

Goldfrap John Henry

The Bungalow Boys Along the Yukon



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CHAPTER I

A MYSTERIOUS CRAFT

On a certain May afternoon, Tom Jessop, assigned to "cover" the Seattle waterfront for his paper, the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, had his curiosity aroused by a craft that lay at the Spring Street dock. The vessel was newly painted, trim and trig in appearance and was seemingly of about two thousand tons register. Amidships was a single yellow funnel. From the aftermost of the two masts fluttered a blue flag with a square of white in the center. The reporter knew that this was the "Blue Peter," flown in token that the steamer was about to sail.

But the steamer, which bore the name of *Northerner*, flew no house flag to indicate the line she belonged to, nor in the shipping news of the day did her name appear. The reporter scented a "story" at once. From some hangerson about the dock he found out that the strange craft had formerly been the *James K. Thompson*, of San Francisco, in the coastwise trade. She had been refitted and equipped at the Aetna Iron Works by her purchaser, a Mr. Chisholm Dacre. That was all that the longshoremen could tell him.

On the bridge was a stalwart form in a goldlaced cap indicating the rank of captain. By his side stood a well-built man of middle age with a crisp iron-gray beard neatly clipped and a sunburned face, from which two keen blue eyes twinkled quizzically as he gazed down at the figure of the reporter on the dock.

"Are you Mr. Dacre?" hailed the reporter, guessing that the bearded man was the *Northerner's* new owner.

"That is my name. What can I do for you?" was the rejoinder.

"My name is Jessop. Ship-news man for the *Post-Intelligencer*. Can I come on board?"

"I am afraid not, Mr. Jessop," rejoined Mr. Dacre, whom our readers know as the Bungalow Boys' uncle. "What do you want?"

"Why, your destination, the object of your voyage and so forth."

"That will have to remain my private property for the time being," was the reply in a kindly tone. "I appreciate your keenness in looking for news, but I cannot divulge what you would like to know just now."

"It's no time for visiting, anyhow," said the sailor-like man at Mr. Dacre's side, who Tom Jessop had guessed was the skipper of the mysterious craft, "we'll soon be getting under way."

The young reporter's face grew fiery red.

"What line are you?" he demanded. "What's the game, anyway?"

"I am not at liberty to answer questions."

"Private craft, eh? Tramp?"

There was almost a sneer in his tones as he spoke. He was trying to make the captain angry and by that means get him to talk. But the other remained quite unruffled.

"Not in trade at all."

"Pleasure trip, eh? Why can't I come aboard?"

"Against orders."

Just then, and before the young newsgatherer could vent his indignation further a cab came rattling up the dock and disgorged at the foot of the *Northerner's* gangplank three brightfaced, happy-looking lads. They were Tom and Jack Dacre and their inseparable chum, Sandy MacTavish, the

voluble Scotch youth whose "thatch" and freckles gave him his nickname. Jack was Tom's junior by two years, but he was almost as muscular and tall as his brother. Both lads were nephews of Mr. Dacre, who had given them their home in the Sawmill Valley of Maine where they had acquired the name of "Bungalow Boys," by which they were known to a large circle of friends.

Tom Jessop turned from the captain to the new arrivals.

"Where is this vessel bound?" he asked.

"She clears this afternoon for Alaska," responded Tom Dacre.

The reporter's eye flashed a look of triumph upward at the bridge.

"In the northern trade?" he asked.

"I didn't say that," was the quiet rejoinder.

Tom Jessop began to get mad in good earnest. He swept his eyes over the ship's decks. Amidships she carried an odd-looking pile of timber and metal.

"A small steamer in sections, eh?" he questioned with a knowing look.

"You're right as to that," spoke Tom.

"Going gold dredging?"

"I can't say."

"Training ship for kids, maybe?"

"Well, I know some folks who might take lessons in good manners without its hurting them a bit," flashed Jack angrily.

The reporter changed his tone to a more conciliatory one.

"You might help a fellow out," he said. "What are your names?"

"I guess we can tell you that much," said Tom. "I am Tom Dacre, this is my brother, Jack, and this is our friend, Mr. MacTavish."

The good-natured Sandy broke into a grin at this formal introduction. He was about to speak, but the reporter interrupted him.

