

NATHANIEL AMES

AN OLD
SAILOR'S
YARNS

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PREFACE

Mr. Buckingham, noticing the "Nautical Reminiscences" in the New England Magazine, says, no author ever stopped at the second book; and he very gravely proceeds to recommend that my number three should savor more of the style of Goldsmith or Washington Irving. I should have no objection whatever to writing like either of these distinguished authors, *if I could*; but as the case is, I must be content to write as well as I can. The whole article in Mr. B's magazine bore no faint resemblance to a dose of calomel and jalap, administered in a table-spoonful of molasses, in which the sweet and the nauseous are so equally balanced, that the patient is in doubt whether to spit or to swallow. I was, however, exceedingly flattered with the notice bestowed upon me by this literary cynic, as he was never before known to speak well, even moderately, of any author, except natives of Boston, or professors in Harvard University.

"Morton" is founded upon an old tradition, now forgotten, but well known when I first went to sea, of the exploits of some of our adventurous and somewhat lawless traders in the Pacific. A number of the crew of one of these smuggling vessels

were taken in the act, and, after a hasty trial, ordered to be sent to the mines. The route to their place of condemnation and hopeless confinement lay near the coast. A large party of seamen landed from two or three ships that were in the neighborhood, waylaid the military escort, knocked most of them on the head, rescued the prisoners, and got safe off without loss. The story says nothing of female influence or assistance, but knowing it to be morally impossible to get through a story without the assistance of a lady, I pressed one into the service, and took other liberties with the original, till it became what peradventure the reader will find it. Many stories are told of the skirmishes, or as sailors call them, "scrammidges," between our "free-traders" and the guarda-costas in different parts of the Pacific. In particular, the ship D – , of Boston, is said to have had a "regular-built fight" with a guarda-costa of forty-four guns, that retired from the action so miserably mauled, that it is doubtful to this day whether she ever found her way back into port. An old sea-dog who was on board the D – , furnished me with many details of the proceedings of our merchantmen on the coasts of California, and Mexico, some thirty years since, but most of them have escaped my memory.

I have inadvertently, in one or two instances, called the inhabitants of Mexico, South Americans. The fact is, there is scarcely a perceptible shade of difference in manners between the Chilians, Peruvians, and Mexicans; there is none in their language, dress, or religion; and sailors, who pay but little regard

to arbitrary divisions of continents, are in the habit of calling all the quondam possessions of his Most Catholic Majesty, that border upon the Pacific, by the general name of South America, upon the same principle, I presume, that they call the whole of that ocean the "*South Sea*," though they may be at that very moment anchored in Sitka, or cruizing in the chops of Behring's Straits.

"The Rivals," is built upon a strange story that was quite current among our men-of-war's-men some years ago, but I am unable to give any further account of the hero of *their* story than the reader will find in the conclusion of mine. There seems to be no doubt that the stranger was obliged to fly on account of a fatal duel; and sailors, who cannot conceive of a duel between two gentlemen, as they somewhat ironically call them, unless there is a woman in the case, have accordingly attached one to the quarrel that compelled the unfortunate officer to take shelter on board an American national vessel.

"Old Cuff" is a sketch from real life. He was a petty officer in the service at the same time with me, and notwithstanding his rambling life, was a man of good education and strong mind. His life was a striking illustration of the truth of the proposition that "there is no romance like the romance of real life." He proposed to me to take minutes of his adventures, which were extremely interesting, but before I could commence operations I was myself made a petty officer, and removed to a station in a part of the ship where I but seldom saw him, and the ship was soon after

ordered home.

The reader need be neither a wizard nor a witch to perceive that "Mary Bowline" is a creation of my own brain, and is of course defective, and will disappoint. But if it is true that "Bacon, Butler, and Shakspeare have rendered it impossible for any one after them to be profound, witty, or sublime," it is equally true that Scott, Irving, and others have rendered it impossible for any one to be equally entertaining, interesting, or amusing. I hold, however, to another maxim, that "he is a benefactor to mankind who furnishes them with innocent materials for laughter and delight," a maxim that did not come exactly "ex cathedra," but is full as profound, and correct. If I have been so fortunate as to contribute to, or become the cause of innocent delight, I shall think that the "Forecastle Yarns" have not been written in vain.

It was objected to my two former works that they contained strictures, and remarks, upon what are commonly called orthodox principles. In the present volume, I have studiously endeavored to steer my footsteps clear of the tender toes of every religious sect except the Catholics; whom, in imitation of the Protestant clergy and laity all around me, I have handled without mittens whenever I could get a chance.

I cannot close without repeating that if I have succeeded in helping to make

"The wheels of life gae down hill scrievin',
Wi' rattlin' glee," —

I shall feel more gratified than if I had squared the circle, or

drawn up a tariff that, like Shakspeare's barber's chair, should fit all parties.

N. A.

—Providence, October 1, 1833.—

P. S. More than a year ago the following pages were written and prepared for the press, under the title of "Forecastle Yarns," but a gentleman connected with the New York Mirror took a fancy to that title, and immediately appropriated it to himself with the most genteel indifference as to the prior right of another. In consequence, I have been obliged to adopt a new name. The "Pirate of Masafuero" was written after the above preface was prepared. "Old Cuff" has already been before the public in the columns of the first and only number of a new magazine¹ that expired for want of patronage, and support, having just survived long enough to give ample proofs that it deserved the patronage, and support, that were denied it. The very favorable notice that the Evening Star took of "Old Cuff," is proof positive that it is much higher than "fair to middling;" and if it is true that "the proof of the pudding is eating the bag," (and the reader will consider "Old Cuff" as the bag,) I think it follows that the pudding now set before him cannot be a bad one.

November, 1834.

¹ American Spectator and National Magazine.

MARY BOWLINE

CHAPTER I

"Nautaeque, per omne
Audaces mare qui currunt, hac mente laborum
Sese ferre, senes ut in otia tuta recedunt,

Aiunt. "Horace.

Captain Robert Bowline, a retired sea-captain, occupied a snug little farm in the town of B — , one of the many pleasant villages on the coast of New England. He had followed the sea for many years, acquired considerable property, married, and had a family. When he had attained his forty-fifth year, a relation of his wife died, leaving her heiress to a very handsome estate, part of which was the farm aforesaid. In consequence of this event he was easily persuaded by his wife, whom he tenderly loved, to retire to private life, and leave the "vexed ocean" to be ploughed by those who had their fortunes to make. They retired to their farm, when the first act of the old Triton was to pull down the antique house that had been erected "about the time of the old French war," and build another more "ship-shape," and congenial to the taste of a sailor. The dwelling itself was not, indeed, externally different from any other of the snug-

looking and rather handsome two-story houses of substantial farmers, &c. in New England; but its internal economy was somewhat nautical, containing numerous "lockers" and "store-rooms." Its front gate-posts were composed of the two jaw-bones of an enormous whale; the fence was of a most fanciful Chinese pattern; and directly in front of the house was erected that never-failing ornament of a sailor's dwelling, a tall flag-staff, with cap, cross-trees, and topmast, complete; the last, always being kept "housed," except upon the 4th of July, 22d of February, &c. At the foot of the flag-staff, "hushed in grim repose," was an iron six-pounder, mounted upon a ship gun-carriage, ready for service, whenever any national holyday required its voice. The house fronted the sea; a most superb view of which it commanded, but was at the same time screened from its storms in great measure by being flanked by noble old elms, and a fine orchard, which almost entirely surrounded it; while in the rear the ground swelled into a thickly wooded hill of moderate height. The ground in front sloped gently down to the water's edge, at the distance of half a mile from the house, but to the left gradually rose into a high point, or headland, terminating in a rocky cliff that strode far out into the sea, and formed the harbor.

The family of the old seaman, at the time he took possession of his "shore quarters," consisted of himself, wife, and daughter Mary – the rest of his children having died young. As we have no particular concern with the events of his life from that period to Mary's twenty-first year, we shall only observe that during that

time he had the misfortune to lose his wife.

Mary Bowline was a young lady, confessedly of the greatest beauty in the little town of B – , and for many miles round; a trifle above the middle stature, sufficiently so to relieve her figure from the imputation of shortness; or, as she was a little inclined to be "fleshy," or "embonpoint," as our refined authors call it, from what is sometimes called "stubbidness;" her eyes were of deep celestial blue; her hair, a dark brown, and her complexion, notwithstanding her continual rambles along the beach in her girlish days, of exquisite purity. Her education, I grieve to say, had been most shamefully neglected; her mother, though a most exemplary woman, both as a Christian and a member of society, had never tied her up in a fashionable corset to improve her figure, nor sent her to a fashionable boarding school to improve her mind; the consequence was that she knew nothing of the piano, – Virgil seems to have had the gift of prophecy with regard to this part of modern education, when he said or sang,

"Stridente stipula miserum *disperdere* carmen," —

and was equally ignorant of that sublime and useful art, working lace; she had no further idea of dancing than had been beat into her head, or rather heels, by the saltatory instructions of an itinerant dancing-master – I ask pardon, "professor" – who, with a bandy-legged dog at his heels, and a green baize bag under his arm, paid an annual visit to the town, to instruct its Thetises in the "poetry of motion;" an apt illustration of the

"*Bacchum* in remotis" choreas "rupibus
Vidi docentem
Nymphasque discentes,"

of Horace, with the alteration of a word; said fiddler having "forsooth thin potations" very soon after the commencement of his capering career. In the "serene and silent art" she was, however, truly fortunate; the clergyman of the place, a most amiable and intelligent man, and, to the credit of his amphibious parishioners, loved and esteemed with the utmost fervor and unanimity, added to his other accomplishments no mean skill as a draughtsman; an art, that he had full leisure to practise; one of his parochial duties, that of visiting the sick, being a mere shadow; for your fisherman, with his wife and his little ones, is but seldom on the doctor's list, and when he "files off," generally does it without beat of drum or flap of banner. He was a constant visiter at the house of Captain Bowline, whither he was attracted by the fascination of the seaman's stories of foreign parts. Charmed with the dawning beauty of the lovely little Mary, he readily undertook to give her better instruction than she could have obtained at the town school, to which he added drawing. Her mother had amply instructed her in the more useful and homely arts of cooking, sewing, knitting, &c. and she had even taught her to spin; for she lived before the establishment of any, or many, of those institutions for the increase of illegitimate children, ignorance, immorality, suicide, seduction, murder, &c. — I mean cotton factories. The comparatively affluent circumstances of

her family had, however, rendered it unnecessary for her to practise this last accomplishment. With all these charms in her own person, and right in her father's strong box, it is not to be wondered at that the lovely Mary Bowline had suitors in abundance; but the only one that seemed to have made any impression upon her light heart, was a young seaman by the name of Kelson, who had now attained his twenty-seventh year.

Thomas Kelson was the son of poor parents, indeed it would have been extremely difficult, if not impossible, to have found a family in the whole town of B – that could be called wealthy. He had followed the sea from early life, and had always returned home during the intervals of his voyages, at which times he had improved his education under the instructions of the clergyman aforesaid. His acquaintance with Mary had passed by a very natural transition from intimacy to affection; he was the constant companion of her rambles, and when she chose an aquatic excursion his sail-boat was always ready. To her father his company was always acceptable; the old seaman had none of the pride of "monied aristocracy;" he saw no harm in his daughter placing her affections, and bestowing her hand and fortune, upon a young man who was fast rising to respectability and wealth, in precisely the same steps by which he had himself ascended, commencing as cabin-boy and ending as master and part owner; he lived on a part of the coast that lay entirely out of the track of "refinement," if indeed she had then begun her march.

