cleared space outside of the stockade, and gained the cocoa-nut trees. William, as directed, closed the door, passed one pole through the inner door-posts for security, and remained on the watch. He was in an awful state of suspense, listening to the slightest noise, even the slight rustling by the wind of the cocoa-nut boughs above him made him start; there he continued for some minutes, his gun ready cocked by his side.

It is time that he returned, thought William; the distance is not one hundred yards, and yet I have heard no noise. At last, he thought he heard footsteps coming very softly. Yes, it was so. Ready was returning, and without any accident. William had his hand upon the pole to slip it on one side and open the door, when he heard a scuffle and a fall close to the door. He immediately threw down the pole and opened it just as Ready called him by name. William seized his musket and sprang out; he found Ready struggling with a savage, who was uppermost, and with his spear at Ready's breast.

In a second, William levelled and fired, and the savage fell dead by the side of Ready.

"Take the water in quick, William," said Ready in a faint voice. "I will contrive to crawl in if I can."

William caught up the barrico of water and took it in; he then hastened to Ready, who was on his knees. Mr. Seagrave, hearing the musket fired, had run out, and finding the stockade door open, followed William, and seeing him endeavouring to support Ready, caught hold of his other arm, and they led him tottering into the stockade; the door was then immediately secured, and they went to his assistance.

"Are you hurt, Ready?" said William.

"Yes, dear boy, yes; hurt to death, I fear; his spear went through my breast. Water, quick, water!"

"Alas! that we had some," said Mr. Seagrave.

"We have," replied William; "but it has cost us dearly."

William ran for a pannikin, and, taking out the bung, poured some water out of the barrico, and gave it to Ready, who drank it with eagerness.

"Now, William, lay me down on these cocoa-nut boughs; go and give some water to the others and when you have all drunk, then come to me again. Don't tell Mrs. Seagrave that I'm hurt. Do as I beg of you."

"Father, take the water—do, pray," replied William; "I cannot leave Ready."

"I will, my boy," replied Mr. Seagrave; "but first drink yourself."

William, who was very faint, drank off the pannikin of water, which immediately revived him, and then, while Mr. Seagrave hastened with some water to the

children and women, occupied himself with old Ready, who breathed heavily, but did not speak.

V

Ready insists on William leaving him, and keeping a strict look-out for the savages, from whom a further attack is expected. William climbs to the look-out in the cocoa-nut tree, and waits there until daylight.

At the dawn of day, he perceived that the savages were at work, that they had collected all the faggots together opposite to where the old house had stood, and were very busy in making arrangements for the attack. At last, he perceived that they every one shouldered a faggot, and commenced their advance towards the stockade; William immediately descended from the tree, and called his father, who was talking with Mrs. Seagrave. The muskets were all loaded, and Mrs. Seagrave and Juno took their posts below the planking, to reload them as fast as they were fired.

"We must fire upon them as soon as we are sure of not missing them, William," said Mr. Seagrave, "for the more we check their advance the better."

When the first savages were within fifty yards they both fired, and two of the men dropped; and they continued to fire as their assailants came up, with great success for the first ten minutes; after which, the savages advanced in a larger body, and took the precaution to hold the faggots in front of them for some protection as they approached. By these means, they gained the stockade in safety, and commenced laying their faggots.

Mr. Seagrave and William still kept up an incessant fire upon them, but not with so much success as before.

Although many fell, the faggots were gradually heaped up, till they almost reached to the holes between the palisades through which they pointed their muskets; and, as the savages contrived to slope them down from the stockade to the ground, it was evident that they meant to mount up and take them by escalade. At last, it appeared as if all the faggots had been placed, and the savages retired farther back, to where the cocoa-nut trees were still standing.

"They have gone away, Father," said William; "but they will come again, and I fear it is all over with us."

"I fear so, too, my noble boy," replied Mr. Seagrave; "they are only retreating to arrange for a general assault, and they will now be able to gain an entrance. I almost wish they had fired the faggots; we might have escaped as Ready pointed out to us, but now I fear we have no chance."

"Don't say a word to my mother," said William; "let us defend ourselves to the last, and if we are overpowered, it is the will of God."

"I should like to take a farewell of your dear mother," said Mr. Seagrave; "but no; it will be weakness just now. I had better not. Here they come, William, in a swarm. Well, God bless you, my boy; we shall all, I trust, meet in Heaven."

The whole body of the savages were now advancing from the cocoa-nut wood in a solid mass; they raised a yell which struck terror into the hearts of Mrs. Seagrave and Juno, yet they flinched not. The savages were again within fifty yards of them, when the fire was opened

upon them; the fire was answered by loud yells, and the savages had already reached to the bottom of the sloping pile of faggots when the yells and reports of the muskets were drowned by a much louder report, followed by the crackling and breaking of the cocoa-nut trees, which made both parties start with surprise; another and another followed, the ground was ploughed up, and the savages fell in numbers.

"It must be the cannon of a ship, Father," said William; "we are saved—we are saved!"

"It can be nothing else; we are saved, and by a miracle," replied Mr. Seagrave, in utter astonishment.

The savages paused in the advance, quite stupefied; again, again, again, the report of the loud guns boomed through the air, and the round-shot and grape came whizzing and tearing through the cocoa-nut grove; at this last broadside the savages turned and fled towards their canoes; not one was left to be seen.

"We are saved!" cried Mr. Seagrave, leaping off the plank and embracing his wife, who sank down on her knees and held up her clasped hands in thankfulness to Heaven.

William had hastened up to the look-out in the cocoa-nut tree, and now cried out to them below as the guns were again discharged—

"A large schooner, Father; she is firing at the savages, who are at the canoes; they are falling in every direction; some have plunged into the water; there is a boat full of armed men coming on shore; they are close to the beach by the garden-point. Three of the canoes have got off full of men; there go the guns again; two of the canoes are sunk, Father; the boat has landed, and

the people are coming up this way." William then descended from the look-out as fast as he could.

As soon as he was down, he commenced unbarring the door of the stockade. He pulled out the last pole just as he heard the feet of their deliverers outside. He threw open the door, and, a second after, found himself in the arms of Captain Osborn.

Ready dies from the effects of his wound, and is buried on the island where he had laboured to such good purpose. The Seagraves sail away in Captain Osborn's schooner, and arrive safely in Sydney to resume their normal lives.

VIII. SETTLERS IN CANADA

"Settlers in Canada" was the second novel which Marryat wrote definitely for boys and girls. It is not such a general favourite as "Masterman Ready" and "Children of the New Forest," but it is a story which tells in a very interesting and straightforward way the life and adventures of a family of English emigrants which settled in Canada some 150 years ago. This family consists of Mr. and Mrs. Campbell, their four sons—Henry, Alfred, Percival and John —and Mr. Campbell's two nieces, Mary and Emma Percival, who are orphans. The story is most interesting when it deals with the everyday happenings of life in the Canadian backwoods. The following short selection is an example of the risks daily run by these old-time settlers.

I

It is a winter's morning, and Mary and Emma Percival, guarded by their dog, Sancho, are setting out for the morning's milking.

Martin is a trapper employed by Mr. Campbell; and the hero of the adventure is John Campbell, the youngest boy. John, as you will notice, is a cool character, and a young man of very few words.

Mary and Emma tripped over the new-beaten snow-path to the cow-house, merry and cheerful, with their pails in their hands. They had just arrived at the cow-house, when old Sancho barked furiously, and sprang to

the side of the building behind them, and in a moment afterwards rolled down the snow heap which he had sprung over, holding on and held fast by a large black wolf. The struggle was not very long, and during the time that it lasted the girls were so panic-struck, that they remained like statues within two yards of the animals. Gradually, the old dog was over-powered by the repeated snapping bites of the wolf, yet he fought nobly to the last, when he dropped under the feet of the wolf, his tongue hanging out, bleeding profusely, and lifeless. As soon as his adversary was over-powered, the enraged animal, with his feet upon the body of the dog, bristling his hair and showing his powerful teeth, was evidently about to attack the young women. Emma threw her arm round Mary's waist, advancing her body so as to save her sister. Mary attempted the same, and then they remained waiting in horror for the expected spring of the animal, when of a sudden, the other dogs came rushing forward, cheered on by John, and flew upon the animal. Their united strength soon tore him down to the ground, and John, coming up as the wolf defended himself against his new assailants, put the muzzle of his rifle to the animal's head, and shot it dead.

The two sisters had held up during the whole of this alarming struggle; but as soon as they perceived the wolf was dead and that they were safe, Mary could stand no longer, and sank down on her knees, supporting her sister who had become insensible.

If John showed gallantry in shooting the wolf, he certainly showed very little towards his cousins. He looked at Mary, nodded his head towards the wolf's body, and saying "He's dead," shouldered his rifle, turned round and walked back to the house.

On his return, he found that the party had just come back from hauling up the punt, and were waiting the return of the Misses Percival to go to breakfast.

"Was that you who fired just now, John?" said Martin.

"Yes," replied John.

"What did you fire at?" said Alfred.

"A wolf," replied John.

"A wolf! where?" said Mr. Campbell.

"At the cow-lodge," replied John.

"The cow-lodge!" said his father.

"Yes; killed Sancho!"

"Killed Sancho! why, Sancho was with your cousins!"

"Yes," replied John.

"Then, where did you leave them?"

"With the wolf," replied John, wiping his rifle very coolly.

"Merciful Heaven!" cried Mr. Campbell, as Mrs. Campbell turned pale; and Alfred, Martin, and Henry, seizing their rifles, darted out from the house, and ran with all speed in the direction of the cow-house.

"My poor girls!" exclaimed Mr. Campbell.

"Wolf's dead, father," said John.

"Dead! Why didn't you say so, you naughty boy?" cried Mrs. Campbell.

"I wasn't asked," replied John.

In the meantime, the other party had gained the cow-house; and, to their horror, beheld the wolf and dog dead, and the two young women lying on the show close to the two animals; for Mary had fainted away shortly after John had walked off. They rushed towards the bodies of the two girls, and soon discovered that they were not hurt. In a short time, they were recovered, and were supported by the young men to the house.

II

Here is a very real description of a forest-fire, another of the almost daily risks which these plucky settlers have to run. "The Strawberry" is a friendly Red Indian girl. Malachi is an old trapper who has spent all his life in the woods.