"Dacre!" he exclaimed. "You're the kids that broke up that gang of Chinese smugglers on the Sound a while ago!"

"You're unco canny to guess it," said Sandy. "We're the boys."

At this instant another figure appeared on the bridge – a tall man with rough-looking clothes and a battered derby hat. It was the pilot. He addressed Mr. Dacre.

"The tide serves, sir. If you are all ready, we'll get under way."

"Come, boys," hailed Mr. Dacre from the bridge. "Time to get aboard."

The three lads hastily gathered up the few packages that they had been purchasing at the last moment. The cabman was paid and they bounded with elastic strides up the gangway. As they reached the end of it, the stern lines were cast off.

"Let go breast and bow lines," bawled the foghorn voice of the pilot.

The order was quickly executed. Jessop shouted something, but his voice was drowned in the three mournful blasts of her siren that were the *Northerner's* farewell to Seattle. But the instant the whistle ceased and the tug that was to tow the *Northerner* into the stream began to puff energetically, he found his voice again.

"S-a-y!" he shouted across the widening breach between the steamer and the dock.

"Hullo!" hailed back Tom, who, with his two companions, stood at the rail amidships watching the city they were leaving.

"Won't you tell me anything about this trip?"

"That's just it," hurled back Tom at the top of his voice, "we don't know ourselves!"

"Well, I'll be jiggered!" exclaimed Tom Jessop as he turned away from the dock and the moving vessel, which he now felt certain held a mystery within her gray steel sides.

CHAPTER II

NORTHWARD HO!

It was hardly surprising that the ship-news reporter had instantly recognized the Bungalow Boys when he heard their names. Their exploits in many quarters had received numerous columns of newspaper space, much to their amusement. The clever manner in which they had broken up forever the operations of the gang of counterfeiters in the Sawmill Valley, as related in the first volume of this series, "The Bungalow Boys," had brought them before the public. Further interesting "copy" had been made by their wonderful adventures in search of a sunken treasure galleon. Readers of this series were given full details of that adventurous voyage on the surface and below the ocean, in the second volume dealing with our young friends' experiences, which was called "The Bungalow Boys Marooned in the Tropics."

In the third volume we followed them throughout their venturesome doings in the northwest. "The Bungalow Boys in the Great Northwest" showed how pluck and self-reliance can win out even against such a combination as the boys found in the "Chinese runners." The fourth volume dealt with their voyage on the Great Lakes. The mysteries of Castle Rock Island, the ways of the wreckers who captured the lads, and the daring manner in which the boys escaped from the ruined lighthouse, all were set forth in the book in question, which bore the title, "The Bungalow Boys on the Great Lakes."

Now the Bungalow Boys found themselves setting forth on a voyage to the Northland on board a fine, staunch steamer. That adventures and possibly perils lay ahead of them they could not doubt; but just what the object of the voyage was, had not been revealed to them.

Tom had stuck to the strict truth when he told the reporter that he did not know anything about the voyage. His uncle had merely invited Jack and himself to take a "sea voyage." At the lad's solicitation, Sandy had been allowed to make one of the party. Of course, the boys would not have been taken from their studies to make this trip, but the headmaster of the academy that they all attended had been taken very ill a short time before and the school had been temporarily closed.

The pilot had been dropped and the *Northerner* was in free sea room, forging ahead through the great swells of the ocean. The steamer appeared oddly silent. There were no passengers rushing about, no bustle and confusion. The voyage had begun as unobtrusively as the departure from the dock. The small crew moved about under the direction of a mate, setting things to rights, coiling ropes and making everything snug. On the bridge were Captain Goodrich and Mr. Dacre. Presently a third person joined them – a man of massive build with crisply curling hair and a big beard. This was Colton Chillingworth, the rancher friend of Mr. Dacre, whose Washington ranch had formed the scene of some of the boys' most exciting adventures in the northwest.

"Where are we headed for?" asked Jack, as the three lads stood at the stern of the steamer watching the white wake that was rolling outward from the vessel's counter at a twelve-knot gait.

"Bang for the Straits of San Juan de Fuca. I heard the captain tell the pilot so when we dropped him," replied Tom.

On one side of the steamer were the picturesque, snow-capped Selkirks, on the other the Olympics, calm and majestic in the afternoon light. Along the shore were small settlements fringing the deep woods. Above all towered Mount Rainier, sharply chiseled against the sky. The pearly whiteness of its eternal snow-cap glistened in the sunlight like a field of diamonds.