Accordingly things were permitted to go on just as though

consent had been asked and obtained; the young couple walked together, sat together, and Kelson being "free of the house," talked together upon almost every subject but love. Was there to be a fishing or sleighing party, or an excursion into the neighboring woods, Tom Kelson was invariably and by quiet agreement Mary Bowline's escort; was there a ball, no one, "louting low with cap in hand," solicited, or thought of soliciting, the honor of her company; that felicity was always supposed to be reserved for Tom Kelson; still, with all this constant and close intimacy, the young seaman had never talked of love, never offered himself as a husband, and Mary, the gay and light-hearted Mary, had never, as the New England saying is, "thought a word about it." Had Kelson suddenly presented himself to her with "Mary, shall we be published next Sunday?" she would have answered "Yes;" without the slightest hesitation; nor thought her assent worth the trouble of a blush or a simper; and such, I believe, will be found the case in most of our country courtships.

Captain Kelson, for he had attained that title some time previous, had been on *terra firma* some months; partly for want of a vessel, but chiefly in compliance with the earnest entreaties of the lovely Mary, who was terrified at the thought of his again encountering the frightful calamity that had so nearly proved fatal to him on his last voyage. On his return from St. Petersburg with a full cargo, he had experienced a tremendous gale near the Grand Banks, during which his vessel was struck by lightning and consumed. After undergoing most dreadful

sufferings in their boats, the exhausted remnant of the crew were most providentially picked up and brought safe home. In consequence of losing his vessel, the owners had received him with coldness, as is invariably the case, as though a deep loaded brig, lying-to in a gale of wind, could dodge a flash of lightning! I have known many a good seaman kept "lying out" of a vessel for months, merely because the owners had thought proper to send him to sea in a *craft* whose bottom had "dropped out," as the sea phrase is, as soon as she had encountered bad weather.

Captain Kelson had accordingly remained on shore from April, till September; the time when we have thought proper to commence our story; during which period he contrived to kill time quite agreeably in fishing, shooting, surveying the harbor, and last but not least, in paying continual attention to the fair Mary. He had one day made a visit to Captain Bowline's house, and had accompanied him in a ramble over part of his farm. During their "cruise," the old sailor had detailed his plans for the season, and gradually extending his views, announced certain arrangements and alterations as about to be carried into execution "when Mary gets married." When Mary gets married! the words passed like the shock of a galvanic battery through the mind of the younger seaman; he soon took leave, and as he strolled, unconscious of the direction his feet were taking without admitting his head into their counsels, down towards the narrow strip of white sand beach at the foot of the headland already mentioned, her father's words, the last that he distinctly heard or

recollected, continued to sound in his ears —

"When Mary gets married! well, she must get married some time or other, and who will it be?" he said to himself, suddenly stopping short. "She seems to prefer me at present, but I know that when I am at sea she appears to favor Sam Ingraham, or Ben Bass, just as much. Yet why should she be so anxious to have me stay on shore to avoid an accident that may not occur again in a century, if I should live so long, unless she does really prefer me to all others? I will certainly try to find out the state of her feelings towards me the first opportunity, and if she refuses me, I will never set foot in B — again."

With this chivalrous determination he visited his lovely and all unconscious mistress the next day, but the fair lady was busy ironing. — "I shall see her again this evening," thought he, as he turned slowly towards the town; and see her that evening he did. They rambled out towards the cape, or promontory, almost invariably the scene of their summer evening walks; for lovers, after one or two strolls over a particular portion of ground, regard it as almost sacred; there are a thousand sweet recollections connected with every step — here they have paused to admire some particular feature in the prospect — under that spreading tree they have stood together in silence, busy with their own peculiar thoughts; and this walk is seldom, if ever, changed — it is almost like inconstancy to each other to propose a different route.

They had reached the high bluff, and were seated, as usual, upon a solitary block of granite, which, had they lived in

heathen times, they might have worshipped as the ancient and much respected god Terminus. Mary, who had hitherto had the conversation almost entirely to herself, suddenly noticed her lover's abstraction.

"Why, what's the matter with you, Thomas?"

"Nothing; I was only thinking, Mary."

"Thinking, Mary!" well, do speak to Mary once in a while. I believe," she continued, after a pause, and with a faltering voice and feeling of faintness that she could not account for, "I believe you are in love, Thomas." She had heard that day that Captain Kelson was making furious love to a sea-nymph in B — , the daughter of one of the richest inhabitants.

"So I am, sweet Mary, most desperately so."

"I know it, sir; I heard it all this morning; I wish you joy," gasped the poor girl.

"Heard of it all! good heavens, Mary, what do you mean? it is you, my own dearest girl, that I love; who else *could* you think of?" as he spoke he held both her hands in his and clasped them earnestly.

"I heard," faltered poor Mary, "I was told that — that it was — Jane Wilson, O, Thomas!" and sinking her glowing cheek upon his shoulder, she burst into tears.

Kelson, inexpressibly delighted by this unequivocal testimony of her love, prest her to his bosom, and hastened to explain to her that the sole object of his seeking an interview with her that evening, was to make known his affection; that his silence and

reserve were owing to the deep interest he felt in the issue of that interview; that his visits to Captain Wilson's were solely on business; that he scarcely saw his daughter Jane at any one of them; and a thousand other things. What a stupid, asinine creature is a lover, *before* the ice is broken, and what an eloquent, inspired animal, *after* the *explosion*! A lover may retire to his closet, and spoil a whole ream of paper with "raven locks," and "eyes' liquid azure," and "sweet girls," &c. Such an epicure creature as Natty Willis will befoul you a quire of foolscap before breakfast in that way – but let a stranger see the same lover in presence of his idol, and he would think that he was then to apologise for an assault and battery with intent, &c.

The walk home was the pleasantest they had ever enjoyed – both were too happy for conversation. They decided, however, before they parted, that it was altogether unnecessary to communicate to Captain Bowline what had taken place. "He has understood all along what was the state of your feelings," said Mary, "and I am sure has always regarded you with paternal kindness."

CHAPTER II

O! a most dainty man!

To see him walk before a lady and bear her fan!

Love's Labor Lost.

The next day, as the old seaman sat by a front window smoking his pipe after dinner, he suddenly started up with the exclamation of "Hey! what – what the devil have we here? Mary, love, hand me the glass – a mariner adrift on a grating, by the Lord Harry!"

The object that called forth this animadversion, and broke a delightful day-dream that Mary was indulging in, now appeared in sight, having hitherto been hidden by a thick clump of trees, that bounded the ocean prospect towards the right. It was a small sail-boat, with three men in her, that, at one moment directly before the wind, and the next, "all shaking," seemed rapidly approaching an extensive mud flat, that formed one side of the harbor, and towards which the flowing tide and fresh breeze seemed to be fast drifting her.

"There they are, hard and fast! and on their beam ends, too, by the piper," continued the veteran, and as he witnessed this last catastrophe, he sprang from his chair, forgetting in his charitable intention of hurrying to their assistance, that they were more than half a mile off, and in full view of the town.

"There is a boat going to them, pa," said Mary, slightly blushing as she recognised at the mast head of a very handsome,

fast sailing boat, a blue "burger," with a large white M. in it, the work of her own fair hands.

"Aye," said the veteran, reseating himself, "aye, there goes Tom Kelson in your namesake, Mary; they'll get off with a ducking, and it will serve them right. Yes," continued he, applying the glass to his eye, "there goes two of them ashore through the mud, like a couple of pup-seals."

Kelson managed his boat with great skill, so as to approach the wreck, on board which still appeared one person half overboard, and apparently almost exhausted by his violent struggles to disencumber himself from the wet sail, and by anchoring immediately to windward, and carrying away cable, reached the boat and rescued the unfortunate man from a situation that was exceedingly uncomfortable if not dangerous. The other two, by dint of swimming, wading, and wallowing through the mud, reached the shore, which was about three hundred yards distant.

As soon as he had ascertained that the man on board the wreck was rescued, the old seaman, "on hospitable thoughts intent," hastened to the village to obtain intelligence and render assistance. It was evening when he returned to his snug dwelling, and then he was accompanied by a tall, slight made, very fashionably dressed young man, whom he introduced to his daughter as Mr. Millinet, of New York.

Mr. Millinet, or as he usually designated himself, George Frederick Augustus Millinet, Esq., was a "dry goods merchant," *par excellence*, in Broadway, who having a little more cash on

hand than he had ever possessed before, made an excursion to New England, with the charitable intention of civilizing and astonishing the natives. His debut was, however, rather unfortunate; B – was his first "land-fall" after quitting the high road from New York, towards the east. Fancying that a sail-boat in a sea-way, was as easily managed as a Whitehall skiff, off the Battery; he had "put to sea," in company with two little amphibious urchins that he had hired for the occasion, and who desired no better sport. They immediately perceived the ignorance of their commander, and began to play tricks upon him, as man-of-war's men do upon an ignorant and tyrannical midshipman. These pranks had terminated more seriously than they expected, and, fearful of punishment, they had betaken themselves to the water and made their escape.

Mr. Millinet being somewhat annoyed by the sly jokes and grave humor of mine host, of the hotel, concerning his misfortune, and the giggling of the waiters and chamber-maids, gladly accepted Captain Bowline's invitation, and was soon seated at his hospitable and well loaded table, for the old tar put no great faith in tea and bread and butter for supper. The knight of the yard-stick had, however, gulped down too much salt water, and been too seriously frightened to feel much appetite, and he retired to bed early. The next morning he made his appearance at breakfast, over which the fair Mary was presiding, and which might have excited an appetite in the gastric region of the most confirmed dyspeptic. There were bass and tautaug

fresh from the water; oysters in different forms, broiled, stewed, fried, &c.; a noble ham, into which the stout seaman plunged his flashing carving-knife, and hewed it in pieces, as Samuel did Agag, in the valley of Gilgal; there was broiled ham, beef steaks, mutton chop, eggs, cheese, butter, honey, hot cakes; a pile of pilot-bread-toast a foot high, ditto untoasted, coffee, tea, and chocolate. To all this good cheer, their fashionable visiter paid but small respect, and the old commander, having pressed him to make himself at home, and help himself, attacked his own breakfast with vigor, feeling at the same time no small contempt for a man whose stomach could be so effectually unhinged by a simple capsize, and thorough ducking. The vender of tape and calico, seemed to feast his eyes, if not his appetite, by gazing on the lovely countenance of his young hostess; and after some slight hesitation, commenced talking to her of theatres, and balls, and assemblies, and fashionable intelligence in general; but Balaam's ass, if she had marched into the room and commenced an oration in the original Hebrew, or Chaldee, or Syro-Phœnician, or whatever might have been *its* vernacular tongue in which she formerly addressed her master, could not have been more unintelligible. The old gentleman made an attempt to drive a conversation, and asked a few questions relative to foreign politics, the state of navigation, and commerce, in New York, &c.; but finding his auditor as ignorant as though he had proposed a case in middle latitude sailing, he dropped him altogether.

He remained in the family three or four days, during which, his attentions to Mary were incessant, but managed with such fashionable tact as not to be annoying. She was exceedingly amused by his consummate vanity and self-conceit; that seemed to make up the greater part of his character. His descriptions of society and manners in the commercial emporium, though not altogether intelligible to his fair auditor, were new and amusing, and in spite of the contagious effect of her father's contempt, and the troubled looks of poor Kelson, she could not help listening to him with complacency. It was evident to every body but Mary that the retailer of gingham was most seriously smitten with her, as much so, that is to say, as his idolatry of himself left him capable of being with any person. And so it proved, for in less time than she had any idea that it was possible to go to and return from New York, back came her Broadway beau. Mary opened her large blue eyes in most unaffected astonishment, as he came up to the door at which she was standing, equipped for a walk with Kelson. She made no scruple of consigning him to her father and continuing her walk. The old man received him, of course, with politeness, and after a short conversation, his visiter who seemed much embarrassed, observed that he was desirous of entering the holy state, and then went on to give an account of his prospects, expectations, possessions, references, hopes, fears, anxieties, &c. The seaman listened with attention to the whole catalogue, mentally exclaiming, "what the d – l does all this mean?"