What is termed the Indian summer had commenced, during which there is a kind of haze in the atmosphere. One morning, a little before dawn, Mary and Emma, who happened to be up first, went out to milk the cows, when they observed that the haze was much thicker than usual. They had been expecting the equinoctial gales, which were very late this year, and Mary observed that she foresaw they were coming on, as the sky wore every appearance of wind; yet still there was but a light air, and hardly perceptible at the time. In a moment after they had gone out, and were taking up their pails, Strawberry came to them from her own lodge, and they pointed to the gloom and haze in the air. She turned round, as if to catch the wind, and snuffed for a little while; at last she said, "Great fire in the woods." Alfred and the others soon joined them, and having been rallied by Emma at their being so late, they also observed the unusual appearance of the sky. Martin corroborated the assertion of the Strawberry, that there was fire in the woods. Malachi and John had not returned that night from a hunting expedition, but shortly after daylight they made their appearance; they had seen the fire in the distance, and said that it was to northward and eastward, and extended many miles; that they had been induced to leave the chase and come home in con-

sequence. During the remainder of the day, there was little or no wind, but the gloom and smell of fire increased rapidly. At night the breeze sprang up, and soon increased to a gale from the north-east, the direction in which the fire had been seen. Malachi and Martin were up several times in the night, for they knew that if the wind continued in that quarter, without any rain, there would be danger; still the fire was at a great distance, but in the morning the wind blew almost a hurricane, and before twelve o'clock on the next day, the smoke was borne down upon them, and carried away in masses over the lake.

"Do you think there is any danger, Martin, from this fire?" said Alfred.

"Why, sir, that depends upon circumstances; if the wind were to blow from the quarter which it now does, as hard as it does, for another twenty-four hours, we shall have the fire right down upon us."

"But still we have so much clear land between the forest and us, that I should think the house would be safe."

"I don't know that, sir. You have never seen the woods a-fire for miles, as I have; if you had, you would know what it was. We have two chances; one is that we may have torrents of rain come down with the gale, and the other is that the wind may shift a point or two, which would be the best chance for us of the two."

But the wind did not shift, and the rain did not descend, and before the evening set in, the fire was within two miles of them, and distant roaring rent the air; the heat and smoke became more oppressive, and the party were under great alarm.

As the sun set, the wind became even more violent, and now the flames were distinctly to be seen, and the whole air was filled with myriads of sparks. The fire bore down upon them with resistless fury, and soon the atmosphere was so oppressive, that they could scarcely breathe; the cattle galloped down to the lake, their tails in the air, and lowing with fear. There they remained, knee-deep in the water, and huddled together.

"Well, Malachi," said Mr. Campbell, "this is very awful. What shall we do?"

"Trust in God, sir; we can do nothing else," replied Malachi.

The flames were now but a short distance from the edge of the forest; they threw themselves up into the air in high columns; then, borne down by the wind, burst through the boughs of the forest, scorching here and there on the way the trunks of the large trees; while such a torrent of sparks and ignited cinders was poured down upon the prairie, that, added to the suffocating masses of smoke, it was impossible to remain there any longer.

"You must all go down to the punt, and get on board," said Malachi. "There is not a moment for delay; you will be smothered if you remain here. Mr. Alfred, do you and Martin pull out as far into the lake as is necessary for you to be clear of the smoke and able to breathe. Quick, there is no time to be lost, for the gale is rising faster than before."

There was, indeed, no time to be lost. Mr. Campbell took his wife by the arm; Henry led the girls, for the smoke was so thick that they could not see the way. Percival and Strawberry followed. Alfred and Martin had already gone down to get the boat ready. In a few minutes they

were in the boat, and pushed off from the shore. The boat was crowded, but being flat-bottomed she bore the load well. They pulled out about half a mile into the lake, before they found themselves in a less oppressive atmosphere. Not a word was spoken until Martin and Alfred had stopped rowing.

"And old Malachi and John, where are they?" said Mrs. Campbell, who, now, that they were clear of the smoke, discovered that these were not in the boat.

"Oh, never fear them, ma'am," replied Martin; "Malachi stayed behind to see if he could be of use. He knows how to take care of himself, and of John, too."

"This is an awful visitation," said Mrs. Campbell, after a pause. "Look, the whole wood is now on fire, close down to the clearing. The house must be burnt, and we shall save nothing."

"It is the will of God, my dear wife; and if we are to be deprived of what little wealth we have, we must not murmur, but submit with resignation. Let us thank Heaven that our lives are preserved."

Another pause ensued; at last the silence was broken by Emma.

"There is the cow-house on fire—I see the flames bursting from the roof."

Mrs. Campbell, whose hand was on that of her husband, squeezed it in silence. It was the commencement of the destruction of their whole property—all their labours and efforts had been thrown away. The winter was coming on, and they would be houseless—what would become of them!

All this passed in her mind, but she did not speak.

At this moment, the flames of the fire rose up straight to the sky. Martin perceived it, and jumped up on his feet.

"There is a lull in the wind," said Alfred.

"Yes," replied Martin, and continued holding up his hand, "I felt a drop of rain. Yes, it's coming; another quarter of an hour and we may be safe."

Martin was correct in his observation; the wind had lulled for a moment, and he had felt the drops of rain. This pause continued for about three or four minutes, during which the cow-house burnt furiously, but the ashes and sparks were no longer hurled down on the prairie; then, suddenly, the wind shifted to the south-east, with such torrents of rain as almost to blind them. So violent was the gust, that even the punt careened to it; but Alfred pulled its head round smartly, and put it before the wind. The gale was now equally strong from the quarter to which it had changed; the lake became agitated and covered with white foam, and before the punt reached the shore again, which it did in a few minutes, the water washed over its two sides, and they were in danger of swamping. Alfred directed them all to sit still, and, raising the blades of the oars up into the air, the punt was dashed furiously through the waves, till it grounded on the beach.

Martin and Alfred jumped out into the water and hauled the punt further before they disembarked; the rain still poured down in torrents, and they were wet to the skin; as they landed, they were met by Malachi and John.

"It's all over, and all is safe!" exclaimed Malachi. "It was touch and go, that's sartain; but all's safe, except the cow-house, and that's easily put to rights

again. You all had better go home as fast as you can, and get to bed."

"Is all quite safe, do you think, Malachi?" said Mr. Campbell.

"Yes, sir, no fear now; the fire hasn't passed the stream, and even if it had, this rain would put it out, for we only have the beginning of it; but it was a near thing, that's sartain."

The party walked back to the house, and as soon as they had entered, Mr. Campbell kneeled down and thanked Heaven for their miraculous preservation. All joined heartily in the prayer, and, after they had waited up a few minutes, by which time they were satisfied that the flames were fast extinguishing and they had nothing more to fear, they took off their wet clothes, and retired to bed.

III

If there are such unpleasant things as wolves and forest fires, there are also such nice compensations as maple syrup and picnics in the woods; and, as we see in the following passage, even bears can sometimes be amusing.

Now that Sancho is dead, Oscar has become the favourite dog.

It was now April, and for some days Malachi and John had been very busy, assisted by the Strawberry; for the time had come for tapping the maple trees, to make the maple sugar, and Mrs. Campbell had expressed a wish that she could be so supplied with an article of such general consumption, and which they could not obtain but by the

boats which went to Montreal. In the evening, when Malachi and John were, as usual, employed in cutting small trays out of the soft wood of the balsam fir, and of which they had already prepared a large quantity, Mrs. Campbell asked Malachi how the sugar was procured.

"Very easily, ma'am; we tap the trees."

"Yes, so you said before; but how do you do it? Explain the whole affair to me."

"Why, ma'am, we pick out the maple trees which are about a foot wide at the bottom of the trunk, as they yield most sugar. We then bore a hole in the trunk of the tree, about two feet above the ground, and into that hole we put a hollow reed, just the same as you would put a spigot in a cask. The liquor runs out into one of these trays that we have been digging out."

"Well, and then what do you do?"

"We collect all the liquor every morning, till we have enough to fill the coppers, and then we boil it down."

"What coppers will you use, then?"

"There are two large coppers in the storeroom, not yet put up, which will answer our purpose very well, ma'am. They hold about a hogshead each. We shall take them into the woods with us, and pour the liquor into them, and boil them down as soon as they are ready. You must come and see us on the boiling-day, and we can have a frolic in the woods."

"With all my heart," replied Mrs. Campbell. "How much liquor do you get from one tree?"

"A matter of two or three gallons," replied Malachi, "sometimes more and sometimes less. After we have tapped the trees and set our trays, we shall have nothing

more to do for a fortnight. The Strawberry can attend to them all, and will let us know when she is ready."

"Do you tap the trees every year?"

"Yes, ma'am, and a good tree will bear it for fifteen or twenty years; but it kills them at last."

"So I should suppose, for you take away so much of the sap of the tree."

"Exactly, ma'am; but there's no want of sugar maples in these woods."

"You promised us some honey, Malachi," said Emma, "but we have not seen it yet. Can you get us some?"

"We had no time to get it last autumn, miss, but we will try this autumn what we can do. When John and I are out in the woods, we shall very probably find a honey tree, without going very far. I did intend to have looked out for some, if you had not mentioned it."

"I know one," said Martin; "I marked it a fortnight ago, but I quite forgot all about it. The fact is, we have all plenty to do just now."

"That we certainly have," replied Henry, laughing; I doubt if I shall be able to get out with my rifle this winter."

"No, sir, you must leave the woods to John and me," replied Malachi. "Never mind, you shan't want for venison. Do you require the sledge to-morrow, Mr. Alfred?"

Malachi referred to a small sledge which they had made in the winter, and which was now very useful, as they could, with one horse, transport things from place to place. It was used by Alfred for bringing down to the storehouse the sacks of flour as fast as they were ground in the mill.

"I can do without it for a day. What do you want it for?"

"To bring all the honey home," said Emma, laughing.

"No, miss, to take the coppers out into the woods," replied Malachi, "that they may be ready for the liquor. As soon as we have tapped the trees, we will look for the honey."

"Did you send your skins down to Montreal by the boats?" inquired Mr. Campbell.

"Yes, father," replied Alfred, "but we have not so many this year as we had last. John has the largest package of all of us."

"Yes, he beats me this year," said Malachi; "he always contrives to get the first shot. I knew that I should make a hunter of the boy. He might go out by himself now, and do just as well as I do."