Broken at intervals by cliffs of chalk, white or dark brown stone, immense forests of somber green fir and cedar stretched from the hills almost to the water's edge. Here and there a cascading stream like a silver thread could be seen dashing its troubled way down the steep mountainside. It was a beautiful, impressive sight, and the boys felt it so as they gazed. But uppermost in their minds

was the question of the object of the trip, of its destination. In this regard they were not to be left long in the dark.

"And after the Straits?"

The question came from the Scotch boy.

"Northward, I guess, to Alaska. That's positively all we know," came from Jack.

"Awell, we're entitled to a guess, I ken," hazarded Sandy. "Suppose we are going pole hunting?"

"What!"

"Looking for the north pole," responded the other stoutly, while Tom and Jack exploded with laughter.

"Nonsense," said Tom. "Uncle Chisholm has too much sound common sense to go off on a wild goose chase like that."

"Anyhow, the pole has been found," quoth Jack in tones of finality.

"You can be sure of one thing at least," put in Tom; "whatever we are after, the whole expedition has been carefully thought out. That steamer on the upper deck, for instance."

"She's all in numbered sections to be put together when we get ready," said Jack. "Doesn't that suggest something to you?"

"How do you mean?" questioned Tom in his turn.

"Just this. In my opinion, we are going to ascend some river."

"But what for?"

"Ah! that's just what we shan't know till they choose to tell us."

"Hoot, mon," exclaimed Sandy, "gie ower guessing! We'll ken all aboot it in gude time. In the meanwhile, we're three mighty lucky boys to have a chance to make such a trip."

"Them's my sentiments," coincided Tom heartily.

They looked seaward. The air had a sharp brisk tang in it, a veritable sea tonic that braced and invigorated. The waves were choppy and as the *Northerner* steamed onward through them, from time to time a glistening cloud of spray was hurled high above her sharp bow. From her funnel poured a column of wind-whipped black smoke, showing that coal was not being spared to drive her along at her best gait.

"Oh, but this is great!" exclaimed Jack, pulling off his cap and letting the wind blow through his tousled hair.

"One thing is certain, this is no idle cruise. There's an object in it," said Tom, "and I reckon that we boys are due to play a part in whatever enterprise is on hand."

"Well, I hope we make good, whatever it is," said Jack.

"Nae fear o' that," spoke up Sandy confidently.

The *Northerner* arose on a higher swell than usual, and then with a sidewise motion settled glidingly down into a watery hollow, rising the next instant on the crest of another roller. Her masts swept the sky in broad arcs. All at once Sandy released his hold on the rail and slid half across the deck before he brought up. His face had suddenly grown very pale. His freckles stood out on it in bright relief.

"What's the matter?" demanded Jack, noticing the woe-begone expression of his friend's face.

"Um?" inquired Sandy. "Matter? Naething's the matter, mon. O-h-h-h!"

"Seasick, eh? That's the last meal you ate ashore. I warned you against all that pie."

Sandy shuddered.

"Don't talk of pie," he groaned.

Just as Tom was about to suggest that Sandy go to his stateroom and lie down for a while, the second mate approached them.

"You young gentlemen are to go to the charthouse. Mr. Dacre says he has something to tell you."

The boys exchanged glances. Even Sandy forgot his woes in the interest aroused by this communication. The officer walked on aft while Tom exclaimed in a low tone:

"At last we'll find out where we are bound, and what for. Come on, Jack."

"How about me?" inquired Sandy.

"Thought you were seasick."

"I was," rejoined Sandy, "but, mon, I feel grond again. If Mr. Dacre is going to talk, I'm a weel boy the noo."

CHAPTER III

MR. DACRE EXPLAINS

Both Mr. Dacre and his companion, Colton Chillingworth, regarded the boys smilingly as the latter filed into the charthouse, wide-eyed with expectation at the news they were confident they were to hear.

"Well," began Mr. Dacre, "I suppose you young men are anxious to know a good deal more about this voyage than you have yet been told?"

"Anxious is no word for it," rejoined Tom. "Sandy has even forgotten seasickness so that he can hear what you have to tell us."