"In short, sir," said he of Broadway, "I have seen no young lady who seems so well calculated to make a man happy as your lovely daughter Mary; and if you have no objection, I should be happy to be permitted to pay my addresses to her, if her affections are not already engaged."

The old sea-dog, who had been rubbing his chin during the latter part of his visiter's harangue, observed that "his daughter was indeed a fine girl, and he (Mr. Millinet) had not and could not say any more good of her than she deserved; that as to her affections being engaged, he did not pretend to bother his brain about an affair that did not concern him, trusting that the girl had good sense enough to make a proper choice; that with regard to paying his addresses to her, he might sheer alongside as quick as he liked – he would without doubt find her at quarters and all ready for action; and finally that he, her father, would not interfere to thwart her wishes in so important an affair as the choice of a husband, for," (he repeated, with an internal chuckle as the thought crossed his mind, that his favorite Tom Kelson was beyond a doubt the man of her choice,) "Mary knew what she was about, and had wit enough to make a judicious choice."

This speech, an exceedingly long one for him, was listened to with great satisfaction by his fashionable guest, who thus armed with the father's consent, as he regarded it, never dreamed of the possibility of any difficulty on the daughter's part, and looked upon the whole affair as settled.

In the mean time Mary, regardless of her victory over the

heart of her New York visitor, was quietly pursuing her evening walk with Kelson, to whom she had made known the presence, in the vicinity, of his rival. Her lover heard the intelligence with a feeling of dissatisfaction that he could not exactly define – he had unbounded confidence in his Mary's constancy and love just at that present time, but, like most men, he had rather a mean opinion of woman's constancy in general, and could not avoid applying the general rules that he had formed for himself, to most individuals. He dreaded the effect of an assiduous and sustained attack upon Mary's inexperienced mind, from a dashing, fashionable lover, who held out to her acceptance all the charms and glitter of a life of ease, and splendor, and dissipation. His uneasy sensations were by no means quieted by his companion's gaiety, who having at once surmised, or pretended so to have done, the object of the Gothamite's visit, promised herself much amusement from his wooing.

On their return to the house, they found the new visitor quietly installed in the parlor, and waiting their, or rather her, return. In high glee with the flattering prospect before him, he completely monopolized Mary's attention, and eventually put to flight the overpowered and mortified Kelson, who left the house with a heavy heart. For at least a week Mr. Millinet kept the field; he was Mary's constant companion, whether sitting quietly at home or walking out; and Kelson, finding it almost impossible even to speak to her, prudently kept himself out of the way, well knowing that Mary would soon miss him, if she had not already, and

eagerly seek an interview; nor was he wrong in his conjecture. Calling at her father's house one Sunday morning, he found her seated in the parlor waiting for meeting time. In the course of conversation he asked her jestingly, though with a beating heart, "what she meant to do with her new lover?"

"I don't know," said she laughing, "he says that he has my father's permission to make love to me, and he seems determined that the permission shall not become a dead letter for want of use."

"Your father! I had no idea that he had given his consent."

"My father, Thomas, has given me free permission to do as I please in the affair of choosing a husband."

"Certainly," said poor Kelson, construing this last speech into sentence of death to *his* love.

"And I have already acted as I pleased," continued the lovely girl, holding out her hand to him.

It was impossible to mistake the meaning of the last words and their accompanying action, and the delighted seaman certified his full intelligence and gratitude upon her lips.

"I believe this fellow, my sweet Mary, has made me almost jealous and quite foolish; but, seriously, what do you mean to do with him?"

"Why, the creature can't stay here for ever, and if he offers himself to me, I shall say 'No,' in as plain English as possible."

Mr. Millinet soon after made his appearance, and attended Captain Bowline and his daughter to meeting, to the no small

surprise of the good folks of B — , who, regarding him as the favored lover of Mary Bowline, could not help expressing their regret that she should have slighted Captain Kelson, and accepted "that tape-measuring son of a b — ."

What a pity that sailors, and seafaring people at large, can seldom or never give vent to their indignation without at the same time attacking the parentage of the object of their resentment. This is decidedly an orientalism; and I have observed in another place that sailors resemble the Orientals in their fondness for tropes and figures. The most opprobrious epithet that a Persian can make use of, when in a passion, is to call his antagonist "a dog's uncle." No other degree of canine consanguinity is considered so degrading.

The retailer of dry goods dined at the house of Captain Bowline, and attended the family to church in the afternoon, but excused himself immediately after the service was over and returned to the town. Kelson made a visit to the house of the old seaman just at dark, and on entering the usual sitting-room he found it unlighted, and occupied only by Dinah, the black girl, who, arrayed in what the old captain called her "goashore bib and tucker," was probably awaiting the arrival of her woolly-headed suitor. The old gentleman had gone out visiting, as he usually did on Sunday evenings, and Mary was in a little back parlor, where she usually sat in her father's absence, and which was the winter sitting-room of the family. Kelson had been in the house but a very few minutes when he saw his

rival approaching the front gate. With all that propensity for mischief that characterizes sailors on shore, he immediately formed, and proceeded to put in execution, a plan for the torment and vexation of his antagonist of the yard-stick. He promised the sable handmaid of his Mary a half dollar, if she would personate her mistress for a few minutes, which he imagined easily enough done in the dark, and instructing her "to behave prim and lady-like," went in quest of the boy Jim, whom he stationed in the entry to open the door for Mr. Millinet, and show him into the front parlor, and then went to the room where the fair lady herself was sitting. She was just on the point of coming to the front room with a light, having heard his well-known voice and step, but he easily engaged her in conversation; and when, at Millinet's knock, she was rising to see who it was, he as easily detained her by the assurance, that it was "nobody but her New York sweetheart." Every thing favored the mischievous plans of the seaman: Millinet never suspecting that any female but the mistress of the house would presume to seat herself in the front parlor, and feeling moreover the darkness and solitude of the room peculiarly favorable to courtship, seated himself by the side of the supposed Mary, and immediately commenced making love in pretty "rapid" style. Finding that the lady answered only in monosyllables, and seemed more than usually affable, he ventured to take her hand and gently squeeze it. He was at first somewhat startled at the hardness and roughness of the palm, but soon recollected that the country ladies in New England were in

the habit of milking their cows, making butter and cheese, &c., and said to himself, "Never mind, when she is Mrs. Millinet her hard palms shall be well rubbed with pumice-stone and milk of roses, till they are as soft as any lady's in Broadway."

Enraptured by the gentle pressure with which the "black lily" returned his amorous squeeze of her hand, he ventured to raise it to his lips, and imprint a kiss upon the short, thick fingers. At this critical and rapturous moment the door flew open, and the real Mary entered, bearing a lighted glass mantel-lamp in each hand. With a profound curtesy she placed her lamps upon the mantel-piece, and gravely asking pardon for her intrusion, flew into the room which she had just left, and which immediately echoed with her laughter, lively and joyous, but most unfashionably loud, hearty, and prolonged. The sable *fair* one made her escape at the same time, and received from Kelson double what he had promised her. Mary, however, as soon as she had recovered her gravity, joined her new suitor, but all her hospitable attentions were lost upon the discomfited Broadway merchant, who soon took his leave, overwhelmed with shame and mortification, nor did he sufficiently recover himself to renew his visits for two or three days. When he did again visit her father's house, Mary, who thought the joke carried far enough, treated him with more than usual attention, by way of apology for her untimely and mortifying mirth, so that by the expiration of the week he had entirely recovered his spirits, his self-conceit, his vanity, and his talkativeness.

CHAPTER III

You are now within a foot
Of the extreme verge; for all beneath the moon
Would I not leap upright!

King Lear.

Shortly after this mad prank of Kelson's, Mr. Millinet invited Mary to walk out one lovely evening, to which she gladly assented. They took their way towards the "Whale's Head," a name given by the inhabitants of B – to the high bluff already mentioned, that formed the eastern side of their harbor, from its real or fancied resemblance to the nose, or to speak more scientifically, "noddle-end," of a whale. A path descended obliquely from the upper part of the cape down to the beach at its foot. The whole cape and the land adjacent were comprised in the estate of Captain Bowline, who kept the paths in good repair, and had been at considerable pains, when he first took possession of the farm, to render it perfectly safe and passable, for the convenience of the fishermen, who were in the habit of digging clams on the narrow beach at the foot of the hill, and fishing among the sunken rocks at the extreme point. For the whole length of the path the hill was extremely steep, but not perpendicular, and covered with short dried grass, which made the surface so slippery, that it afforded an apt illustration of Virgil's "facilis descensus Averni;" for though any one might

accomplish a descent safely enough by dint of holding on to the few shrubs and bushes, and sliding occasionally, no animal but a cat, a goat, or a monkey, could ascend, if it was to save his life. Near the middle of the path it was crossed by a deep gap, or ravine, caused by the constant wearing of a small spring of water that trickled down the face of the cliff, and which was generally swollen by the melting of the snow, or by occasional heavy rains. The beach, or rather marsh, at the foot of the hill, where the little rivulet joined the sea, was so soft and boggy, as to be utterly impassable. Across this ravine, which was known by the name of the "Devil's Gap," Captain Bowline had caused a narrow bridge, of two planks in width, to be built, protected on the outside by a light railing. On the side next the hill, it was sufficiently guarded by the crooked branches of a knurly and scrubby oak tree, that grew on the very edge of the ravine.

Down this path the fair Mary and her suitor directed their steps. They wandered along the beach as far as the point, the New Yorker in full chat and high spirits, and Mary's attention almost entirely occupied by a distant boat that seemed to be engaged in fishing, and which she recognised, notwithstanding the distance, to be her namesake, the Mary, belonging to her lover Kelson. Their walk occupied them till nearly sunset, when Mary suddenly recollected that the tide was flowing, and would soon entirely cover the narrow beach that they had just passed. By dint of walking fast, they reached the foot of the path before the beach was covered by the tide, and commenced their ascent just as the

sun went down.

In the mean time, heavy black clouds began to muster in the north-west, announcing the approach of a thunder shower, and reducing the evening twilight to less than half its usual duration. Large heavy drops of rain were soon felt and heard, rattling in the few straggling shrubs and bushes, accompanied by short gusts of wind. Mr. Millinet, who was considerably alarmed by these indications of a violent shower, and who trembled for the safety of his new Broadway hat, and Broadway coat, hurried on with the most uncourteous and unlover-like disregard of his fair companion, who was too much accustomed to take care of herself, to be at all incommoded by his neglect. They reached the "Devil's Gap," and the lover strode on most rapidly; he was just upon the middle of the little bridge, when being startled by a sudden bright flash of lightning, he stumbled, and in the dread of falling off, laid violent hold upon one of the branches of the scrubby oak on the other side, recovered himself, and passed on. The oak, that had long since been partially undermined by the water from the spring, and which Captain Bowline had determined to remove before it did any damage, gave way before the violent pull of Millinet. Mary, whose feet were already upon the planks of the bridge, alarmed by the rattling of the loose earth and stones that fell from under the roots of the tree, ran hastily back. The next instant, the tree, with a ton or two of earth attached to its matted roots, came thundering down, sweeping away with it the bridge, and a large portion of the path beyond

it. In the mean time, short violent showers, of but four or five seconds in duration, with equally short and violent gusts of wind, induced the Broadway gallant to increase his speed; he had indeed heard a loud crash, but it is no more than bare justice to him to say that he mistook the noise for thunder.