The next morning, Malachi went out into the woods, taking with him the coppers and all the trays on the sledge: during that day he was busy boring the trees and fitting the reed pipes to the holes. Strawberry and John accompanied him, and by sunset their work was complete.

The next morning when they went out, only Malachi and John took their axes with them, for John could use his very well for so young a lad. They first went to the tree which Martin had discovered; he had given a description where to find it. They cut it down, but did not attempt to take the honey till the night, when they lighted a fire, and drove away the bees by throwing leaves on it and making a great smoke; they then opened the tree, and gained about two pails full of honey, which they brought in just as the family were about to go to bed. When they went out the next morning, they found a bear very busy at the remains of the comb, but the animal made off before they could get a shot at him.

Every morning the Strawberry collected all the sap which had run out of the trees, and poured it into the coppers which had been fixed up by Malachi, ready for a fire to be lighted under them. They continued their search, and found three more hives of bees, which they marked and allowed to remain till later in the season, when they could take them at their leisure. In a fortnight they had collected sufficient liquor from the trees to fill both the coppers to the brim, besides several pails. The fires were therefore lighted under the coppers, and due notice given to Mrs. Campbell and the girls, that the next day they must go out into the woods and see the operation; as the liquor would towards the afternoon be turned into the coolers, which were some of the large washing-tubs then in use, and which had been thoroughly cleansed for the purpose.

As this was to be a holiday in the woods, they prepared a cold dinner in a large basket, and gave it in charge of Henry. Mr. Campbell joined the party, and they all set off to the spot, which was about two miles distant. On their arrival, they examined the trees and the trays into which the juice first ran, the boilers in which the liquor was now simmering over the fire, and asked questions of Malachi, so that they might, if necessary, be able to make the sugar themselves; after which, the first cooler was filled with the boiling liquor, that they might see how the sugar crystallized as the liquor became cold. They then sat down under a large tree and dined. The tree was at some distance from the boilers, as there was no shade in the open spot where Malachi had placed them, and the afternoon was passed very agreeably in listening to Malachi's and Martin's stories of their adventures in the

woods. While they were still at dinner, Oscar and the other dogs which had accompanied them, had strayed to about a hundred yards distant, and were soon very busy scraping and barking at a large hole.

"What are the dogs after?" said Alfred.

"Just what the Strawberry wants, and told me to get for her," replied Malachi; "we will dig him out to-morrow."

"What is it, Strawberry?" said Mary.

The Strawberry pointed to her mocassins, and then put her finger on the porcupine quills with which they were embroidered.

"I don't know the English name," said she softly.

"A porcupine, you mean," said Mary; "the animal those quills come from."

"Yes," replied the Strawberry.

"Is there a porcupine there, Malachi?" said Mrs. Campbell.

"Yes, ma'am, that is certain; the dogs know that well enough, or they would not make such a noise. If you like we will go for the shovels and dig him out."

"Do, pray; I should like to see him caught," said Emma; "it shall be our evening's amusement."

Martin got up, and went for the shovels; during his absence, the dinner was cleared away, and the articles replaced in the basket; they then all adjourned to where the dogs were still barking and scratching.

It was more than an hour before they could dig out the animal, and when, at last, it burst away from the hole, they could not help laughing as they witnessed the way in which one or two of the dogs were pricked with the quills of the animal, who needed no other defence; the dogs ran

back, pawed their noses, and then went on again. Oscar was too knowing to attack it in that way; he attempted to turn it over, so that he might get at its stomach, when he would soon have killed it, but Martin despatched the poor beast with a blow on the nose, and the dogs then rushed in upon it. They amused themselves selecting all the best of the quills for the Strawberry, and then they went back again to the coolers to see the sugar which had been made.

As they neared the spot, Emma cried out, "There is a bear at the cooler; look at him."

Malachi and John had their rifles ready immediately. Mrs. Campbell and Mary were much alarmed, as the animal was not one hundred yards from them.

"Do not be afraid, ma'am," said Malachi; "the animal is only after the sugar. He likes sugar just as well as honey."

"I don't doubt but he's the same beast that you saw at the honeycomb the other day," said Martin. "Let us stay where we are and watch him. We may lose a few pounds of sugar, but I expect he will make you laugh."

"I really see nothing laughable in such a terrific brute," said Mrs. Campbell.

"You are quite safe, ma'am," said Martin; "Malachi and Mr. John have both their rifles."

"Well, then, I will trust to them," said Mrs. Campbell; "but I should prefer being at home, nevertheless. What a great brute it is."

"Yes, ma'am; it is a very large animal, that's certain; but they are not very fat at this time of the year. See how he's smelling at the liquor, now he's licking the top of it with his tongue. He won't be satisfied with that, now that he has once tasted it. I told you so."

The eyes of the whole party, some frightened and some not, were now fixed upon the bear, who, approving of what he had tasted as a sample, now proceeded to help himself more liberally.

He therefore placed his paw down into the contents of the cooler, but although the surface of the liquor was cool, the lower part was still scalding hot, and he had not put his paw in for a moment, when he withdrew it with a loud roar, rearing up and sitting upon his hind legs, and throwing his burnt paw in the air.

"I said so," observed Malachi, chuckling; "he has found it hotter than he expected."

John, Alfred, and Martin burst out laughing at the sight; and even Mrs. Campbell and the two girls could not help being amused.

"He'll try it again," said Martin.

"Yes, that he will," replied Malachi. "John, be all ready with your rifle, for the brute has seen us."

"Why, he won't come this way, will he?" exclaimed Mrs. Campbell.

"Yes, ma'am, that he most likely will when he is angry; but you need not fear."

"But I'm afraid, Malachi," said Mary.

"Then perhaps you had better go about fifty yards back with Mr. Campbell, where you will see the whole without danger. There he goes to it again; I knew he would."

Martin, who had got all the dogs collected together and fast by a piece of deer's hide, as soon as they had discovered the bear, went back with Mr. and Mrs. Campbell and the girls.

"You need have no fear, ma'am," said Martin; "the rifles won't miss their mark, and if they did, I have

the dogs to let loose upon him; and I think Oscar, with the help of the others, would master him. Down—silence, Oscar—down, dogs, down. Look at the Strawberry, ma'am, she's not afraid, she's laughing like a silver bell."

During this interval the bear again applied to the cooler, and burnt himself as before, and this time, being more angry, he now gave another roar, and, as if considering that the joke had been played upon him by the party who were looking on, he made directly for them at a quick run.

"Now, John," said Malachi; "get your bead well on him, right between his eyes."

John kneeled down in front of Malachi, who had his rifle all ready; much to the horror of Mrs. Campbell, John permitted the bear to come within twenty yards of him. He then fired, and the animal fell dead without a struggle.

"A good shot, and well put in," said Malachi, going up to the bear. "Let the dogs loose, Martin, that they may worry the carcase; it will do them good."

Martin did so; the dogs were permitted to pull and tear at the dead animal for a few minutes, and then taken off; in the meantime, Mr. Campbell and the ladies had come up to where the animal lay.

"Well, ma'am, isn't John a cool shot?" said Malachi. "Could the oldest hunter have done better?"

"My dear John, you quite frightened me," said Mrs. Campbell; "why did you allow the beast to come so near to you?"

"Because I wanted to kill him dead, and not wound him," replied John.

"To be sure," replied Malachi; "to wound a bear is worse than leaving him alone."

"Well, Malachi, you certainly have made a hunter of John," said Mr. Campbell. "I could not have supposed such courage and presence of mind in one so young."

John was very much praised, as he deserved to be, by the whole party; and then Malachi said, "The skin belongs to John, that of course."

"Is the bear good eating now?" said Mrs. Campbell.

"Not very, ma'am," replied Malachi, "for he has consumed all his fat during the winter; but we will cut off the legs for hams, and when they are salted and smoked with the other meat, you will acknowledge that a bear's ham is at all events a dish that any one may say is good. Come, John, where's your knife? Martin, give us a hand here, while Mr. Campbell and the ladies go home."

The rest of the story is full of similar adventures which happen to the settlers. If you would like to read how Percival Campbell was captured by the Red Indians, and how he was rescued, together with many other exciting happenings, you are advised to read the book.

IX. CHILDREN OF THE NEW FOREST.

This delightful tale is a seventeenth century romance of the Civil War. It is staged in the New Forest, and the children are the two sons and two daughters of Colonel Beverley, a cavalier of Prince Rupert's, who was killed at Naseby. Their mother also dying soon after, the four orphans are left in the care of Jacob Armitage, an old servant of the family. When the Beverley home, Arnwood, is burned by the Parliamentary troopers, Jacob carries the children away, and shelters them in his cottage in the depths of the New Forest. The two boys, Edward and Humphrey, are taught all about farming, forestry and hunting, while the domestic work of the cottage is left to the two girls, Alice and Edith. Edward is a great hunter, but Humphrey is the practical man, and some of the most delightful passages are those describing the way in which Humphrey overcomes various difficulties. In the following selection we see Humphrey putting his wits to work with good results.

I

This was now a busy time at the cottage. The manure had to be got out of the stable and pigsties, and carried out to the potato-ground and garden; the crops had to be put in; and the cart was now found valuable. After the manure had been carried out and spread, Edward and Humphrey helped Jacob to dig the ground, and then to put in the seed. The cabbage-plants of last year were then put out, and the turnips and carrots sown. Before

the month was over, the garden and potato-field were cropped, and Humphrey took upon himself to weed and keep it clean. Little Edith had also employment now; for the hens began to lay eggs, and as soon as she heard them cackling, she ran for the eggs and brought them in; and before the month was over, Jacob had set four hens upon eggs. Billy, the pony, was now turned out to graze in the forest; he came home every night of his own accord.

"I'll tell you what we want," said Humphrey, who took the command altogether over the farm; "we want a cow."

"Oh yes, a cow," cried Alice; "I have plenty of time to milk her."

"Whose cows are those which I see in the forest sometimes?" said Humphrey to Jacob.

"If they belong to anybody, they belong to the King," replied Jacob; "but they are cattle which have strayed and found their way to the forest, and have remained here ever since. They are rather wild and savage, and you must be careful how you go too near them, as the bulls will run at you. They increase very fast: there were but six a few years ago, and now there are at least fifty in the herd."

"Well, I'll try and get one, if I can," said Humphrey.