"It will not take long. Mr. Chillingworth, here, is my partner in the enterprise on which we are bound. We are going to Alaska in search of foxes."

Had Mr. Dacre said that they were going to the moon in search of green cheese, the boys could not have looked more astonished.

"Foxes!" exclaimed Tom. "Just common foxes?"

"By no means. The kind we are after are silver grays and blacks. Mr. Chillingworth and I have decided to start raising them on his ranch. When I tell you that a good skin of a silver fox is worth anywhere from twenty-five hundred dollars upward, you will see why we have spent so much in equipping this expedition and chartering this steamer. You will wonder why we did not embark on a regular passenger steamer. For many reasons. One was that we could not care properly for such valuable and timid animals on a regular craft. Another was that we do not want any details of our plans to leak out till the business is well established. Such creatures as silver foxes might well tempt unscrupulous persons to steal or kill them, so that on all considerations, it was deemed best to charter this craft, which we managed to get cheap, and to form our own expedition."

"What country are we going to hunt for the foxes in?" asked Tom, his eyes shining at the prospect before them. The other boys looked equally excited and delighted.

"Along the Yukon River," was the reply. "That is why that light draught portable steam launch is on deck."

"How long shall we be gone?" came the next question.

"That is impossible to say. If we do not 'get out,' as they call it, before the winter sets in, we may have to remain in the north till the spring."

The boys exchanged delighted glances.

"The prospect appears to please you," said Mr. Chillingworth.

"Please us!" cried Tom. "We're tickled to death."

"Well, I think you will have an instructive and, I hope, a pleasant time," said Mr. Dacre, "and at the same time be useful to us. Both Mr. Chillingworth and myself have been in the Yukon country before, and I can assure you that it won't be all picnicking. It is a wild country we are going to. North of fifty-three lies one of the few really wild territories left in the world. It's a great chance for you boys to show what you are made of."

Soon afterward the boys left the charthouse, half wild with excitement. The lure of the north was upon them. Each hastily went over in his mind all that he could recall about the land for which they were bound. There was magic in the name of Yukon, that mighty river of frozen lands, whose course winds through golden sands and solitudes undisturbed by the foot of man.

"Fellows, it seems too good to be true," exclaimed Jack warmly. "It's the chance of a lifetime."

"We'll have lots of good hunting. I'm glad we brought our rifles," said Jack.

"Maybe we'll find gold!" exclaimed Sandy.

"Well, at the market rate for silver and black foxes, a few of them would be as good as a gold mine," declared Tom.

"But who ever heard of raising foxes to sell?" objected Jack.

"Foxes wi' siller coats, too!" added Sandy incredulously.

"Don't try to be funny, Sandy," struck in Tom. "It appeals to me as a great business and one with lots of possibilities in it for the future."

"Well, it seems at any rate that we are going to get plenty of fun out of it," declared Jack. "I wouldn't much mind if we did get stuck up north for the winter. It would be a great experience."

The gong for dinner cut short their chat, and they hastened to their cabins to get ready for the meal. As the *Northerner* had once been a passenger steamer, she was well provided with cabins, and each boy had a well-equipped stateroom on the main deck. Their elders occupied cabins forward of midships, and on the opposite side of the superstructure the captain, his two mates and the engineers had their quarters.

They entered the dining saloon to find it a handsomely fitted white and gold affair, a relic of the passenger-carrying days of their ship. Electric lights gleamed down on the table and the boys, when joined by their elders, set to with sharp appetites on a meal excellently cooked and served by two Chinese stewards. As they ate, the object of the trip was, of course, the main topic of conversation, and Mr. Dacre gave them much valuable information concerning the country whither they were bound. As we shall accompany the boys in their own experiences "north of fifty-three," there is no need to set down here all that the enthusiastic man told his eager young listeners.

Absorbed in the wonders which were being described, the two Bungalow Boys and Sandy MacTavish sat late at the table, listening to accounts of the great river for which they were bound, of the flaming volcanoes of the Aleutian Archipelago, of the seal poachers, the midnight sun and the vast undeveloped riches of Uncle Sam's northerly possession. The thought that soon they would be up there themselves, participating in the marvelous life of which they had heard, sent them to bed in anything but restful moods. It was long before they slept, and then their dreams were of the most jumbled description, in which huge bears and other denizens of the wild figured, together with golden rivers and snow-capped mountains.