Poor Mary was thus completely insulated – it was impossible to go back, for the beach was long since covered by the rising tide – to climb up the hill was exceedingly difficult, if not absolutely impossible to an active man – to go forward was of course out of the question – there was every appearance of a cold, driving October storm of wind and rain, to which she must necessarily be exposed, with no additional clothing except a shawl, till the tide had ebbed sufficiently to leave the beach passible, and then the walk round the point was full three miles. In this dilemma, far from any human habitation, and exposed to the night wind, which now began to blow extremely chilly, poor Mary seated herself upon the bank and wept bitterly. After the lapse of a few minutes, she became more composed, and most fervently and earnestly commending herself to Divine protection, she endeavored to shelter herself as much as possible from the wind; for the rain had now ceased, and the clouds breaking away towards the south-west, gave indications of a clear, cold, frosty autumnal night.

Relief was, however, much nearer than she expected. Her father, alarmed at her non-appearance, and the threatening looks of the weather, sallied forth in quest of her. He had gone but a few rods, when he met Mr. George Frederic Augustus, with

his pocket handkerchief tied over his hat, and his coat buttoned up to the chin, "striking out," as sailors say, like a man walking against time.

"Holloa," he shouted, "you Mr. What's-your-name! where the d – I have you left Mary? a pretty fellow you are to convoy a lady, to bear up before the wind as soon as the weather looks misty, and leave her to shift for herself! not but that the girl is a d – d sight better able to take care of herself than you are to take care of her." All this was said in perfect good humor, the old tar taking it for granted that his daughter had "made a harbor," as he expressed it, in one of the neighbor's houses.

But the abrupt question had startled Millinet, and he answered with much confusion and hesitation, "I – really, sir, I thought, – I am sure that is – I thought she was close behind me – she certainly was a few minutes since."

Captain Bowline, muttering an inverted blessing upon his fashionable guest, pushed on towards the path over the cliff. He was soon joined by Kelson, who had come in from fishing but a few minutes before, and who, hearing of Mary's walking out upon the beach, had immediately hastened to her father's house. He too had seen the hero of Gotham; but that gentleman, not deeming it wholesome to hold much conversation with men of so little refinement and fashion as Bowline and Kelson, when irritated, had made the best of his way towards B – .

Mary's father and lover accordingly hurried on, stopping at the house of old Haddock, the fisherman, who lived near the

upper end of "Jade's Walk," as the hill-path was called, where they furnished themselves with a lantern, a coil of rope, and sundry other articles that they deemed necessary. Old Haddock and his two "boys," great two-fisted fellows of twenty and two and twenty years of age, also accompanied them. They soon arrived at the Devil's Gap, where they beheld the ruin caused by the fall of the tree. For an instant a thrill of horror ran through the hearts of two of the beholders; the idea that the object of their search and solicitude had been swept away by the fall of the bridge, and crushed in its ruins, or smothered in the mud and water at the foot of the hill, occurred instantly to both of them.

From this state of agony and suspense, they were soon relieved by the silver voice of +Mary+ herself, calling from the further side of the gap, "Here I am, dear father, don't attempt to come to me, the path is all carried away on this side, and it is impossible for you or any one to get to me. Wait till the tide has gone down, and I will walk round to the point."

The sight of the dear girl in safety only stimulated them to greater exertions; the old fisherman and one of his boys departed to their house to procure a long plank, while Kelson and the other young man returned to the top of the hill, and, by sliding and supporting themselves by the bushes, safely descended to the spot where stood the lovely wanderer. She was so overjoyed to see them, and so completely chilled through, that she could scarcely speak. Kelson immediately stripped off his coat, and insisted upon wrapping her in it; and the young Triton, following the

brilliant example of one whom he respected so much as Captain Kelson, doffed his "monkey-jacket," and with hearty but rough kindness forcibly enveloped her feet and ankles in its fearnought folds.

In a short time the other two fishermen arrived, bearing on their shoulders a long plank. An end of a rope was then thrown to Kelson, by which one end of the plank was hauled across, and firmly bedded in the bank. Its passage was then rendered secure by double "life-lines" on each side; and Mary, supported by her lover and the young fisherman, safely reached the other side, and was pressed, sobbing with joy, to her fond father's bosom. The whole party then returned towards Captain Bowline's house, where the old fisherman and his two sons were liberally rewarded, and treated with a good supper.

The next morning a messenger arrived from the village, bearing a note from Mr. George, &c. Millinet, in which he attempted to excuse his behavior the preceding evening. Mary declined opening it, however, and contented herself with sending word by the bearer that the writer need not give himself any further trouble on her account, an answer that was sufficiently intelligible. But the old commander shouted after the messenger, "Tell that lubberly *yoho*² that if I catch him within a cable's length of my house, I'll break every d – d bone in his tailor-built body."

² Yoho, an animal, probably the ourang-outang, in whose existence sailors are firm believers, and of whose courage, intelligence, cunning, malicious and mischievous disposition, they tell wonderful stories. The word seems to be a corruption of Dean Swift's "Yahoo."

This threat was duly reported to the crest-fallen vender of pins and bobbin, who settled his bills, and accomplished his escape, with as little parade and as much expedition as possible; a movement that excited full as much conversation as his first appearance and intimacy in Captain Bowline's family; and while one party were confident that he had only gone to New York to make preparations for his marriage, and another were equally sure that Mary had, in nautical parlance, "given him his walking ticket," the story of the accident and Mary Bowline's narrow escape at the Devil's Gap came out, with suitable additions and embellishments, and of course the whole affair wore a different face at once. Old Haddock, the fisherman, was seized upon one evening in a ship-chandlery and grocery store, that was the usual Rialto of the loungers in B — , and rigorously cross-questioned. The man of hooks and lines hitched up his trowsers, and proceeded to enlighten his audience as follows: —

"Why you see that 'are New York chap and Miss Mary took a stroll down Jade's Walk as it might be about five o'clock in the arternoon, P. M. as the newspapers say. Well, they went down Squaw Beach, and so clean away out as fur as the pint; and when they was coming back, and got to the further eend of the walk, the Yorker he kinder shinned up to her, and she didn't like it, for I knowed all along she meant to have Captain Kelson. Well, one word brought on another, till finally he conducted himself in a very promiscuous manner, and she told him to go 'long about his business, or she'd tell Captain Kelson of his doings. Well,

that made him just about as mad as a hoe, and so when they come to the Devil's Gap he kinder kicked away one eend of the bridge, and then turned to and hauled down that 'ere scrub oak that growed clost to the bridge, so's folk mought think 'twas done by accident; and so there the poor gal was left by herself till old Captain Bowline and I and my two boys and Captain Kelson, come there and rigged a kind of trumporary bridge like, and got her safe over, and that's the whole consarnment of the matter as far as I know any thing on't."

This account of the affair, coming from an eye-witness, was considered authentic, being full as correct as the stories of eye-witnesses generally are. Mary at first attempted to contradict it, but finding her efforts fruitless, prudently determined to let the story die a natural death, which it soon did; a tremendous gale of wind and a shipwreck on the Whale's Nose having in less than a week most effectually turned the current of conversation into another channel.

Mr. Millinet reached New York in safety, and solaced himself for his defeat in New England by attention to his pretty person, and his pretty customers, balls, assemblies, and billiards; in process of time made a fashionable failure, a fashionable marriage, and commenced business afresh. To the questions of his acquaintance respecting his excursion "down east," he was shy and reserved; evading all questions on the subject by declaring that he had passed his time very pleasantly while he was in New England, but that the people had some very peculiar and odd

notions of things. In process of time the story of his repulse reached New York with all its embellishments. Some of his friends were exceedingly shocked at the idea of his having made an attempt upon the life of a young lady, for such seemed the tenor of the story; but those who knew him best fully acquitted him of any thing of the kind, inasmuch as he had not courage sufficient to offer violence to a hen and chickens. A true version of the story soon after came out, and Mr. George Frederic was compelled to undergo the ridicule of all his acquaintance.

Mary Bowline became Mrs. Thomas Kelson on "Thanksgiving-day-night," as the New England folks call it, on which joyful occasion the flag-staff was rigged "all a-tanto," and the colors kept flying from eight o'clock in the morning till sunset; according to the regulations of the naval service, and were also hoisted the next day.

It was a leading article in Mary's consent to the marriage, that her husband should give up going to sea, which he and her father contended did not include or contemplate his probably making a coasting "trip," if business required, and Mary at last consented to admit the exception. The bridge at the Devil's Gap was substantially repaired, and was often visited by Mary and her husband; and Jade's Walk was long celebrated as a favorite evening stroll when the weather permitted, not only with young lovers, but even with "old married fudges," as young ladies who are husband-hunting very politely call them.

OLD CUFF

"Qualia multa mari nautæ patiuntur in alto!"

Virgil.

What Yankee man-of-war's-man is there, ashore or afloat, who has "helped Uncle Sam," any time between the beginning of the "long embargo," and the year 1827, who does not know or has not heard of Old Cuff? His real patronymic appellation is nobody's business; – perhaps it would puzzle himself to give any account of it: nor is it worth while to inquire how the name of Cuff, generally bestowed upon the woolly-headed and flat-nosed descendants of Ham, should be given to a white man; and as for the *prænomen*, as the Romans would call it, of "old," it is well known to all my short-jacketed readers, that it seldom has, in "sea dic." or nautical language, any reference to antiquity on the part of the bearer thereof; but is merely a familiar or affectionate distinction; as the commander of a merchantman, although perhaps under twenty years of age, is invariably called the "old man," by all hands on board.

Old Cuff, when I knew him, was just turned of forty, and was, of course, of venerable standing; as it is I presume, well known to every body that a sailor's life does not average much more than forty years, from exposure, hardships, and privations. Though not stricken in years, according to the usual signification

of the phrase, Old Cuff had certainly *lived a great deal*, and had seen a great deal, there being scarcely a habitable corner of the world that he had not visited, or of the private history and internal economy of which he could not relate many anecdotes; so that he might, without arrogance or vanity, have assumed to himself the proposed motto of the Jesuits:

"Quæ regio in terris nostri non plena laboris!"

He commenced his career as cook and cabin-boy on board a "horse-jockey;" one of those vessels which carry horses, mules, and other cattle to the West Indies; a title bestowed upon them by sailors, who are very much in the habit of indulging in that figure of speech called by rhetoricians metonymy; in this instance applying the genuine name of all Connecticut men, and some Rhode Islanders, to a fore-topsail schooner, or hermaphrodite brig, as the case might be. He was next, by a sort of metamorphosis, or rather metastasis, not uncommon with those of "steady habits," a travelling tin-pedler; and his adventures and hard bargains, during a visit or two to the western and southern states, might prove highly entertaining to my readers, had I not seen some twenty or thirty of them lately going the rounds of the newspapers, which Old Cuff has often very gravely assured us, in our "quarter watches" in the main-top, were actually perpetrated by himself. By a transition still easier, and perhaps more natural, from a tin-pedler he transmuted himself into an itinerant preacher, and from conscientious motives endeavored to repair the injury he had

done to the pockets of his customers with his white-oak nutmegs, horn gun-flints, and bass-wood cucumber seeds, by supplying them with pure unadulterated orthodox Calvinism, fresh from the Saybrook Platform. Nor did he confine his usefulness to beating the "drum ecclesiastic;" during the long winters in the country, he "kept school," as it is somewhat perversely called; whereas, in nine cases out of ten, it is the school that "keeps" the schoolmaster.

But "the sow that was washed returned to her wallowing in the mire;" and in like manner Cuff left off steering the souls of sinners through the temptations and sorrows of this wicked world, or the infant mind through the intricacies of a – b ab, and once more betook himself to steering vessels across the ocean. He went to sea as mate, and shortly after as master, of a merchantman. He was chiefly employed in the West India trade.