"You will be puzzled to do that, boy," replied Jacob, "and as I said before, beware of the bulls."

"I don't want a bull," replied Humphrey; "but a cow would give us milk, and then we should have more manure for the garden. My garden will then grow more potatoes."

"Well, Humphrey, if you can catch a cow, no one will interfere; but I think you will not find it very easy, and you may find it very dangerous."

"I'll look out for one," replied Humphrey, "anyhow. Alice, if we only had a cow, wouldn't that be jolly?"

The crops were now all up, and as the days began to be long, the work became comparatively light and easy. Humphrey was busy making a little wheel-barrow for Edith, that she might barrow away the weeds as he hoed them up; and at last this great performance was completed, much to the admiration of all, and much to his own satisfaction. Indeed, when it is recollected that Humphrey had only the hand-saw and axe, and that he had to cut down the tree, and then to saw it into plank, it must be acknowledged that it required great patience and perseverance even to make a wheel-barrow; but Humphrey was not only persevering, but was full of invention. He had built up a henhouse with fir poles, and made the nests for the hens to lay and hatch in, and they now had between forty and fifty chickens running about. He had also divided the pigsty, so that the sow might be kept apart from the other pigs; and they expected very soon to have a litter of young pigs. He had transplanted the wild strawberries from the forest, and had by manure made them large and good; and he had also a fine crop of onions in the garden, from seed which Jacob had bought at Lymington; now Humphrey was very busy cutting down some poles in the forest to make a cowhouse, for he declared that he would have a cow somehow or another. June arrived, and it was time to mow down grass to make into hay for the winter, and

Jacob had two scythes. He showed the boys how to use them, and they soon became expert; and as there was plenty of long grass at this time of the year, and they could mow when they pleased, they soon had White Billy, the pony, in full employment carrying the hay home. The little girls helped to make it, for Humphrey had made them two rakes. Jacob thought that there was hay enough made, but Humphrey said that there was enough for the pony, but not enough for the cow.

"But where is the cow to come from, Humphrey?"

"Where the venison comes from," replied he; "out of the forest."

So Humphrey continued to mow and make hay, while Edward and Jacob went out for venison. After all the hay was made and stacked, Humphrey found out a method of thatching with fern, which Jacob had never thought of; and when that was done, they commenced cutting down fern for fodder. Here again Humphrey would have twice as much as Jacob had ever cut before, because he wanted litter for the cow. At last it became quite a joke between him and Edward, who, when he brought home more venison than would keep in the hot weather, told Humphrey that the remainder was for the cow. Still Humphrey would not give up the point, and every morning and evening he would be certain to be absent an hour or two, and it was found out that he was watching the herd of wild cattle who were feeding: sometimes they were very near, at others a long way off. He used to get up into the trees, and examine them as they passed under him, without perceiving him. One night, Humphrey returned very late, and the next morning he was off before

daylight. Breakfast was over, and Humphrey did not make his appearance, and they could not tell what was the matter. Jacob felt uneasy, but Edward laughed, and said:

"Oh, depend upon it, he'll come back and bring the cow with him."

Hardly had Edward said these words when in came Humphrey, red with perspiration.

"Now then, Jacob and Edward, come with me; we must put Billy in the cart, and take the dog, Smoker, and a rope with us. Take your guns, too, for fear of accident."

"Why, what's the matter?"

"I'll tell you as we go along, but I must put Billy in the cart, for there is no time to be lost."

Humphrey disappeared, and Jacob said to Edward, "What can it be?"

"It can be nothing but the cow he is so mad about," replied Edward. "However, when he comes with the pony, we shall know; let us take our guns and the dog Smoker as he wishes."

Humphrey now drove up the pony and cart, and they set off.

"Well, I suppose you'll tell us now what we are going for?" said Edward.

"Yes, I will. You know I've been watching the cattle for a long while, because I wanted a cow. I have been in a tree when they have passed under me several times, and I observed that one or two of the heifers were very near calving. Yesterday evening, I thought one could not help calving very soon indeed, and as I was watching I saw that she was uneasy, and that she at last left the herd and went into a little copse of wood. I remained

three hours to see if she came out again, and she did not. It was dark when I came home, as you know. This morning I went before daylight and found the herd. She is very remarkable, being black and white spotted; and, after close examination, I found that she was not with the herd, so I am sure that she went into the copse to calve, and that she has calved before this."

"Well, that may be," replied Jacob; "but now I do not understand what we are to do."

"Nor I," replied Edward.

"Well then, I'll tell you what I hope to do. I have got the pony and cart to take the calf home with us, if we can get it—which I think we can. I have got Smoker to worry the heifer and keep her employed while we put the calf in the cart; a rope that we may tie the cow, if we can; and you with your guns must keep off the herd, if they come to her assistance. Now do you understand my plan?"

"Yes, and I think it very likely to succeed, Humphrey," replied Jacob, "and I give you credit for the scheme. We will help you all we can. Where is the copse?"

"Not half a mile farther," replied Humphrey. "We shall soon be there."

On their arrival they found that the herd were feeding at a considerable distance from the copse, which was perhaps as well.

"Now," said Jacob, "I and Edward will enter into the copse with Smoker, and you follow us, Humphrey. I will make Smoker seize the heifer if necessary; at all events, he will keep her at bay—that is, if she is here.

First let us walk round the copse and find her *slot*, as we call the track of a deer. See, here is her footing. Now let us go in."

They advanced cautiously into the thicket, following the track of the heifer, and at last came upon her. Apparently, she had not calved more than an hour, and was licking the calf, which was not yet on its legs. As soon as the animal perceived Jacob and Edward, she shook her head, and was about to run at them; but Jacob told Smoker to seize her, and the dog flew at her immediately. The attack of the dog drove back the heifer quite into the thicket, and as the dog bounded round her springing this way and that way to escape her horns, the heifer was soon separated from the calf.

"Now then, Edward and Humphrey," said Jacob, advancing between the heifer and the calf, "lift up the calf between you and put it in the cart. Leave Smoker and me to manage the mother."

The boys put their arms under the stomach of the calf, and carried it away. The heifer was at first too busy defending herself against the dog to perceive that the calf was gone; when she did, Jacob called Smoker to him, so as to bring him between the heifer and where the boys were going out of the thicket. At last, the heifer gave a loud bellow, and rushed out of the thicket in pursuit of her calf, checked by Smoker, who held on to her ear, and sometimes stopped her from advancing.

"Hold her, Smoker," said Jacob, who now went back to help the boys. "Hold her, boy. Is the calf in the cart?"

"Yes, and tied fast," replied Edward.

"That's right," replied Jacob. "Now I'll get in too, and let us drive off. She'll follow us, depend upon it. Here, Smoker! Smoker! let her alone."

Smoker, at this command, came bounding out of the copse, followed by the heifer, lowing most anxiously. Her lowing was responded to by the calf in the cart, and she ran wildly up to it.

"Drive off, Humphrey," said Jacob; "I think I heard the lowing of the heifer answered by some of the herd, and the sooner we are off the better."

Humphrey, who had the reins, drove off; the heifer followed, at one time running at the dog, at another putting her head almost into the hind part of the cart; but the lowing of the heifer was now answered by deeper tones, and Jacob said:

"Edward, get your gun ready, for I think the herd is following. Do not fire, however, till I tell you. We must be governed by circumstances. It won't do to lose the pony, or to run any serious risk, for the sake of the heifer and calf. Drive fast, Humphrey."

A few minutes afterwards they perceived at about a quarter of a mile behind them, not the whole herd, but a single bull, who was coming up at a fast trot, with his tail in the air, and tossing his head, lowing deeply in answer to the heifer.

"There's only one, after all," said Jacob. "Well, we can manage him. Smoker, come in. Come in, sir, directly," cried Jacob, perceiving that the dog was about to attack the bull.

Smoker obeyed, and the bull advanced till he was within a hundred yards.

"Now, Edward, do you fire first—aim for his shoulder. Humphrey, pull up."

Humphrey stopped the pony, and the bull continued to advance, but seemed puzzled who to attack, unless it was the dog. As soon as the bull was within sixty yards, Edward fired, and the animal fell down on its knees, tearing the ground with its horns.

"That will do," said Jacob; "drive on again, Humphrey; we will have a look at that fellow by-and-bye. At present, we had better get home, as others may come. He's up again, but he is at a standstill. I have an idea that he is hit hard."

The cart drove on, followed by the heifer; but no more of the wild herd made their appearance, and they very soon gained the cottage.

"Now, then, what shall we do?" said Jacob. "Come, Humphrey, you have had all the ordering of this, and have done it well."

"Well, Jacob, we must now drive the cart into the yard, and shut the gate upon the cow, till I am ready."

"That's easy done, by setting Smoker at her," replied Jacob; "but, mercy on us, there's Alice and Edith, running out!—the heifer may kill them. Go back, Alice, run quite into the cottage, and shut the door till we come."

Alice and Edith, hearing this, and Edward also crying out to them, made a hasty retreat to the cottage. Humphrey then backed the cart against the paling of the yard, so as to enable Edward to get on the other side of it, ready to open the gate. Smoker was set at the heifer, and, as before, soon engaged her attention; so that the gate was

HUMPHREY THEN BACKED THE CART

opened and the cart drove in, and the gate closed again, before the heifer could follow.

"Well, Humphrey, what next?"

"Why, now lift the calf out and put it into the cowhouse. I will go into the cowhouse with a rope and a slip-knot at the end of it, get upon the beam above, and drop it over her horns as she's busy with the calf, which she will be as soon as you let her in. I shall pass the end of the rope outside, for you to haul up when I am ready, and then we shall have her fast, till we can secure her properly. When I call out 'ready,' do you open the gate and let her in. You can do that and jump into the cart afterwards, for fear she may run at you: but I don't think that she will, for it's the calf she wants, and not either of you."

As soon as Humphrey was ready with the rope, he gave the word, and the gate was opened; the cow ran in immediately, and, hearing her calf bleat, went into the cowhouse, the door of which was shut upon her. A minute afterwards Humphrey cried out to them to haul upon the rope, which they did.

"That will do," said Humphrey from the inside; "now make the rope fast, and then you may come in."

They went in, and found the heifer drawn close to the side of the cowhouse by the rope which was round her horns, and unable to move her head.

"Well, Humphrey, that's very clever; but now what's to be done?"