When they awakened and hastily dressed, it was to find the *Northerner* out of sight of land and rolling briskly along in a sea flecked with white-caps. Ahead of the ship flashed the wet backs of a school of porpoises, seemingly intent on a race with the *Northerner*. The boys watched them with interest, although they were no novelty to them, many such schools having been encountered during their cruise in the tropics. But there was, nevertheless, a fascination in watching the sportive creatures as they rolled and tumbled along, from time to time leaping right out of the water and showing their black, glistening bodies.

"This is the life for me," exclaimed Jack. "How is the seasickness, Sandy?"

The sandy-haired youth gave him a reproachful look.

"I dinna ken what you mean," he said. "I wonder how soon breakfast will be ready?"

"You're cured, all right," chuckled Tom. "But glorious as all this is, I can hardly wait till we get that steamer together and go chugging up the Yukon into the heart of Alaska."

"I guess we all subscribe to that," echoed Jack with enthusiasm. Just then the breakfast gong boomed out its summons.

"I'll beat you to the table!" shouted Jack. The challenge was accepted and off they all dashed, while the long silent decks of the converted *Northerner* rang with their shouts of merriment.

CHAPTER IV

SANDY FINDS A MASCOT

Northward, along the rugged, rock-bound Alaskan coast, the good ship *Northerner* plowed her way. The boys by this time had become quite used to life on board the staunch craft and every day found something new to rouse their interest and enthusiasm. Among the equipment left on the craft when she had been chartered by her present navigators was a wireless outfit.

Mr. MacKenzie, the second officer, could work this, and the boys whiled away some of their time in studying the use of the apparatus. As they all knew something of telegraphy they speedily became quite proficient, considering the short time they had to pick up a knowledge of the wireless operator's methods.

One bright noonday the vessel's course was changed and she nosed her way into the entrance of that great indentation of the coast known as Resurrection Bay. Her destination was the town of Seward, which lies at the head of the harbor. The boys were all excitement as they passed the rugged rocks at the bay's mouth and saw hundreds of sea lions crawling on them like huge slugs, or else plunging into the water after fish. As the *Northerner's* whistle gave a shrill blast, the seals set up an answering shout, barking and leaping from the rocks in hosts.

The purpose of the stop at Seward was to purchase some supplies which had been overlooked in the haste with which the departure from Seattle had been made. Some minor repairs to the machinery, too, were necessary, and it was decided to stop over two days. The boys found plenty to interest them. They wrote voluminous letters and sent them home, as well as post cards, which were readily obtained even in that out-of-the-way corner of the world.

The second morning of their stay, while Tom and Jack remained on board writing letters, Sandy elected to go ashore in one of the small boats. He returned just before dinner time. As he approached the ship, pulling laboriously at the oars, it was seen that some object was being towed astern.

"Hey! what's your souvenir?" hailed Tom, with a grin. "Looks like a log."

"We're not hard up for firewood," added Jack.

"Whist!" exclaimed the Scotch youth, with a knowing look. "Bide a wee and be more respectful."

He shipped his oars and turned his face up toward his two companions, who stood leaning over the rail good-naturedly chaffing him.

"If you've naething else to do, you may rig a block and tackle, the noo," said he.

"What for? To hoist that old saw-log on board?" disrespectfully inquired Tom.

"It's nae a saw-log," protested Sandy with spirit.

"Then what on earth is it?" demanded Jack.

"It's an idol."

"An idol!" echoed both boys in a breath.

"Aye, an idol, or rather a 'totem,' is what they call 'em up here. No home is complete without one."

Jack broke into a laugh.

"Why, you bonehead, there's nothing sacred about a totem. They're simply family records, that's all. Something like the crests that our newly rich keep librarians so busy digging up."

Sandy looked blank.

"And that's all they are?" he questioned doubtfully.

"That's all. The natives used to set them up outside their houses like door-plates to show who lived within. For instance, John Smith Aleut would be known by a seagull's head at the top of his

totem pole, while on the stalk of the thing would be carved some of his big stunts and those of his ancestors."

With a disgusted look, Sandy pulled out his knife. He bent over the tow-rope, ready to cut loose the bulky object bobbing about astern. But Tom checked him.

"What are you up to now?"