It has been said, that all, or nearly all, the Americans taken on board piratical vessels in the West Indies and parts adjoining, are natives of New-England; and it is gravely stated as a reason, that in consequence of the immense trade between that section of the Union and those islands, and the neighboring parts of the main land, that are the chief scenes of piratical depredation and resort; the crews of the New-England vessels trading, and occasionally smuggling, in bye-ports, become gradually and imperceptibly acquainted with those of piratical vessels frequenting those bye-ports and obscure harbors, for the purpose of refitting their vessels or disposing of their plunder; and that these acquaintances

ripen into intimacies, that terminate in a strong cord with a running noose in the end of it. The deduction is perfectly logical, and it only remains to substantiate the premises; and these, I fear, may be proved, in but too many cases, to be based upon too solid a foundation to be overthrown by all the incredulous writhings of national pride. Be that as it may, the atrocities of Gibbs and others have recently proved, that total depravity is approached as nearly by the natives of New-England as by any of our Christian brethren.

In process of time the subject of our narrative grew tired of stowing molasses, feeding horses, or throwing them overboard, and "dodging" from island to island, and entered the naval service of the United States. The vessel to which he was attached was stationed in the West Indies, and had been on her station but a very short time, before that scourge of no small portion of the western world, the yellow fever, made its appearance on board. Our navy certainly was not then under so good regulations as at present. The medical department might perhaps be almost as good then as it now is, or rather as it was when I was in the service; the disgracefully penurious compensation allowed our naval surgeons rendering their station contemptible and degrading in the estimation of medical men of any pride or ability. Besides this, the sick at sea can never receive assistance from female attendance; for although some may deem it altogether imagination, there *is* something so soothing to the sick or wounded man in those thousand nameless acts of kindness

that none but woman can think of, and none but woman perform, that, after one or two visits from the doctor, the patient feels wonderfully inclined to dispense with his further attendance: nay, when languishing on that bed from which he is doomed never to rise, his pillow is softer when arranged by woman's hand; his parched and clammy lips seem to recover their healthy freshness when woman administers the cooling draught. When I die, grant, kind Heaven! that the last earthly sound that murmurs in my "death-deafened" ear may be the kind, soothing, pitying voice of woman. When this worn-out hulk, strained fore and aft by exposure and hard service, its upper works crank with vexations and disappointments, shall be hauled up high and dry upon the lee-side of death's cove, may the last that "shoves off" from alongside be woman – I care not whether wife or stranger.

In addition to the want of proper attention, a sick sailor is invariably an object of contempt and disgust to his officers: they cannot forbear regarding with contempt a man who is reduced to mental and bodily imbecility by a disease that *they* do not and perhaps never did feel: his pale, emaciated, and squalid appearance excites disgust. I have made these remarks to illustrate what, on the authority of Old Cuff, took place on board the U. S. ship – .

Owing to the negligence or imbecility, or both, of the medical department on board, little or no provision was made for the sick. They lay about on the forecastle or the booms, and the dead were collected, sewed up in their hammocks, "ballasted," and

hove overboard, every morning before the decks were washed, that is, between day-break and sunrise. This duty was generally performed by the master-at-arms and ship's corporal, familiarly called throughout the service "Jack Ketch and his mate;" but in this particular ship, and for the time being, they received the more apposite title of ship's "turkey buzzards." I ought to have mentioned, that in obedience both to naval etiquette and the superstitious feelings of the sailors, the burial service of the Episcopal Church was regularly read over the result of the ship's turkey buzzards' researches above or below deck.

Old Cuff, who had been on shore with a watering party, where he had made a pretty heavy libation of new rum, came on board at sunset; but having a somewhat confused recollection of the "bearings and distances" down the fore-ladder, he wisely concluded to set up his tabernacle for the night upon the boom. Long before midnight he perceived the symptoms of the cruel disorder that had so fearfully thinned the – 's complement. His distress increased every moment – he earnestly begged for a draught of water, but in vain, and before daylight he became insensible. In due time all hands were called; the resurrection-men commenced their examination, and receiving no intelligible reply to a sound kick upon our hero's ribs, the ship's corporal laid hold of him by the heels, and dragged him into the gangway, where the two functionaries declared him "dead enough to bury," and forthwith reported progress to that effect to the lieutenant of the morning watch. "Very well," said the officer. "Young

gentlemen, have a couple of eighteen-pound shot got up; pass the word, there, for the sail-maker's mate. Boatswain's mate, call all hands to bury the dead. How many are there?" "Only one, sir." "Very well. Tell Mr. Quill to bring his prayer-book on deck."

The corpse was soon inclosed in its canvass coffin, with the shot attached to the feet. The captain's clerk commenced the funeral service in a hurried, monotonous tone, and had nearly got to the fatal "we therefore commit his body to the deep," the signal for launching, when the ceremony was interrupted, and the officers and crew horrified by a violent struggle of the supposed defunct, accompanied with angry ejaculations.

"What the devil are you about? Let me out, let me out; d – n your eyes, I ain't dead yet; – cut away your thundering hammock, and I'll let you know whether I'm dead or not. This is a pretty how-d'ye-do, to be giving a fellow a sea-toss before his time has come."

Half a dozen jack-knives were at work in an instant upon the stitches of the hammock that inclosed the dead-alive – their owners being in their eagerness utterly regardless of the risk of amputation to which their haste subjected Old Cuff's nose; who, having burst his cerements and shaken himself, was conducted below to the doctor.

Death, however, had not yet done with him. His next cruise was in the Patriot service. Nothing very particular took place, till being sent with a party "cutting out," as it is technically termed by seamen – that is, capturing and bringing out vessels

lying at anchor in an enemy's port, he and several of his party were made prisoners, and, according to the murderous system of warfare going on between the Spanish royal forces and the insurgents, ordered to be shot. No great formality was ever used on these occasions, (the Catholic Church, of course, withheld her consolations from heretics,) and their preparations were nearly completed, when several dragoons dashed into the "plaza," bloody with spurring, fiery red with haste, announcing that the rebels were advancing in great force from the interior. The intelligence proved to be correct, but the executing party did not wait to ascertain that fact; they scampered off instantly, leaving the prisoners bound. The Patriots, of course, set them at liberty, and Old Cuff was thus rescued a second time from an "untimely grave." (By the way, I never saw any person, however old and infirm, who was willing to admit the grave "timely," at any age.)

After many wanderings and adventures, he entered another Patriot vessel, cruising off the mouth of the river Plata. After making some captures, they were one day suddenly surprised and completely hemmed in by a Spanish squadron, consisting of a frigate and four or five other smaller vessels. Finding escape impossible, the commander of the Patriot brig, an Englishman, determined to defend himself to the last extremity, at the same time using every exertion to escape, of which the swift sailing of his vessel held out some hopes. These hopes were, however, frustrated, in consequence of the brig losing several important spars, and being soon rendered almost a complete wreck. In this

crippled and unmanageable condition, she drifted upon a small, low, island, at no great distance, but still kept up a fire from such of her guns as could be brought to bear, or rather such as she had men enough left to work, for, by this time, full two thirds of her crew were killed or wounded. – Finding it impossible to save his vessel, the commander, who was dreadfully wounded, and fast bleeding to death, recommended to the wretched survivors of his brave crew to save themselves by swimming. Old Cuff and eight or ten others, being all who were able or willing to try their chance, accordingly took to the water, and reached the island safely, Cuff himself being severely wounded. The island was very low, scarcely rising six feet from high-water mark, and completely covered with a species of wild vine, that, finding neither trees nor rocks to support it, had formed a perfect cover to the whole island, by twisting and interweaving its branches with each other, so as to form a vegetable carpet sufficiently firm and close, in nearly all parts, to support the weight of a man. Between this singular roof and the ground was a space of two or three feet, and within this space the unhappy seamen secreted themselves, not with the hope of escaping, but deferring the fate that they were certain awaited them. Accordingly, the Spaniards, after having boarded the wreck of the brig, and, according to custom, murdered the wounded and mangled the dead, landed a large party to complete the horrid tragedy by murdering the few unfortunate men whom they had seen swim to the island. These savages ran about the island, which it does not seem was

more than a couple of acres in extent, yelling like wild beasts, and thrusting their swords and boarding pikes down among the vines, with the hope of piercing some of the objects of their revenge. One of them, who appeared to be an officer, stood for some minutes directly over and upon Old Cuff, and while giving directions to his men, repeatedly thrust his sword down through the sheltering vines. The weapon passed once between his arm and body, and once through his clothes, slightly grazing his side. His agony during these moments was horrible. To be dragged out, and murdered by inches, or stabbed to death where he lay, not daring to move, though the pressure of the wretch's weight who stood upon him was so painful, that he could scarce forbear crying out. Such seemed his inevitable fate. But he was doomed to undergo still greater agony. One of the unfortunate men was discovered and dragged out within a few yards of him. The incarnate demons were a full hour murdering him, stabbing and hacking him with their pikes and cutlasses in parts of the body where wounds would be exquisitely painful but not mortal. The shrieks of the unhappy man were dreadful, the more so, as every one of his companions expected every moment to share his fate. The approach of night at length put an end to the dreadful scene, and the disappointed hell-hounds returned to their ships.

The next morning, the Spanish squadron sailed round the island, pouring upon every part of it discharges of grape and canister shot, that proved fatal to several of the unfortunate men concealed upon it. They also landed again, and attempted to set

fire to the vines and dry grass, but providentially without much effect. They continued, however, to blockade the little island for two days longer, when they were compelled, by bad weather, to stand out to sea. Having ascertained that the Spanish murderers were gone, the miserable remnant of the brig's crew ventured from their hiding-places, almost exhausted with hunger, thirst, and terror. The main land was in possession of the Patriot, or Buenos Ayrean troops, but was more than two miles distant; and they consequently had no alternative but to swim to it; which they accordingly attempted, being extremely apprehensive that the Spaniards would return. The passage across the straits was long and tedious; and their hopes of ultimate success for a long time doubtful. When about half way across, one of their number declared that he was too much exhausted to go any farther, and after a few words of encouragement from his companions, suddenly exclaimed, "good bye," and sunk for ever. The rest, five in number, succeeded in reaching the shore, just at sunset.

After wandering about a mile, they came to a sort of farmhouse, the mistress of which was employed baking bread. Delirious with hunger, three of them tore the half-baked bread from the oven, and devoured large quantities of it. They all died in horrible agonies before day-break. The other two, more prudent, or having arrived at that point of starvation, at which pain had ceased, ate nothing but such light food as was provided for them by the humane Buenos Ayreans. In a few days they were quite recovered from the effects of such prolonged hunger, and

made the best of their way towards the city of Buenos Ayres. Here Old Cuff found several Republican officers, by whose influence he obtained a commission as lieutenant of artillery. But, not altogether liking the land service in the first place, and having moreover ascertained that the Republic of Buenos Ayres, like that of the United States of America, was not willing to vouchsafe any thing but hard knocks, and no pay, to those who stood by her and supported her, in her fierce struggle for independence, he very deliberately disrobed himself of his regimentals, laid aside his epaulets, tore up his commission, and returned in a merchantman to his native country. Not long after his return, he entered in the United States service, and it was then, that I first saw him. He was made captain of the main-top before sailing, and I was, myself, shortly after, stationed in the main-top likewise.