"First, I'll saw off the tips of her horns, and then if she does run at us, she won't hurt us much. Wait till I go for the saw."

As soon as the ends of her horns were sawed off,

Humphrey took another piece of rope, which he fastened securely round her horns, and then made the other end fast to the side of the building, so that the animal could move about a little and eat out of the crib.

"There," said Humphrey, "now time and patience must do the rest. We must coax her and handle her, and we soon shall tame her. At present, let us leave her with the calf. She has a yard of rope, and that is enough for her to lick her calf, which is all that she requires at present. To-morrow, we will cut some grass for her."

They then went out, shutting the cowhouse door.

"Well, Humphrey, you've beat us after all, and have the laugh on your side now," said Jacob. "'Where there's a will, there's a way,' that's certain; and I assure you, that when you were making so much hay, and gathering so much litter, and building a cowhouse, I had no more idea that we should have a cow than that we should have an elephant; and I will say that you deserve great credit for your way of obtaining it."

II

Another time, Edward and Humphrey go out hunting for fresh beef, and get themselves in an awkward situation.

As soon as dinner was over, Edward and Humphrey took down their guns, having agreed that they would go and hunt the wild cattle.

"Humphrey, have you any idea where the herd of cattle are feeding at this time?"

"I know where they were feeding yesterday and the day before, and I do not think that they will have changed their ground; for the grass is yet very young, and only grown on the southern aspects. Depend upon it we shall fall in with them not four miles from where we now are, if not nearer."

"We must stalk them as we do the deer, must we not? they won't allow us to approach within shot, Humphrey, will they?" said Edward.

"We have to take our chance, Edward; they will allow us to advance within shot, but the bulls will then advance upon us, while the herd increase their distance. On the other hand, if we stalk them, we may kill one, and then the report of the gun will frighten the others away. In the first instance there is a risk; in the second there is none, but there is more fatigue and trouble. Choose as you please, I will act as you decide."

"Well, Humphrey, since you give me the choice, I think that this time I shall take the bull by the horns, as the saying is; that is, if there are any trees near us, for if the herd are in an open place I would not run such a risk; but if we can fire upon them and fall back upon a tree in case of a bull charging, I will take them openly."

"With all my heart, Edward: I think it will be very hard, if, with our two guns and Smoker to back us, we do not manage to be masters of the field. However, we must survey well before we make our approach; and if we can get within shot without alarming or irritating them, we of course will do so."

"The bulls are very savage at this spring-time," observed Edward.

"They are so at all times, as far as I can see of them," replied Humphrey; "but we are near to them now, I should think—yes, there is the herd."

"There they are, sure enough," replied Edward: "now we have not to do with deer, and need not be so very cautious; but still, the animals are wary, and keep a sharp look-out. We must approach them quietly, by slipping from tree to tree. Smoker, to heel!—down—quiet, Smoker—good dog!"

Edward and Humphrey stopped to load their guns, and then approached the herd in the manner which had been proposed, and were very soon within two hundred yards of the cattle, behind a large oak, when they stopped to reconnoitre. The herd contained about seventy head of cattle, of various sizes and ages. They were feeding in all directions, scattered, as the young grass was very short; but although the herd was spread over many acres of land, Edward pointed out to Humphrey that all the full-grown large bulls were on the outside, as if ready to defend the others in case of attack.

"Humphrey," said Edward, "one thing is clear—as the herd is placed at present, we must have a bull or nothing. It is impossible to get within shot of the others without passing a bull, and depend upon it our passage will be disputed; and, moreover, the herd will take to flight, and we shall get nothing at all."

"Well," replied Humphrey, "beef is beef; and, as they say, beggars must not be choosers, so let it be a bull, if it must be so."

"Let us get nearer to them, and then we will decide what we shall do. Steady, Smoker!"

They advanced gradually, hiding from tree to tree, until they were within eighty yards of one of the bulls. The animal did not perceive them, and as they were now within range, they again stepped behind the tree to consult.

"Now, Edward, I think that it would be best to separate. You can fire from where we are, and I will crawl through the fern, and get behind another tree."

"Very well, do so," replied Edward: "if you can manage, get to that tree with the low branches, and then perhaps you will be within shot of the white bull, which is coming down in this direction. Smoker, lie down! He cannot go with you, Humphrey; it will not be safe."

The distance of the tree which Humphrey ventured to get to was about one hundred and fifty yards from where Edward was standing. Humphrey crawled along for some time in the fern, but at last he came to a bare spot of about ten yards wide, which they were not aware of, and where he could not be concealed. Humphrey hesitated, and at last decided upon attempting to cross it. Edward, who was one moment watching the motions of Humphrey, and at another that of the two animals nearest to them, perceived that the white bull farthest from him, but nearest to Humphrey, threw its head in the air, pawed with his foot, and then advanced with a roar to where Humphrey was on the ground, still crawling towards the tree, having passed the open spot, and being now not many yards from the tree. Perceiving the danger that his brother was in, and that, moreover, Humphrey himself was not aware of it, he hardly knew how to act. The bull was too far from him to fire at it

with any chance of success; and how to let Humphrey know that the animal had discovered him and was making towards him, without calling out, he did not know. All this was the thought of a moment, and then Edward determined to fire at the bull nearest to him, which he had promised not to do till Humphrey was also ready to fire; and after firing to call Humphrey. He, therefore, for one moment, turned away from his brother, and, taking aim at the bull, fired his gun; but probably from his nerves being a little shaken at the idea of Humphrey being in danger, the wound was not mortal, and the bull galloped back to theherd, which formed in close order about a quarter of a mile distant. Edward then turned to where his brother was, and perceived that the bull had not made off with the rest of the cattle, but was within thirty yards of Humphrey, and advancing upon him, and that Humphrey was standing up beside the tree with his gun ready to fire. Humphrey fired, and, as it appeared, he also missed his aim; the animal made at him; but Humphrey, with great quickness, dropped his gun, and, swinging by the lower boughs, was into the tree, and out of the bull's reach, in a moment. Edward smiled when he perceived that Humphrey was safe; but still he was a prisoner, for the bull went round and round the tree roaring and looking up at Humphrey. Edward thought a minute, then loaded his gun and ordered Smoker to run in to the bull. The dog, who had only been restrained by Edward's keeping him down at his feet, sprang forward to the attack. Edward had intended, by calling to the dog, to induce the bull to follow it till within gunshot; but before the bull had been attacked, Edward observed that one or two more of the bulls had left the herd, and were coming

at a rapid pace towards him. Under these circumstances, Edward perceived that his only chance was to climb into a tree himself, which he did, taking good care to take his gun and ammunition with him. Having safely fixed himself in a forked bough, Edward then surveyed the position of the parties. There was Humphrey in the tree, without his gun. The bull who had pursued Humphrey was now running at Smoker, who appeared to be aware that he was to decoy the bull towards Edward, for he kept retreating towards him. In the meantime, the two other bulls were quite close at hand, mingling their bellowing and roaring with the first; and one of them as near to Edward as the first bull, which was engaged with Smoker. At last, one of the advancing bulls stood still, pawing the ground as if disappointed at not finding an enemy, not forty yards from where Edward was perched. Edward took good aim, and when he fired the bull fell dead. Edward was reloading his piece when he heard a howl, and looking round saw Smoker flying up in the air, having been tossed by the first bull; and at the same time he observed that Humphrey had descended from the tree, recovered his gun, and was now safe again upon the lower bough. The first bull was advancing again to attack Smoker, who appeared incapable of getting away, so much was he injured by the fall, when the other bull, who apparently must have been an old antagonist of the first, roared and attacked him; and now the two boys were up in the tree, the two bulls fighting between them, and Smoker lying on the ground, panting and exhausted. As the bulls, with locked horns, were furiously pressing each other, both guns were discharged, and both animals fell. After waiting a little while to see if they rose again, or if any more of the

herd came up, Edward and Humphrey descended from the trees and heartily shook hands.

III

There are other risks than hunting, and other enemies quite as dangerous as wild cattle. One of these enemies is James Corbould, a verderer, or forester. Edward, going on a journey across the forest, is stopped by Corbould, who accuses him of deer-stealing, and attempts to take him prisoner. Edward resists and gets the better of the argument. He then resumes his journey. Returning home the following day, he again meets Corbould in the forest.

Edward had gained above eight miles of his journey across the forest, when he thought that he was sufficiently far away to venture to look out for some venison. Remembering there was a thicket not far from him, in which there was a clear pool of water, Edward thought it very likely that he might find a stag there cooling himself, for the weather was now very warm at noon-day. He therefore called his dog, Holdfast, to him, and proceeded cautiously towards the thicket. As soon as he arrived at the spot, he crouched, and crept silently through the underwood. At last, he arrived close to the cleared spot by the pool. There was no stag there, but fast asleep upon the turf lay James Corbould, the sinister-looking verderer who had accosted him in the forest on the previous day. Holdfast was about to bark, when Edward silenced him, and then advanced to where the verderer was lying; and who, having no dog with him to give notice of Edward's

approach, still remained snoring with the sun shining on his face. Edward perceived that his gun was under him on the grass; he took it up, gently opened the pan and scattered the powder, and then laid it down again; for Edward said to himself, "That man has come out after me, that I am certain: and as there are no witnesses, he may be inclined to be mischievous, for a more wretched-looking person I never saw. Had he been deer-hunting, he would have brought his dog; but he is man-hunting, that is evident. Now I will leave him, and should he fall in with anything, he will not kill at first shot, that's certain; and if he follows me, I shall have the same chance of escape as anything else he may fire at." Edward then walked out of the covert, thinking that if ever there was a face which proclaimed a man to be a murderer, it was that of James Corbould. As he was threading his way, he heard the howl of a dog, and on looking round, perceived that Holdfast was not with him. He turned back, and Holdfast came running to him. The fact was, that Holdfast had smelt some meat in the pocket of the verderer, and had been putting his nose in to ascertain what it was: in so doing he had wakened up Corbould who had saluted him with a heavy blow on the head; this occasioned the puppy to give the howl, and also occasioned Corbould to seize his gun, and follow stealthily in the track of the dog, which he well knew to be the one he had seen the day before with Edward.