"Hoot, mon! I've been stung by an innocent native. The gloomeroon that sold me yon totem told me that it was a sacred idol. That's why I bought it. Whist! back she goes, and I paid five dollars of my good money for it!"

"Hold on a minute!" cried Tom checking him. "Maybe we have found a mascot after all."

"Yes," declared Jack, who had been leaning over the rail closely scanning the figure of the totem as it bobbed about alongside the *Northerner*, "it looks as if it were the figure of some old gent of these parts. Maybe the old fellow is the 'Good Genius of the White North.'"

"Anyhow, that's a good name for him," agreed Tom. "Come on, fellows, let's rig a block and tackle and get him on board."

The three boys set about preparing to hoist the "Genius of the White North" on board. It was a crudely carved figure about seven feet in height. A fierce-looking face with big chunks of wood inserted for teeth and a large, round stomach were the chief characteristics of the totem, which was about two feet wide and tapered toward the grotesquely small feet. Carved on the body was what appeared to be meant for a whale or a seal hunt. The figure had once been brightly daubed with red, yellow, black and white, but these colors were faded now.

"Well, he was a beauty, whoever he was," declared Tom, when the boys had hoisted the dripping figure on deck.

"Looks like an 'ad' for a dentist, with those teeth of his," laughed Jack.

"That is meant for a good-natured grin," maintained Sandy, confronting his purchase critically.

"Appears more as if he was getting ready to tackle a whale steak or something of that kind," declared Tom.

"I guess it will bring good luck," went on Sandy, poking his prize in the ribs. "The native told me that if you kept it handy, say in your pocket, you'd have good luck all the time. Never go hungry or get sick."

"That alone is worth the price of admission," chuckled Jack skeptically. "How does it work?"

"You just stick it up in front of your house, and as long as it is planted there and kept painted it'll stay on the job," was Sandy's glowing reply.

"That's simple," said Tom, "about as cheap a way of maintaining a mascot as you could find."

At this point Mr. Dacre, who had been busy below consulting with the engineering force, came on deck. A smile overspread his face as he saw the totem.

"Well, well. You young men are certainly acquiring the rudiments of a museum," he said amusedly. "Who is the owner of the gentleman with the 'bowsprit' teeth?"

Sandy proudly proclaimed his ownership and the manner in which he had come by it. Mr. Dacre declared that he had not been unduly cheated except in the declaration of the native that the totem possessed magic powers.

"The use of the totem pole may fitly be termed 'Alaskan heraldry,'" said he. "It acts as the shield of the various tribes or families. Among the totems of the Haidas, to mention only one tribe, the insignias of the eagle, whale, crow, wolf and bear are found. To anyone who can decipher it, the totem pole in front of a house forms a history of the family within.

"The figure at the top may sometimes be a rude portrait, as in the case of Sandy's old gentleman, or it may be any symbol similar to those I have mentioned. The carvings on the pole usually represent traditional events connected with the history of the tribe.

"According to ethnologists, the totem was first adopted to distinguish the four social clans into which the Alaskan Indians were formerly divided, namely, the Kishpootwadda, the Lacheboo, the

Canadda and the Lackshkeak. The Kishpootwadda symbolically were represented by the fish-back whale on the sea, the grizzly bear on land, the grouse in the air and the sun and stars in the heavens.

"The Canadda tribes adopted the frog, raven, starfish and bull's-head. The wolf, heron and grizzly proclaimed the Lacheboo, and the Lackshkeaks selected the eagle, beaver and halibut. Members of a clan, though living hundreds of miles apart, are recognized as blood relations by means of their totems.

"According to Indian legends, in the dim past they lived in a beautiful land where there was unlimited game and fish. The creatures on the totem poles were the divinities of this mystic land, just as the ibis and the cat are held sacred in Egyptian lore.

"Families having the same crest may not intermarry. A Frog may not marry a Frog, or an Eagle an Eagle. A young Lochinvar of the Frog family may woo and win, – sometimes with a club, – a maiden of the Whale family. But it would be considered very bad form for a Wolf and an Eagle to marry, as both are creatures of prey.

"Like most other races, the Alaskan Indians have a 'bogyman' story with which to frighten naughty children. In a northern village there is a totem pole surmounted by the whitened face of a Caucasian, flanked on each side by the figure of a child wearing a tall hat. The story is that long, long ago a chief's wife left a temporary summer camp. Taking her two children with her she crossed a channel in a bidarka or native canoe, and landed on an island where she gathered spruce boughs for holding salmon eggs.