On the passage out to the Pacific, and when nearly in the latitude of Cape Horn, we, that is to say, a midshipman, Old Cuff, and thirteen men, were all very comfortably asleep in the main-top, the weather being remarkably mild for that high latitude. It was the middle watch, from midnight to four in the morning; Cuff was lying athwart-ships, or cross-wise of the top, and near the fore part of it, where there were no topsail nor topmast-shrouds to prevent a fall. There was, indeed, a "life-line" from the first topmast-shroud, on each side, to the cap-shore amidships, but it was breast high, and of course afforded no security to a man who was lying down. My head was pillowed

upon Old Cuff's side, the midshipman's head was on my breast, and the rest of my earthly tabernacle was occupied as a bolster by as many of the quarter watch as could get near me. About two o'clock, I was suddenly awoke by the abduction of my living pillow, and the consequent collision of my head against one of the top burton-blocks. At the same time I heard a whizzing noise, like a rope running swiftly through a block, but none of us took much notice of it; the midshipman growled some at my fidgeting about while fixing another pillow, but the absence of the captain of the top was not perceived. At seven bells, or half past three, the midshipman of the quarter deck hailed, "Main-top there! answer your musters, in the main-top."

"You had better keep awake in that main-top;" thundered the lieutenant of the deck, through his trumpet, "you have lost one of your number already by your sleeping."

All this was "Hebrew Greek" to us, but in a short time the sentry at the cabin door "reported" eight bells; the larboard watch was called, the wheel, look-outs, and tops relieved, and the mystery of the loss of "one of our number" fully explained.

"What did you heave Old Cuff out of the top for?" said the first one of the larboard watch, whose head came through the "lubber's hole."

"When did Old Cuff, fall from aloft?" said the next that ascended to the "sky-parlor."

"Old Cuff is done for," said the third that came up.

"He has broke his back-bone short off;" said a fourth, with his

jacket over one shoulder.

"Yes, and four of his ribs to boot;" added a fifth, who was determined the story should not want particulars.

"The doctor says he won't live till morning," said a sixth, who had not yet hove in sight, speaking below the top, as Hamlet senior's ghost does under the stage.

By this time, the whole of the alarming intelligence was fairly expended, the remaining eight, who made up the sum total of the quarter watch, having no farther particulars of consequence to communicate, the first six who came up having already broken every bone in poor Old Cuff's body, and "abridged his doleful days" to boot. By dint of cross questioning, we made shift to ascertain, that about two o'clock, or four bells, Old Cuff had rolled away from under my head, and over the top brim. Fortunately he fell across the fore-topmast studding-sail tack, which broke two of his ribs and his fall, and thence he had gently canted over, and alighted upon the quarter-deck hammock-nettings, nearly knocked overboard the half-asleep main-topman who was perched up there as a look-out. He recovered, however, in two or three weeks, in spite of the doctor's prognostication.

Upon our arrival at Valparaiso, a similar accident happened to him, that, taken in connexion with the first, formed what newspaper folks call "a singular coincidence." A considerable portion of the town, or city, or whatever it may be, of Valparaiso, is built upon and among several high, rocky, precipitous cliffs, to which sailors, time out of mind, have given the names of

fore, main, and mizen tops. It is, perhaps, another singular coincidence, that the name "main-royal," that belongs of right to the highest sail in a ship, is applied to the lowest part of said respectable sea-port. The "main-top" is the favorite resort of sailors, but I cannot say much in praise of the moral virtues of the denizens of said main-top. They do, indeed, enjoy a better prospect and a purer air than their fellow citizens, whose location is somewhat nearer the level of the sea, so that their physical elevation gives them many advantages that serve to compensate them for what they lack through moral debasement. The part of the main-top that fronts the bay, is a sheer precipice of two hundred feet; but on another part, it is simply too steep for any animal but a monkey to make a highway of. Down this part Old Cuff, who was ashore on liberty, and who likewise had his "beer aboard," contrived to trundle himself, and was picked up as dead in the street below. He, however, recovered from this tumble as speedily as he did from the other, having received but little damage, except some half dozen cuts and bruises in the countenance, which he held in but light esteem, being by no means vain of his beauty. I do not recollect that he met with any more accidents of consequence during the cruise. He returned to America in the frigate, and I have since been told that he had received a gunner's warrant, in consideration of his long, and, in his way, faithful services and many wounds; for I believe he had been wounded in almost every naval engagement during the last war.

THE RIVALS

In the neighborhood of Genoa, there lived some years since an old gardner, who, by dint of most unwearied industry and great skill in his vocation, had acquired sufficient property to enable him to purchase the farm that he had hitherto occupied as a tenant. His name was Pietro Morelli. He had no family but an only child, his daughter Bianca, at the time of our story in her nineteenth year, and who assisted her father in such branches of his occupation as were not inconsistent with her sex.

Bianca Morelli possessed all that peculiar beauty for which her countrywomen are celebrated; namely, regular Grecian features, a clear brunette complexion, a profusion of raven black tresses, and soft, languishing, and most intelligent black eyes. Her form was tall, slender, and graceful, while her disposition was amiable and gentle as her face was lovely. The beautiful Bianca was well known, and admired by most of the inhabitants of Genoa; and her sweet face and modest deportment were always, with them, irresistible inducements to purchase her fruits and flowers, when she accompanied her father to market, or visited the city alone.

It so chanced one day, that a party of Austrian officers, who had recently been quartered in Genoa, rode out to old Morelli's house, to enjoy what was to them both a luxury and a novelty; – eating fruit fresh gathered from the trees and vines. – Old Morelli

was by no means ambitious of this honor; he was too firm a friend to his degraded, but still redeemable country, to desire any intimacy with the military myrmidons of her Austrian despot; so that, notwithstanding the grave and correct moral deportment which is said to be the general characteristic of the Austrian officers, and of which he was aware, he saw their approach to his humble dwelling with a vague feeling of distrust and anxiety.

Among his military visitors was General Baron Plindorf, one of those "gallant militarists" that abound in all standing armies; whose sole employment, during the "piping times of peace," and in the course of a soldier's unsettled and rambling life from quarters to quarters, seems to be, to abuse the rights of hospitality, by carrying disgrace and infamy into every domestic circle to which they can by any means obtain admittance. It ought to be a source of pride to my countrymen, that they are more of a marrying people than the English or French, and do not regard women in the same degraded light as a gambler does a pack of cards, that are to be shuffled and played with for a while, and then thrown away. Our naval and military officers are rather remarkable for their readiness to form matrimonial connexions; while on the other hand, our young men who are educated to the law, physic, or divinity, never think of "setting up for themselves," till they are "accommodated," as Bardolph says, with a wife, whom the three learned professions regard as indispensable as Starkie on Evidence to the first; a pocket case of instruments, or Dawes' Midwifery, to the second; or a Brown's

Concordance, or Calmet's Dictionary, to the third.

Such characters as I have alluded to, it would seem, are extremely common in the British army; and it is to be presumed that they are not less plentiful in the armies of the European powers; though it does not appear that the community at large gain wisdom and caution from the mournful experience of their neighbors, but rather the reverse; for, if we may believe their own writers, the footsteps of a regiment, moving about through different country quarters, are marked by more incurable evils, and more true horrors, than the march of an invading army through a hostile, and resisting country. It has been said of the Turkish army, that they are far more formidable to their friends, than to their foes; if any dependence can be placed in those numerous writings, professing to be descriptions of English manners, that find their way across the Atlantic, the same may be said of that portion of the British army that is on the "home station."

Baron Plindorf was an unprincipled libertine, cold, selfish, and unfeeling. He was eminently successful too in his diabolical enterprise, although there was nothing prepossessing in his person or in his manners; but he had the reputation of being irresistible, and of course he was so; for, whatever may be the reason, it is a most lamentable fact, that to be called a professed rake, and reputed father of some half dozen illegitimate children, is a man's most irresistible passport, and powerful recommendation to the good graces and smiles of

the fair sex at large; every woman is instantly eager to call into exercise that fascinating treachery that ought to doom its possessor to public infamy and detestation. The next most powerful introduction to female favor, is to be a widower or a foreigner; though the latter is almost uniformly "brought to bay," in a few months after marrying in this country, by a wife and some eight or nine children from "over the water;" the very next foreigner that comes over *alone*, is snapped up in the same way – but enough of this.

He saw and admired Bianca, as Milton's devil saw and admired Paradise, with the prospective determination of destroying its calm happiness forever.

There was one of old Morelli's visitors, how ever, upon whom the lovely Bianca's beauty, modesty and grace, had made an impression of a far different kind. This was the young Count Altenberg, acknowledged on all hands to be the most accomplished gentleman, and most amiable and estimable young man, in that division of the Grand Duke's army. Frederic Count Altenberg, was the son of Rudolf, of Altenberg, an officer of high rank, who had served his country faithfully, but ineffectually, in opposing the headlong progress of the blood-stained Corsican. The old Count had, within two years, been gathered to his fathers, and his title and estates had descended to his only son, then in his twenty-third year. At an early age Frederic had received a commission as captain of cavalry, but as every body knows that promotion is slower in the army of

his Tuscan highness than in that of any other European power, he still remained a captain of cavalry, and probably would do so unto his dying day. It was his determination, as soon as he returned to Florence, to resign his commission, and retire to his paternal estates in Germany, but "*diis aliter visum est*," the fates had decreed otherwise. An indulgent and fond father had spared no pains nor expense in educating this his only child, and that child had amply repaid his care.

Educated most carefully in the strictest principles of the Christian religion and morality, generous, brave, and humane, he was, when he arrived to man's estate, the *beau ideal* of a man of honor, and a gentleman. By neither of these terms, do I mean that fashionable personage whose god is himself, who would seduce his friend's wife or sister, or strip him of his last farthing at a gaming table, and then shoot him through the head, by way of making amends; or who scrupulously discharges all gambling and betting debts; utterly neglecting those of the poor tradesman, or industrious mechanic, but the "*justum et tenacem propositi virum*," of the Roman satirist, the man of strict integrity, and immoveable principles. Frederic had long since formed a determination, that as soon as he could clear himself from the army, he would most seriously incline himself to the search of a wife. Although considered by his fair-haired countrywomen as lawful game, and moreover as one who was well worth securing, he had hitherto escaped any very serious affection of the heart. The beauty of Bianca, so unlike what

he had been accustomed to, had charmed him; her unaffected modesty had commanded his respect; and when he left her father's house, he determined that it was absolutely necessary to his comfort, to see her again. Accordingly the next evening, and the next, and many succeeding evenings, saw him riding towards old Morelli's cottage; and he had long been convinced, from what he saw of Bianca, that he had at last found the woman who only of all her sex could make him happy; which is precisely what every man thinks when in love for the first time, and alters his mind in less than a twelvemonth. Nor was the gentle Bianca insensible to his evident partiality for her society; she detected herself repeatedly, without being willing to acknowledge it, wishing for evening – disappointed, if the sky was overcast, or the weather rainy – fluttering with hope, and joy, and indescribable emotion, at the sight of every distant cavalier, or at the sound of every horse's hoof upon the road towards the city. The warm blush, the speaking smile, the sparkling eyes, of both the lovely Bianca and the young soldier, would have been sufficient to convince the most casual observer that there existed the most decided case of a *serious affection of the heart*. Of course old Morelli's eyes had long before seen and made due report to his mind, as to what was the true state of his daughter's and the young nobleman's affection. Ever anxious for Bianca's happiness and welfare, and still more so now that she had attained that age when female beauty is both mature and fully developed, while at the same time it has all the freshness and rosiness of youth, he became

exceedingly alarmed and agitated at the too obvious state of the lover's sentiments. He sought and soon obtained an opportunity of speaking to him, and Frederic was at that moment anxious to see the old man, and putting to him that question, which, whether addressed to the fair one in person, or to her pa and ma, is always embarrassing; always makes a man look, and feel, and act, very much like a fool; and when answered in the affirmative, is not unfrequently the forerunner of most sincere and hearty repentance. In fact, repentance being so often the consequence of marriage, (it is gravely asserted by some of the old fathers,) is in our mind reason why Catholics regard it (that is, the marriage, not the repentance) a sacrament, "because it produces repentance, which is a step towards grace." I am so far a Catholic, as to admit most cheerfully, that it is a holy state, and that there is no text in scripture more true, than that "it is not good for man to be alone;" still if I was about entering that holy state, I am sadly afraid that my feelings would be wholly uninfluenced by any hopes of approaching any nearer towards a state of grace, not even over the thorny path of the consequent repentance.