Edward waited for a short time, and not perceiving that Corbould made his appearance, continued on his way home, having now given up all thoughts of killing any venison. He walked fast, and was within six miles of the cottage, when he stopped to drink at a small rill of water,

and then sat down to rest himself for a short time. While so doing, he fell into one of his usual reveries, and forgot how time passed away. He was, however, aroused by a low growl on the part of Holdfast, and it immediately occurred to him that Corbould must have followed him. Thinking it as well to be prepared, he quietly loaded his gun, and then rose up to look out. Holdfast sprang forward, and Edward looking in the direction, perceived Corbould partly hidden behind a tree, with his gun levelled at him. He heard the trigger pulled, and snap of the lock, but the gun did not go off; and then Corbould made his appearance, striking at Holdfast with the butt-end of his gun. Edward advanced to him and desired him to desist, or it would be the worse for him.

"Indeed, younker! it may be the worse for you," cried Corbould.

"It might have been if your gun had gone off," replied Edward.

"I did not aim at you. I aimed at the dog, and I will kill the brute, if I can."

"Not without danger to yourself; but it was not him that you aimed at—your gun was not pointed low enough to hit the dog—it was levelled at me, you sneaking wretch; and I have only to thank my own prudence and your sleepy head for having escaped with my life. I tell you candidly that I threw the powder out of your pan while you were asleep. If I served you as you deserve, I should now put my bullet into you, but I cannot kill a man who is defenceless—and that saves your life; but set off as fast as you can away from me, for if you follow me, I will show no more forbearance. Away

with you directly," continued Edward, raising his gun to his shoulder and pointing it to Corbould; "if you do not be off, I'll fire."

Corbould saw that Edward was resolute, and thought proper to comply with his request: he walked away till he considered himself out of gunshot, and then commenced a torrent of oaths and abusive language, with which we shall not offend our readers. Before he went farther, he swore that he would have Edward's life before many days had passed, and then, shaking his fist, he went away. Edward remained where he was standing till the man was fairly out of sight, and then proceeded on his journey. It was now about four o'clock in the afternoon, and Edward, as he walked on, said to himself, "That man must be of a very wicked disposition, for I have offended him in nothing except in not submitting to be made his prisoner: and is that an offence to take a man's life for? He is a dangerous man, and will be more dangerous after being again foiled by me as he has been to-day. I doubt if he will go home; I am almost sure that he will turn and follow me when he thinks that he can without my seeing him; and if he does, he will find out where our cottage is—and who knows what mischief he may not do, and how he may alarm my little sisters? I'll not go home till dark; and I'll now walk in another direction, that I may mislead him." Edward then walked away more to the north, and every half-hour shifted his course, so as to be walking in a very different direction from where the cottage stood. In the meantime, it grew gradually dark; and as it became so, every now and then when Edward passed a large tree he turned round behind it and looked to see if Corbould was following him. At last, just as it was dark, he per-

ceived the figure of a man at no great distance from him, who was following him, running from tree to tree, so as to make his approach. "Oh, you are there!" thought Edward, "now will I give you a nice dance, and we will see whose legs are tired soonest. Let me see, where am I?" Edward looked round, and then perceived that he was close to the clump of trees where Humphrey had made a pitfall for the cattle, and there was a clear spot of about a quarter of a mile between it and where he now stood. Edward made up his mind, and immediately walked out to cross the clearing, calling Holdfast to heel. It was now nearly dark, for there was only the light of the stars; but still there was sufficient light to see his way. As Edward crossed the cleared spot, he once looked round and perceived that Corbould was following him, and nearer than he was before, trusting probably to the increased darkness to hide his approach. "That will do," thought Edward, "come along, my fine fellow." And Edward walked on till he came to the pitfall; there he stopped and looked round, and soon discovered the verderer at a hundred yards' distance. Edward held his dog by the mouth, that he should not growl or bark, and then went on in a direction so as to bring the pitfall exactly between Corbould and himself. Having done so, he proceeded at a more rapid pace; and Corbould following him, also increased his, till he arrived at the pitfall, which he could not perceive, and fell into it headlong; and as he fell into the pit, at the same time Edward heard the discharge of his gun, the crash of the small branches laid over it, and a cry on the part of Corbould. "That will do," thought Edward, "now you may lie there, and that will cool your courage."

Corbould, in falling into the pit which Humphrey had made to trap the wild cattle, accidentally shoots himself in the leg. He is rescued by Humphrey, and recovers from his wound, but is dismissed by the Intendant (overseer of the foresters), who is friendly to Edward. Corbould, now bearing a greater grudge than ever against Edward, joins a band of robbers who are living in the forest.

IV

Humphrey learns that Corbould and the other robbers intend to attack the cottage. Edward is away from home, staying at the house of his friend, the Intendant of the forest. So Humphrey has no one to help him defend the cottage and protect his sisters from the robbers but a gipsy boy, Pablo. Humphrey barricades the cottage, and then sends Pablo to the Intendant's with a letter to Edward, asking for a party to be sent to his help.

Humphrey continued on the look-out during the whole day, with his gun on his arm, and his two dogs by his side; for he knew the dogs would give notice of the approach of anyone, long before he might see them; but nothing occurred during the whole day; and when the evening closed in he barricaded the doors and windows, and remained on the watch with the dogs, waiting for the coming of the robbers, or for the coming of the party which he expected would be sent by the Intendant to take them. Just as it was dark, Pablo returned with a note from Edward, saying that he would be over by ten o'clock, with a large party.

Humphrey had said in his letter that it would be better that any force sent by the Intendant should not arrive till after dark, as the robbers might be near and perceive them, and then they might escape; he did not, therefore, expect them to come till some time after dark. Humphrey was reading a book—Pablo was dozing in the chimney-corner —the two girls had retired into their room and had lain down on the bed in their clothes—when the dogs both gave a low growl.

"Somebody come," said Pablo, starting up.

Again the dogs growled, and Humphrey made a sign to Pablo to hold his tongue. A short time of anxious silence succeeded, for it was impossible to ascertain whether the parties were friends or enemies. The dogs now sprang up and barked furiously at the door, and as soon as Humphrey had silenced them, a voice was heard outside, begging for admission to a poor benighted traveller. This was sufficient: it could not be the party from the Intendant's, but the robbers who wished to induce them to open the door. Pablo put a gun into Humphrey's hand, and took another for himself; he then removed the light into the chimney, and on the application from outside being repeated, Humphrey answered—

"That he never opened the door at that hour of the night, and that it was useless their remaining."

No answer or repetition of the request was made, but, as Humphrey retreated with Pablo into the fireplace, a gun was fired into the lock of the door, which was blown off into the room, and had it not been for the barricades the door must have flown open. The robbers appeared surprised at such not being the case, and one of them inserted his arm into the hole made in the door, to

ascertain what might be the further obstacle to open it, when Pablo slipped past Humphrey, and, gaining the door, discharged his gun under the arm which had been thrust into the hole in the door. The person, whoever it might have been, gave a loud cry, and fell at the threshold outside.

"I think that will do," said Humphrey; "we must not take more life than is necessary. I had rather that you had fired through his arm—it would have disabled him, and that would have sufficed."

"Kill much better," said Pablo. "Corbould shot through leg, come again to rob; suppose shot dead, never rob more."

The dogs now flew to the back of the cottage, evidently pointing out that the robbers were attempting that side. Humphrey put his gun through the hole in the door, and discharged it.

"Why you do that, Massa Humphrey, nobody there!"

"I know that, Pablo; but if the people are coming from the Intendant's they will see the flash and perhaps hear the report, and it will let them know what is going on."

"There is another gun loaded, Humphrey," said Alice, who with Edith had joined them without Humphrey observing it.

"Thanks, love; but you and Edith must not remain here: sit down on the hearth, and then you will be sheltered from any bullet which they may fire into the house. I have no fear of their getting in, and we shall have help directly, I have no doubt. Pablo, I shall fire through the back door; they must be there, for the dogs have their noses under it, and are so violent. Do you fire

another gun, as a signal, through the hole in the front door."

Humphrey stood within four feet of the back door, and fired just above where the dogs held their noses and barked. Pablo discharged his gun as directed, and then returned to reload the guns. The dogs were now more quiet, and it appeared as if the robbers had retreated from the back door. Pablo blew out the light, which had been put more in the centre of the room, when Alice and Edith took possession of the fireplace.

"No fear, Missy Edith, I know where find everything," said Pablo, who now went and peered through the hole in the front door, to see if the robbers were coming to it again; but he could see and hear nothing for some time.

At last, the attack was renewed; the dogs flew backwards and forwards, sometimes to one door and then to another, as if both were to be assailed: and at the same time a crash in Alice's bedchamber told them that the robbers had burst in the small window in that room, which Humphrey had not paid any attention to, as it was so small that a man could hardly introduce his body through it. Humphrey immediately called Holdfast, and opened the door of the room; for he thought that a man forcing his way in would be driven back or held by the dog, and he and Pablo dared not leave the two doors. Watch, the other dog, followed Holdfast into the bedroom; and oaths and curses, mingled with the savage yells of the dogs, told them that a conflict was going on. Both doors were now battered with heavy pieces of timber at the same time, and Pablo said—

"Great many robbers here."

A moment or more had passed, during which Pablo and Humphrey had both again fired their guns through the door, when, of a sudden, other sounds were heard—shots were fired outside, loud cries, and angry oaths and exclamations.

"The Intendant's people are come," said Humphrey. "I am sure of it."

Shortly afterwards, Humphrey heard his name called by Edward, and he replied, and went to the door and undid the barricades.

"Get a light, Alice, dear," said Humphrey, "we are all safe now. I will open the door directly, Edward, but in the dark I cannot see the fastenings."

"Are you all safe, Humphrey?"

"Yes, all safe, Edward. Wait till Alice brings a light."

Alice soon brought one, and then the door was unfastened. Edward stepped over the body of a man which lay at the threshold, saying—

"You have settled somebody there, at all events," and then caught Edith and Alice in his arms.

He was followed by some other men, leading in the prisoners.

"Bind that fellow fast," said Edward. "Get another light, Pablo; let us see who it is that lies outside the door."

"First see who is in my bedroom, Edward," said Alice, "for the dogs are still there."

"In your bedroom, dearest? Well, then, let us go there first."

Edward went in with Humphrey, and found a man half in the window and half out, held by the throat and apparently suffocated by the two dogs. He took the

dogs off; and desiring the men to secure the robber, and ascertain whether he was alive or not, he returned to the sitting-room, and then went to examine the body outside the door.