"Signior Count," began old Morelli, as soon as he had ascertained that they were alone, "you cannot suppose me ignorant of the cause of your frequent visits to my poor house, or that as a father I am so indifferent to my daughter's happiness as to see it without extreme anxiety."

"I was about speaking to you on the same subject," said Frederic, hesitatingly, "I have already told you that it is my fixed

determination to leave the army, and retire to peaceful life on my own estate. But although my fortune is princely, I feel it would be valueless without your lovely daughter. Signior Morelli, I love Bianca; I have made no attempt to conceal it from you; were my intentions dishonorable, do you not think that I would endeavor to hide them from a father's eye? Do you take me for the bold, hardened libertine that would trample under foot a father's hospitality to accomplish his daughter's infamy? You wrong me, Signior, if you do; but I cannot believe that in your dislike to my country, you believe all her children base and unprincipled."

"Nay, my young friend, I believe nothing of that detestable character can be laid to your charge. But consider for a moment the immense distance between you. You are an Austrian nobleman of high rank and of ancient family, and Bianca, on the other hand, can boast of nothing but her good name and unsullied character."

"And does not virtue outweigh all worldly titles and distinctions in the estimation of every rational and virtuous mind? Your lovely daughter's virtues are far superior to my empty titles or immense wealth. In accepting me as a husband, she would confer honor, not receive it. She descends to my level; I do not and cannot rise to hers – the gain, the honor, the advantage, of such an alliance would be mine."

"You are an enthusiast, Count; your passion has gotten the better of your judgment; that you love my daughter *now* I am perfectly willing to admit, but that your affection for her

will sustain the shock of the ridicule of your associates, or the contempt and neglect with which your proud and titled kindred and countrymen will treat such a wife, whom they regard so infinitely beneath them, I very much doubt. Matches between people so widely separated by difference of rank, however arbitrary and absurd those distinctions may be, can never produce aught but unhappiness."

The Count was, notwithstanding the reasonableness of old Morelli's objections, as politely obstinate as young lovers are to old fathers, when those old fathers condescend to reason with them instead of resorting to the more usual and summary process of turning them out of doors, and forbidding their daughters to hold any farther communication with the dear rejected. In a subsequent conversation with his daughter he found that both parties were nearly in the same situation; Bianca with many tears confessing her love for Count Altenberg. There seemed then but two chances to escape from this state of embarrassment, namely, either to consent to Frederic's offer of his hand, or to send his daughter to an aged relative at Padua; which last plan was liable to so many objections that, after ruminating upon it for two days, he gave it up, and permitted the lovers to enjoy each other's society, though without giving a direct consent to their union.

In the mean time the libertine Plindorf was plotting destruction to the fair Bianca. He well knew that such a woman was not to be carried by the usual attacks of flattery and money; which last, whether administered in the form

of rich and dazzling presents, or simply by itself, is almost uniformly found irresistible by old and young women, according to their tastes or situations; his plan was therefore necessarily more deeply laid than any he had heretofore practised. It was accordingly with a mingled emotion of pleasure and anxiety that he watched the progress of the attachment between the two lovers. Although he feared that her attachment might prove too strong to be easily shaken, he still hoped to be able to involve them in embarrassments, and then, under the guise of friendship and pretence of assisting them, further his own unprincipled views. The impetuosity of the young nobleman, and certain circumstances that he could not foresee, brought the affair to a crisis both unexpected and disastrous.

The Baron walked out one afternoon towards old Morelli's cottage, without any fixed object, for the unequivocal dislike that Bianca always manifested towards him, had determined him to cease his visits to her father's house, and make his approaches with the utmost caution. He approached a retired spot near the house, where the lovers frequently strolled to enjoy each other's society. Bianca had also wandered there in the hope of meeting Frederic. She was occupied gathering flowers, and arranging them in a nosegay, when a rustling among the bushes attracted her attention. She hastily advanced towards the spot, exclaiming "Frederic!" when the Baron, the man whom of all others she most hated, and, for some undefinable reason or other, feared, stood before her.

"Fairest Bianca!" said Plindorf, advancing, "let me not alarm you, although I am not the person you seemed to expect; let me hope that the presence of a friend and well-wisher to both parties is not disagreeable or terrifying."

Bianca, exceedingly alarmed at the sudden apparition of one so odious to her, had sunk down upon a rude seat. The Baron approached, and taking her passive hand, seated himself by her side. Mistaking the cause of her quietness, he ventured to press her trembling hand to his lips, and attempted to pass his arm around her waist. The terrified girl suddenly sprang from him with a loud shriek, and attempted to fly; the Baron again caught her hand, and endeavored forcibly to detain her. At that moment the Count Altenberg suddenly stood before them, his eyes flashing with rage.

"Villain," he exclaimed, as soon as his passion would give him utterance, "deceitful, cowardly scoundrel! take that" – striking him a violent blow, and at the same time unsheathing his sword.

The Baron was ready in an instant, but as soon as the Count felt his weapon clashing against that of his antagonist, he became at once cool and composed. Not so Plindorf, he dashed at his more youthful opponent with a fury that had well nigh brought the combat to a speedy and fatal issue, and compelled Frederic to exert his utmost skill. The peculiar danger of his situation, and almost certain death or remediless disgrace that awaited him, even if victorious, for having struck his superior officer, were present to the mind of the young officer in gloomy and

terrible colors; but it was too late to retract. The fury of the Baron threw him off his guard – he received a mortal wound, and fell dead. The unhappy survivor stood for some seconds gazing upon the inanimate form before him; and as the features, after being convulsed for a little, settled into the iron stiffness of everlasting sleep, he uttered a deep sigh, and unconsciously moved away from the spot. At this moment Bianca, recovering from the stupor into which the terrible scene had thrown her, earnestly enjoined him to fly.

"There is no time to be lost," said the agonized girl; "fly at once to the sea-side – go on board any vessel that is about sailing – in a few days, I doubt not, this unhappy business will be hushed up."

"And where shall I fly?" said the Count; "where shall I go from *him*?" – indicating the slain nobleman by a movement of his hand – "do you know what I have done? I have in one moment sentenced myself to death; or, what is worse, to disgraceful and infamous privation of all my honors and rank."

"No, no – there is yet time – go immediately on board the American man-of-war in the harbor – they dare not search for you there."

With many entreaties and tears, she prevailed upon him to take measures for his safety; and with a lightened heart saw him, from the windows of her father's house, reach the water-side uninterrupted; saw him leave the shore in a little skiff, when the intervention of other objects hid him from her sight.

The two officers were missed that evening. The dead body of the ill-fated Baron was soon discovered; for many had seen him going towards old Morelli's cottage; but no traces of Count Altenberg have ever been discovered. Morelli and his daughter underwent a rigid examination; the former could throw no light upon the mysterious disappearance of Frederic, but Bianca, the pure-minded Bianca, unreservedly related all the circumstances. The examining officers forwarded an elaborate and circumstantial report of the case to Vienna, accompanied by an earnest petition in behalf of the absent Count. The Emperor laid the affair before a select council of old and experienced officers, who, after due deliberation, and weighing the excellence of Altenberg's character against the depravity of his slain antagonist, suggested the expediency of pardoning the offender. Proclamation was accordingly made to that effect, but without success.

The unhappy Bianca lived to experience, in all its bitterness, that "hope deferred that maketh the heart sick" and eventually breaks it. She died in less than two years after the flight of Frederic, a victim to a disorder that has no place in the catalogue of nosologists, and is not recognised as a malady; though it is as incurable and consigns almost as many victims to an untimely grave as consumption, with which it is very frequently confounded – I mean a broken heart. She was buried, according to her dying request, in the little arbor that Frederic had assisted her to erect and adorn, and where she had passed those most

delightful moments in human existence, the days of the first love, and first courtship, of two young, affectionate, and virtuous beings. Blessed moments! that occur but once in the dreary threescore years and ten, and fade away before we have time to enjoy them, and we only become conscious of their existence from the certainty that they are gone for ever.

Several years ago, and, if I am not much mistaken, just after the peace of 1815, an officer, in full Austrian uniform, came on board one of our frigates then lying in the harbor of Genoa. From the richness of his regimentals, and a cross and ribbon in his button-hole, it was evident that the stranger was of high ancestral and military rank.

It so happened that he came on board just at "grog time," (four o'clock) in the afternoon; and during the interesting moment that sailors are discussing their whiskey – the whole Holy Alliance, with aids and prime ministers and protocols, might come on board, and balance Europe, or upset the scales, just as unto them seemed good, expedient, or politic, without attracting any attention from these short-jacketed philosophers; unless indeed some straggler from the upper deck might come below, and casually inform his messmates, that "there was a whole raft of soger officers on the quarter-deck;" for be it known to all concerned, that the word number is seldom or never used by nautical philologists to designate things numerable, it is always "*a raft* of women," "*a raft* of marines," &c. I could easily go on to show that the word "raft" is a good phrase, and

peculiarly applicable to women and marines; but I must resist the temptation of convincing the public, that sailors are as deeply versed in the mysteries of their mother-tongue, as many of those who stay ashore all their life-times, and make dictionaries.

The day after the arrival of this military stranger, it was ascertained by the crew, that there was a supernumerary on board by the name of Williams; for it is as impossible for the commander and officers of a man-of-war to keep a secret in the cabin, as it is for twelve "good men and true," locked up in a jury-room. The new-comer seemed to have free access to the cabin, and was treated with much respect by the officers, but it was soon observed, by the seamen, that he never went on shore. In the course of a few months, he was put on board a homeward-bound ship: and when the crew of the frigate returned to America, they saw him again in New York, abandoned to intemperance.

When on a cruise in the Pacific, the crew of one of the light vessels of the squadron were transferred to the frigate that I was on board of; their time of service having expired. Among them was Williams; and from his shipmates I learned the above particulars. In person, he was about five feet eight or nine inches high, and extremely well made. With the rest of the schooner's people, he had been on shore on liberty, where he had been continually intoxicated; his face was in consequence bloated, and his eyes bloodshot and swollen.

I further understood, that he would get drunk whenever he had an opportunity, and when intoxicated he was completely

insane. He was also subject to fits of temporary derangement, independent of the insanity produced by excessive drinking, when he was both furious and dangerous; and it was always necessary, on such occasions, to confine him in irons. He was also represented as being extremely reserved, and refusing to answer any questions respecting himself, whether addressed to him by officers or seamen; that he spoke with fluency all European languages, on which account, he was extremely useful as an interpreter, both on the coast of Peru and Chili, and on that of Brazil; that he was a first rate swordsman, either with the small-sword or sabre, and a dead shot with pistol or musket.

During his short stay on board the frigate, he had one of his temporary fits of insanity, probably induced by excessive intemperance, if intemperance admits of superlatives, while on shore. He suddenly started up from a gloomy, stupid reverie, and ran about the decks like a wild beast, striking and knocking down, every one he met; then all at once plunging down the main-hatchway, he attempted to get possession of one of the boarding cutlasses, but fortunately they were well secured in the racks over the guns, to prevent them from falling down with the motion of the ship. Before he could make a second and more regular attempt, he was secured, put in irons, and placed under charge of a sentry. Had he succeeded in arming himself, he would have made bloody work on the quarter-deck, towards which it seemed evident he was steering his course; the uniforms of the officers, and marine guard, probably calling up

to his diseased imagination, and memory, scenes of by-gone days connected with or the remote cause of his present insanity. The officers seemed to be so far acquainted with his history, as to feel compassion for his most wretched situation; for, as he manifested no symptoms of derangement the next morning, except his usual deep melancholy, he was discharged from confinement, to the great astonishment of the ship's company; for though the discipline on board was as mild as it could be consistent with the preservation of good order, and perfectly free from that tyranny that but too many of our navy officers think indispensable, they certainly were not accustomed to seeing such quiet jail deliveries.

Williams afterwards re-entered on board the same vessel that he came from, and I lost sight of him of course, as our frigate was on the point of quitting the station to return home. He has, in all probability, long ere this, reached the grave towards which he seemed to be hurrying, with all the speed of intemperance and insanity combined.

MORTON

CHAPTER I

Bel and the Dragon's chaplains were
More moderate than these by far:
For they, poor knaves, were glad to cheat,
To get their wives and children meat;
But these will not be fobb'd off so,
They must have wealth and power too;
Or else with blood and desolation
They'll tear it out o' th' heart o' th' nation. —

Hudibras.

Notwithstanding the success of the many daring and lawless adventurers who visited the Pacific Ocean, or "Great South Sea," as it is called in the maps and travels of the period, and who reaped many a golden harvest there, about the time of the first James and Charles of England, the coasts washed by its waves were but seldom visited, and its waters seldom ploughed by any other keels than those of discovery ships for many years. Chili, Peru, Mexico, and California, after having been definitively ceded to the Spanish crown, constituted an El Dorado, whose gates could only be opened by a formal declaration of war.

Spain was generally considered by the other European powers to have a double right to South America, namely, that of discovery and conquest; and after an ineffectual struggle to wrest the golden prize from the grasp of its legitimate possessor, England, and the rest of the "high contracting powers," acquiesced in her possessing it, the more readily because they wished the same kind of title should be acknowledged in their own case. Accordingly discovery and conquest have, to this day, been considered as good and lawful titles, and a sort of deed of conveyance, on the part of the natives, to their discoverers and conquerors of all and sundry their lands and landed estates, together with their goods and chattels, when of any value.

His Most Catholic Majesty, then, finding his claim to the New World fully established, set about civilizing his new conquest in good earnest, and sending out swarms of priests, backed of course by the military portion of the secular arm, with glory to God on their lips, and hatred to his creatures in their hearts, with the sword in one hand and the crucifix in the other, soon convinced the unhappy natives of their damnable heresies. Their simple religion was destroyed, millions perished by the sword or the tender mercies of the Holy Inquisition, and as many more in the mines; and civilization and religion kissed each other, and rested from their labors of love.

This was the most received method of converting whole nations at once, then in vogue – we Protestants of the present day are far more humane; we only distribute among the newly

discovered nations of the earth, rum and Calvinism, gunpowder and the venereal disease, and with these powerful agents our missionaries and merchants, have succeeded in causing Dagon to bow down before them – over all the civilized world. New Holland seems to be the only uncivilized part of this watery ball, but New Holland holds out no temptations to the missionary; the inhabitants are a little too cannibally given, and martyrdom is altogether obsolete; besides, it is doubted by our soundest theologians whether Christianity was ever intended for a people so brutal and debased.

Spain, at the time I refer to, was renowned in arts and in arms; her commerce extended from the East to the West Indies, and she was for a time one of the most powerful of the kingdoms of Europe. Her priests, finding the New World a land overflowing, not exactly with milk and honey, but with what in all ages and in all countries is considered infinitely better, gold and silver, and abounding in every thing that could pamper the pride and gratify the sense, founded churches and monasteries, while her viceroys built cities and forts, and South America became the richest jewel in the diadem of His Catholic Majesty. To secure this jewel entirely to himself seems to have been his chief anxiety, and accordingly all foreigners were rigidly excluded from its sea-ports, and although the "Assiento," or contract for supplying the colonies with African slaves, was enjoyed successively by the English and French, both of whom successively abused it by smuggling immense quantities of their respective manufactures

into those colonies, the duty of supplying them with European merchandise was carried on finally solely by means of register ships, as they were called, Cadiz being the only European port where they were permitted to load and discharge.

The whaling ships were only permitted to procure supplies, or "recruit," as our unctuous brethren of Nantucket call it, at certain fixed and well-fortified ports. Still even these managed to carry on quite a respectable business in the smuggling way, especially with the ports of Mexico and California.

But a new flea was about getting into Don Diego's ear – the peace of 1783, while it added an infant giant to the catalogue of earthly "principalities and powers," also liberated from the fetters of commercial, as well as political restraints, a people active, restless, daring, prying, and enterprising to the last degree; a people whose skill in navigation and swift-sailing vessels rendered them absolutely intangible to an enemy that took occasion to chase them, while their courage, when they thought proper to "stand to it," as dame Quickly says, made them dangerous antagonists. This the reader probably "guesses" must be brother Jonathan, and he guesses about right. The same spirit of restless curiosity that prompts a cat, when she sets up her Ebenezer in a new house, to examine every portion of it, from cellar to garret, seemed to have possessed our grandpas more strongly than it does us of the present age.

This national character of ours is owing doubtless to our having been placed by the hand of Heaven in an immense

unexplored region, and was no doubt much increased by the spirit-stirring scenes of the revolutionary war, which beheld our "old continentals" one day ferreting out the long-tailed Hessians from the woods of Saratoga, and another "doing battle right manfullie" on the plains of South Carolina.

While they of the land service were pushing their advanced posts to the foot of the Rocky Mountains, our seamen were carrying our striped bunting into every portion of the navigable world. Such were the people whose arrival in the Pacific the Spanish commandantes and viceroys awaited with no small fear and trembling. They knew vaguely that we had just come off victorious from a long, fierce, and bloody struggle with powerful England, and while they consigned us pell-mell to the devil, as "malditos Americanos," they doubted whether we had the additional claim to go there upon the strength of being heretics. The captains of the guarda-costas redoubled their vigilance, and sailed in chase of not a few albatrosses and whale-spouts, such was the zeal that animated them.

I should have described these redoubtable crafts, the guarda-costas, before – they were armed vessels of different classes, varying from light frigates down to mere gunboats, and were distributed along the coasts to protect trade, and prevent smuggling.

When however these formidable strangers did arrive, the readiness with which they conformed to the numerous, and in most cases vexatious, port regulations, their quiet behavior

on shore, and the many novelties and luxuries that they freely distributed to the port officers, completely blinded them to the instinctive disposition to trade that characterizes my beloved countrymen, especially the New Englanders, who were the first to carry our flag into the Pacific, as they were also the first to display it in Europe.

I have made these long-winded and apparently uncalled-for remarks partly to show my learning, but chiefly in conformity with the fashion of the day, that requires that every story, long or short, should be ushered in by at least one chapter of prefatory remarks. I do not intend to be so unreasonable; but before this my first chapter is finished, shall give my readers an idea of my purposed principal scene of operations.

If then, the reader will turn to the proper map, he will find in about the latitude of twenty-one north, Cape Corrientes; and not far from this three islands, called Las Tres Marias; the Three Marys, that is, so named after the three Marys of the New Testament.

Geographers, when they make maps, seem to start with the notion that there must be a certain number of islands, &c. inserted in each map; and when they have located the larger and more important ones within fifteen or twenty degrees of latitude and longitude of their proper places, which is as near as they commonly come to the truth, they proceed to distribute the remainder according to their own taste. In compliance with this fashion of theirs, they have laid down upon all modern

maps, especially those that are called the best, and in nearly the latitude that I have above mentioned, and longitude that I have not, namely, about one hundred and fifteen west from Greenwich Observatory, a little island which they call Revalliggedos. I have passed twice over the spot where this little island with the big name "stays put," in all maps by them, and have conversed with many whalemens and others, who, taken collectively, have sailed over every square inch of salt water in that place, and none of them have seen it. So too, they have studded the ocean off Cape Horn so thickly with islands, that a landsman wonders how a ship of any size can manage to squeeze through into the Pacific. I have passed that cape three times, and have been working to windward off them some weeks, but although we always kept a bright look-out for ice islands and strange vessels, we never, to use a vulgar expression, saw "hide or hair" of these supererogatory islands.

But to return; in a direction nearly east from the Three Marys, the reader will find, on most maps, a small river, called by the Spaniards, in their usual style of bombast, El Rio Grande, or the Great River; though the identical legs that I now stand upon have waded across it at low water, and, except cutting my foot with an oyster-shell, there was nothing very remarkable in the exploit. At the mouth of this mighty stream is an island on which stands the town of St. Blas.

The Spaniards, as it is well known, when they discovered America, christened every cape, bay, mountain, river, island, rock, or shoal after some saint or other, but the learned are

somewhat puzzled to know who this St. Blas can be. In my poor opinion, the difficulty is easily enough got over – the word Blas is only a corruption of Blast, and accordingly we shall find that St. Blast, properly so called, is neither more nor less than our old friend Æolus, of the heathen mythology, smuggled into the calendar, who, being the god of blasts and puffs, might well be canonized under the name of St. Blast, without doing violence to the tender consciences of the good Catholics. In this way, according to Dean Swift, Jupiter became Jew Peter, and by a natural transition, *Saint* Peter. Whether he is right or not, one thing is certain, that sundry temples, of which the veritable Jupiter has been "seized in fee tail," I think lawyers call it, from time immemorial, have quietly become "St. Peter's churches," to the great edification of the Christian world, and incredible advancement of religion and piety.

The island, upon which St. Blas is perched, slopes off gradually to the eastward, but to the south and west descends in a sheer precipice of two or three hundred feet in height. The town was taken and retaken several times during the sanguinary war of the Mexican revolution. The last time it was in the hands of the royalists, they compelled all the male inhabitants, and, report says, not a few women and children besides, that they suspected of favoring the Patriot cause, to leap off this precipice. Soldiers were stationed at the foot of the cliff, to despatch those who reached the bottom with any signs of life. This piece of information I had from a widow who kept a shop in the *Plaza*,

and who also told me, "with weeping tears," that her husband was one of the number who took the fearful leap.

Rather on the north-west side, the hill is surmountable by a zig-zag path, up which a loaded mule can climb with some difficulty. On the west, or seaward, side, is a strip of flat land, of considerable width, on which formerly stood the royal arsenal, rope-walks, and warehouses, the ruins of which were standing in 1822, when I visited the place. On the western extremity of this level land is a small village, called, as usual in such cases, the *Porte*, or landing place. The bay, which is a fine harbor, sweeps far to the eastward, when the land, trending away to the southward, with a slight inclination westerly, becomes lost in the distance. The more immediate, or inner, harbor, is formed by a point of land opposite the *Porte*, on the southern extremity of which is a battery, formerly of considerable dimensions, and strength, but since suffered to decay, and is much reduced in effectiveness. It was intended to command the harbor and anchorage; but with Spanish artillerymen, a mile offing, and reasonably good weather, a ship would be as safe from its fire, for three months at least, as though she was all the while in London Docks.

At the distance of two or three miles from the usual anchorage, and forming an excellent leading mark for the bay, is *Pedro Blanco*, or the *White Rock*, of two hundred feet height, perfectly precipitous and inaccessible, and resembling a huge tower, rising abruptly from the sea.

Taken altogether, the bay of St. Blas forms a very beautiful prospect, with the Andes in the back ground, which, with their
"Meteor standard to the winds unfurl'd,

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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