"Corbould, as I live!"

"Yes," replied Edward; "he has gone to his account. God forgive him!"

On inquiry they found that of all the robbers, to the number of ten, not one had escaped—eight they had made prisoners, Corbould, and the man whom the dogs had seized, and who was found to be quite dead, made up the number.

V

Here we find Humphrey, with the help of Pablo, again putting his wits to work to capture some of the wild New Forest Ponies.

There was one thing, however, that Humphrey had not forgotten, which was, that he had told Edward that he would try and capture some of the forest ponies; and during the whole of the time since the heavy fall of snow had taken place, he had been making his arrangements. The depth of the snow prevented the animals from obtaining any grass, and they were almost starved, as they could find nothing to subsist upon except the twigs and branches of trees which they could reach. Humphrey went out with Pablo and found the herd, which was about five miles from the cottage. He and Pablo brought with them as much hay as they could carry, and strewed it about, so as to draw the ponies nearer to them, and then

Humphrey looked for a place which would answer his purpose. About three miles from the cottage, he found what he thought would suit him; there was a sort of avenue between two thickets, about a hundred yards wide; and the wind blowing through this avenue, during the snow-storm, had drifted the snow at one end of it, and raised right across it a large mound several feet high. By strewing small bundles of hay, he drew the herd of ponies into this avenue, and in it he left them a good quantity to feed upon every night for several nights, till at last the herd went there every morning.

"Now, Pablo, we must make a trial," said Humphrey. "You must get your lassoes ready, in case they should be required. We must go to the avenue before daylight with the two dogs, tie one upon one side of the avenue and the other on the other, that they may bark and prevent the ponies from attempting to escape through the thicket. Then we must get the ponies between us and the drift of snow which lies across the avenue, and try if we cannot draw them into the drift. If so, they will plunge in so deep that some of them will not be able to get out before we have thrown the ropes round their necks."

"I see," said Pablo; "very good—soon catch them."

Before daylight they went with the dogs, and a large bundle of hay, which they strewed nearer to the mound of drifted snow. They then tied the dogs up on each side, ordering them to lie down and be quiet. They then walked through the thicket so as not to be perceived, until they considered that they were far enough from the snow-drift. About daylight the herd came to pick up the

hay as usual, and, after they had passed them Humphrey and Pablo followed in the thicket, not wishing to show themselves till the last moment. While the ponies were busy with the hay, they suddenly ran out into the avenue and separated, so as to prevent the ponies from attempting to gallop past them. Shouting as loud as they could, as they ran up to the ponies, and calling to the dogs, who immediately set up a barking on each side; the ponies, alarmed at the noise and the appearance of Humphrey and Pablo, naturally set off in the only direction which appeared to them to be clear, and galloped away towards the mound of drifted snow, with their tails streaming, and snorting and plunging in the snow as they hurried along; but as soon as they arrived at the mound they plunged first up to their bellies, and afterwards, as they attempted to force their way where the snow was deeper, many of them stuck fast altogether, and attempted to clear themselves in vain. Humphrey and Pablo, who had followed them as fast as they could run, now came up with them and threw the lasso over the neck of one, and ropes with slip nooses over two more, which were floundering in the snow there together. The remainder of the herd, after great exertions, got clear of the snow, by turning round and galloping back through the avenue. The three ponies captured made a furious struggle; but, by drawing the ropes tight round their necks, they were choked, and soon unable to move. They then tied their fore-legs, and loosened the ropes round their necks that they might recover their breath.

"Got them now, Massa Humphrey," said Pablo.

"Yes, but our work is not yet over, Pablo; we must get them home; how shall we manage that?"

"Suppose they no eat to-day and to-morrow, get very tame."

"I believe that will be the best way; they cannot get loose again, do all they can."

"No, sir; but get one home to-day. This very fine pony; suppose we try him."

Pablo then put the halter on, and tied the end short to the foreleg of the pony, so that it could not walk without keeping its head close to the ground—if it raised its head it was obliged to lift up its leg. Then he put the lasso round its neck to choke it if it was too unruly, and, having done that, he cast loose the ropes which had tied its fore-legs together.

"Now, Massa Humphrey, we get him home somehow. First I go loose the dogs; he 'fraid of the dogs, and run t'other way."

The pony, which was an iron-gray and very handsome, plunged furiously and kicked behind; but it could not do so without falling down, which it did several times before Pablo returned with the dogs. Humphrey held one part of the lasso on one side, and Pablo on the other, keeping the pony between them; and with the dogs barking at it behind, they contrived, with a great deal of exertion and trouble, to get the pony to the cottage. The poor animal, driven in this way on three legs, and every now and then choked with the lasso, was covered with foam before they arrived. Billy was turned out of his stable to make room for the new-comer, who was fastened securely to the manger and then left without food, that he might become tame. It was too late then, and they were too tired themselves to go for the other two ponies, so they were left lying on the snow all night, and the next morning they

found they were much tamer than the first, and during the day, following the same plan, they were both brought to the stable and secured alongside of the other. One was a bay pony with black legs, and the other a brown one. The bay pony was a mare, and the other two horses. Alice and Edith were delighted with the new ponies, and Humphrey was not a little pleased that he had succeeded in capturing them, after what had passed between Edward and himself. After two days' fasting, the poor animals were so tame that they ate out of Pablo's hand and submitted to be stroked and caressed; and before they were a fortnight in the stable, Alice and Edith could go up to them without danger. They were soon broken in; for the yard being full of muck, Pablo took them into it and mounted them. They plunged and kicked at first, and tried all they could to get rid of him, but they sank so deep into the muck that they were soon tired out; and after a month they were all three tolerably quiet to ride.

When Charles II is crowned at Scone, Edward goes north to join the royal army, and takes part in the battle of Worcester, which ended in the defeat of Charles by Cromwell. Edward escapes, and returns to Humphrey and his sisters at the New Forest cottage. Afterwards, he goes to France and serves there and in the Netherlands; but his travels and troubles both come to an end after a time, and at the Restoration, Edward rides in the King's train into London, and is greeted by his sisters. Arnwood, the Beverley home, is rebuilt and restored to its rightful owners, and Edward, Humphrey, Alice and Edith have, like the King himself, "come into their own again."

You have here read brief selections from nine of the two dozen or so novels which Captain Marryat wrote. A much wider range of scenes and characters is to be found in the full length books. These books have already delighted three generations; they will delight you, too, if you care to make their closer acquaintance.

EXERCISES

Although these exercises are intended for class use, it is not suggested that all of them should be attempted by every pupil. The aim has been to construct exercises that will, whilst providing a training in literary appreciation, increase a pupil's enjoyment of his reading by offering him opportunity to express that enjoyment either in class discussion or conference or on paper.

Every pupil should have a dictionary and easy access to books of reference or an encyclopædia. Unfamiliar words or allusions should be entered in a special notebook and the explanations of them written in sentence-form. The practice of note-making is most valuable and should be carried out steadily and carefully. It is taken for granted that the teacher will give instruction in the proper method of making notes.

LIFE AND WRITINGS OF CAPTAIN MARRYAT

ORAL EXERCISES

1. Find out from an encyclopædia all you can about Nelson, Collingwood, and Napoleon Bonaparte.

2. You can read about the notorious school kept by Mr. Squeers in "Nicholas Nickleby" by Dickens. (See "The Dickens Book" in this series, pages 40–51.)

WRITTEN EXERCISES

1. Write a letter to a friend giving him some idea of the life and character of Captain Marryat.

NEWTON FORSTER

ORAL EXERCISES

1. Consult a dictionary to find out the meaning of the following words:—malignity, rancour, oblivion, velocity, sustenance, lethargy, respite, aberration, imminent, inveterate, protracted, binnacle, pennant, larboard, grapnel.

2. What other stories do you know in which the hero is shipwrecked and left on a desert island?

3. Mention three separate instances of Jackson's villainy. Which do you consider the worst, and why?

4. Suggest an alternative adjective in each of the following phrases without materially altering the meaning:—*immediate* death; a *perilous* undertaking; *diabolical* enmity; *natural* courage; *insufferable* thirst.

WRITTEN EXERCISES

1. Express more simply:—

(a). He had but a faint reminiscence of what had occurred.
(b). He dropped down in a renewed state of insensibility.
(c). "All I request is that you will lay aside your wanton animosity."
(d). His respiration was almost suspended.

2. What is your opinion of Newton's character? State clearly on what facts in the narrative your ideas are based.

3. Show how, on two occasions, Jackson's attempts on Newton's life nearly resulted in the loss of his own.

4. Collect and write down five adverb clauses, five adjective clauses, and five noun clauses.

Examples:—

(a). *Adverb clause: As there was no time to be lost*, Newton commenced his arrangements. (Time.)
(b). *Adjective clause:* Newton, *who had been below four days*, had retired.
(c). *Noun clause:* He felt *that the water washed his feet.*

PETER SIMPLE

ORAL EXERCISES

1. See how many puns (playing upon words) you can find in the first extract from the story. (Example:—". . . stating that I need not be afraid, if I fell overboard, of sinking to the bottom, as if I was giddy, my head, at all events, *would swim.*")

2. Consult a dictionary for the meaning of the following words:—rattans, holystoned, xebeque (xebec), frigate, cutter, carronades, parole, interstices, glacis, opaque, tholes, gunwales, trysail, shears (naut.).

3. What other stories do you know in which the hero escapes from captivity?

4. "A large frill which stuck out like the back fin of a perch." Find other similes in these extracts from "Peter Simple."

WRITTEN EXERCISES

1. Relate some of the ways in which Peter's shipmates amused themselves at his expense.

2. Tell briefly any story you may know about practical joking.

3. Marryat gives us a wonderful pen-portrait of "Gentleman Chucks." Try to write a pen-portrait of one of your friends.

4. Write a short account of the adventures of Mr. Chucks while he was posing as a lord.

5. Write the story of how Peter and O'Brien escaped from the fortress of Givet.

6. Rewrite, in *Direct Speech*:—

(a). One said that I looked like a hardy fellow, and asked me whether I could not bear a great deal of sleep. I replied that I could, I daresay, if it was necessary for the good of the service.

(b). But Tomkins defended himself by saying . . . slower than they did.

7. Put into *Indirect or Reported Speech* the first part of the narrative of Mr. Chucks, from "My father was a boatswain before me" to "many of the officers took his part." (Begin: "Mr. Chucks said that his father . . .")

8. Analyse into clauses:—

I have often thought since, when I have been in company where people fond of good living have smacked their lips at their claret, that if they could only be wounded and take a cup of water, they would then know what it is to feel a beverage grateful.

JACOB FAITHFUL

ORAL EXERCISES

1. Why did Jacob learn to swim?

2. Explain the allusion to Fatima and "the dreadful chamber of Bluebeard."

3. How was it that Fleming had been able to continue his career of crime for so long without detection?

4. "I did, however, take the opportunity of saying all I could in favour of Marables." What do you suppose Jacob would have said?

WRITTEN EXERCISES

1. Make sentences to show clearly the meaning of the following words:—prolix, expostulate, tremulous, accessory, notorious, depredations, impunity, audacious, nefarious, condign.

2. In this story Marryat gives us a beautiful description of an early morning scene by the river. Write a short description of an early morning scene *either* in town *or* in the country.

3. Narrate, as briefly as possible, the story of how Jacob was responsible for bringing Marables and Fleming to trial.

4. "The lamp of day." The word *lamp* is here used metaphorically for the sun (i.e. a comparison is implied but not actually stated). Make sentences in which the following words are used metaphorically:—air, storm, avenue, field, poison (verb), breezy.

5. Rewrite in *Indirect or Reported Speech*:—
"You, William Fleming . . . mercy on your soul."
(Begin: "The judge, addressing the prisoner, William Fleming, declared that he had been tried. . . .")

MR. MIDSHIPMAN EASY

ORAL EXERCISES

1. Consult a dictionary for the meaning of the following words:—loquacity, venial, ratiocination, submersion, demoniacal, incessant, reverberating, pertinacity, impetus, carnage.

2. Act, as a little play, the scene between Jack, the gentleman on whose land he was fishing, and the keepers.

3. What do you think is the author's opinion of Jack's notions of equality?

4. For the story of Festus and St. Paul see "Acts," Chapters XXV and XXVI.

5. Find the derivation of the following words:—urbane, monopoly, philosopher, interrogate, comprehension.

WRITTEN EXERCISES

1. Narrate an imaginary adventure of your own when trespassing.

2. Write paragraphs about any *three* of the following:—Mesty, Mr. Tallboys, Mr. Biggs, Easthupp, Don Silvio.

3. Describe any other duel of which you have read.

4. Illustrate, from "Mr. Midshipman Easy," Marryat's gift of humour.

5. Write a short descriptive account of *either* a battle at sea *or* a house on fire.

6. Pick out the Adverb Clauses in the following sentences and state clearly what you consider each clause expresses. (*Note.* Adverb Clauses may express Time, Place, Manner, Purpose, Result, Condition, Concession, Reason, Degree or Comparison):—

(a). I must take that rod as my property until I am dispossessed by one more powerful.

(b). As both were right, both were satisfied.

(c). If the gunner is no navigator, he is not fit to take charge of His Majesty's ships.

(d). He raved amazingly, although he could not meet Jack's indignant look.

(e). Captain Wilson hauled up his courses and brailed up his driver, that the night-signal might be clearly seen.

JAPHET IN SEARCH OF A FATHER

ORAL EXERCISES

1. What do you know of Shem, Ham, and Japhet?

2. "You liked him the first minute that you were in his company." Explain what you find attractive in Timothy's character.

3. Express more simply:—

(a). Two ladies from Billingsgate indulging their rhetorical powers.

(b). Planting a well-directed blow with his dexter and dexterous hand upon the sinister and sinistrous eye of his opponent.

(c). He of the rubicund hair.

(d). A vile potation.

(e). The fragile glass, shivering, inflicted divers wounds upon his physiognomy.

4. How was Timothy deceived,

(a) by the meat hawker.

(b) by the Eton boys?

5. Give synonyms for:—complacent, scrutinise, facetious, conspicuous, predict, elegant, antagonist, odour, lament, disdain.

6. Distinguish between:—lotions, potions, draughts, pills, embrocations.

WRITTEN EXERCISES

1. Write from memory a pen-portrait of Mr. Phineas Cophagus.

2. Write short paragraphs about:—Dr. Johnson; Homer; Milton; Swift and "The Battle of the Books"; Capulet and Montague (see Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet"). An encyclopædia or other book of reference (e.g. a history of English Literature) should be consulted before the question is attempted.

3. Write a description of the fight between Timothy and Mr. Ebenezer Pleggit's messenger, imagining yourself to have been an onlooker. Preserve, as far as possible, the humour of Marryat's narrative.

4. Write an essay on "Rogues and Vagabonds."

POOR JACK

ORAL EXERCISES

1. Tell, as concisely as possible, any ghost story you happen to know, which, like the yarn about the cat, is capable of a perfectly natural explanation.

2. Read either of the following:—"The Ancient Mariner" (S. T. Coleridge), "The Raven" (E. A. Poe).

3. What is the dramatic effect of the "interruption" near the end of Dick's yarn? Observe carefully the point in the narrative at which it occurs.

WRITTEN EXERCISES

1. Write down, in your own words, the story of "Old Duty." Does any part of the story seem to you "far fetched"?

2. Narrate briefly any humorous "sailor's yarn" you have read by any other author (e.g. Mr. W. W. Jacobs).

3. Write an essay on "Superstitions."

4. From Dick's yarn pick out and write down three similes.

(*Note.*) A simile is a direct comparison of one thing to another, the likeness being definitely stated, usually by means of the words *like* or *as*—e.g. He fought like a wild animal; his face was as red as fire.

MASTERMAN READY

ORAL EXERCISES

1. Explain how Tommy was the cause of so much unnecessary suffering among the defenders of the stockade.

2. Make up sentences to show clearly the meaning of the following words:—disembarked, succour, barricaded, palisades, consternation, sanguine, privation, sultry, escalade, stupefied.

3. Before the attack on the stockade William says to Ready:—"I thought I saw another vessel under sail, out away by the garden point." Ready suggests that this is a canoe which has separated from the others during the night. What do you think?

WRITTEN EXERCISES

1. Collect as many examples as possible to show that, in planning the defence of the stockade, Ready lived up to his name.

2. Narrate briefly the story of Ready's self-sacrifice.

3. Analyse into clauses:—

Although many fell, the faggots were gradually heaped up till they almost reached to the holes between the palisades through which they pointed their muskets; and, as the savages contrived to slope them down from the stockade to the ground, it was evident that they meant to mount up and take them by escalade.

4. In each of the following sentences replace the Phrase in italics by a Clause, without altering the meaning:—

(a). *During the conversation between Mr. and Mrs. Seagrave within the stockade*, William and Ready were watching the motions of the savages.
(b). I think they will attack *at night time.*
(c). William, *as directed*, closed the door.
(d). *At the dawn of day*, he perceived that the savages were at work.
(e). Mr. Seagrave, *hearing the musket fired*, had run out.

SETTLERS IN CANADA

ORAL EXERCISES

1. Make sentences to show clearly the meaning of the following words:—profusely, corroborated, oppressive, ignited, visitation, careened, miraculous, simmering, mocassins, adjourned.

2. Draw a picture of a porcupine.

3. Do you consider that the pleasures enjoyed by the settlers compensated for the dangers they had to face? (Class Debate.)

WRITTEN EXERCISES

1. Describe the encounter with the wolf from John's point of view. Remember that John is a very cool character, and a young man who does not waste words.

2. Write a paragraph describing how maple sugar is procured.

3. Describe an imaginary encounter with a bear.

4. "She's laughing like a silver bell"; "the girls were so panic-struck that they remained like statues." These are good examples of similes, or direct comparisons. A simile is usually introduced by the words *like* or *as*. Find similes for the ideas contained in the following and use them in sentences:—a brave man; a pretty girl; a full moon; a dark night; a rough sea.

CHILDREN OF THE NEW FOREST

ORAL EXERCISES

1. Mention some instances of Humphrey's ingenuity (apart from the capture of the heifer).

2. "Where there's a will, there's a way." This proverb teaches resolution. Mention any other proverbs you know and explain what lesson each one teaches (e.g. "Look before you leap" teaches caution).

3. How did Edward twice get the better of Corbould?

WRITTEN EXERCISES

1. Find out from your history books the causes of the Civil War between King and Parliament, and write a summary of them.

2. What is your favourite historical romance? Give a brief account of it.

3. Describe, as concisely as possible, *either* how Humphrey and the others captured the heifer and her calf, *or* how Humphrey and Pablo captured the New Forest ponies.

4. Write a paragraph or two about the New Forest.

5. Dramatise the story of the robbers' attack on the cottage.

6. Pick out the clauses in the following sentences and show clearly what kind of clause (noun, adjective, or adverb) each is:—

(a). Before the month was over, the garden and potato-field were cropped.
(b). They are cattle which have strayed and found their way to the forest.
(c). If you can catch a cow, no one will interfere.
(d). Edward perceived that his gun was under him on the grass.
(e). They sank so deep into the muck that they were soon tired out.

GENERAL EXERCISES

ORAL

1. Who were Jacob Armitage, Mr. Brookes, Mr. Drummond, Gascoigne, Jack Jervis, Juno, Malachi, Agnes Rebiera, The Strawberry, Swinburne?

2. Who said the following, to whom were the words said, and in what circumstances?

"I don't know what I do when I'm in liquor."
"If you please, we will argue that point."
"I say, my lad, can you swim?"
"Are you aware, sir, of my rank and station in society?"
"Now you may lie there, and that will cool your courage."
"Spaniards hab knives, and use dem, too, by de power!"
"Wolf's dead, father."
"Ugly puppy—knows nothing—um—patients die."
"You've your duty to do; and I've got mine."
"If they attack me, I shall then fire with a quiet conscience."

3. Which episode in this book do you consider
   (a) the most humorous.
   (b) the most exciting?

4. Which episodes do you prefer—those describing life at sea or the others? (Class Debate).

WRITTEN

1. Write a letter to a friend advising him to read some of Marryat's books. Tell him which book you like best and give reasons for your choice.

2. Write an account of the character in Marryat that you like best.

3. Which do you consider the most vivid descriptive passage in this book? Justify your choice.

4. Compare Marryat with any other writer of sea stories with whose work you are acquainted.

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