"Before she entered the woods, she drew the canoe up on the beach and told the children to stay right by it. When she came back the children had vanished. She called and called, but in vain. From the woods came back the mocking voices of crows and that was all. In despair she returned to the camp and told her story. The Shaman, or medicine man of the tribe, brewed potions and wrought spells and found out that a white man had stolen the children and that they had been taken to America to wear tall hats and forget their tribe. The white man is supposed still to haunt the woods and waters looking for disobedient children, and if the story is doubted, there is the totem pole to show the recorded history of the fate of the two youngsters in the dim past. And that, young gentlemen, will conclude what I'm afraid has been a tedious lecture on totem poles."

But the interested faces of the boys showed that they had appreciated Mr. Dacre's little talk, and the figure of the old gentleman with the prominent teeth took on a new interest in their eyes.

"That Indian told me that if you poured oil on this totem when you were going fishing, your boat would go where you wanted to go and make no trouble for you," said Sandy.

"Well, he certainly gave you your five dollars' worth," smiled Mr. Dacre.

At five o'clock that night the *Northerner's* anchor rumbled home. She was off once more. In the extreme bow of the vessel, erect and boldly facing the north, was Sandy's totem. Its head glistened with oil. Although rather dubious as to whether it was the right brand, the boys had used kerosene for the baptism. But so far as the totem displayed his feelings, he had no preference in the matter!

CHAPTER V

A MID-OCEAN HUNTING TRIP

"Well," remarked Jack after breakfast the next day, "old 'Frozen Face' seems to be on the job all right."

"Yes, but, mon, we should have baptized him wi' seal oil! I've just remembered that that was what the native told me to use."

"Seal oil, eh?" laughed Tom. "Well, there's a scarcity of that article on board just now, so I'm afraid that Mister Totem will just have to job along without any."

"Huh!" grunted Sandy, "then dinna depend on yon old gent to treat us right. I'll bet he's got it in for us richt noo."

The next day it appeared, indeed, as if Sandy's dire predictions were about to be verified. The *Northerner* ran into a storm that buffeted her about sadly. Her speed had to be cut down till she made scarcely any headway. It was a difficult matter to get about on deck owing to the great seas that washed over the laboring vessel. By orders of Mr. Dacre the lads were kept below much to their disgust.

The gale finally blew itself out and the boys found that the old totem had remained at his post through it all, although they had more than half expected to find him washed overboard. But their faith in him as a mascot was sadly shaken.

From time to time, as they nosed northward, the ship encountered floating icebergs. None of them were so large as to cause alarm, however, and for the most part they were low and islandlike in appearance.

The boys were idly watching one of these as the ship approached it, when Tom made out several black objects on the floe. What these specks were did not become apparent till some time later when Jack proclaimed their nature.

"Seals!" cried he. "Don't I wish we had a harpoon! We'd have a seal hunt!"

Tom smiled and drew from his pocket his automatic revolver which he had been cleaning.

"I guess this is as good as any harpoon that ever harpooned," he said, tapping its heavy stock.

"I wonder if we could get permission to go after them?" pondered Jack. "I'm sick of being penned up on board here."

"I'll be the lad to go and ask," declared Sandy boldly. "If we can kill a seal it'll be a chance to baptize old 'Frozen Face' in the richt style. I'll point oot to Mr. Dacre that all the hurlyburly the other day came from shampooing him with kerosene instead of seal oil."

"I hope he puts the seal of approval on your plan," declared Jack.

"Don't repeat that offense, or in case we do get leave to go, you'll be left behind," said Tom.

"I'll seal you later," cried Sandy, dashing off before a justly merited punishment could be visited upon him.

He was back in a few minutes.

"It's a' richt, fellows!" he exclaimed. "We're to take the small boat and not delay longer than we have to. They won't give us more than half an hour."

"Then we'll have to hustle. We'll be up to that floe before long," cried Jack.

The boys darted to their cabins to get ready for the hunt. Their faces glowed with pleasure at this unexpected break in the monotony of the voyage. When they returned on deck, they found Mr. Dacre awaiting them and the boat lowered alongside with the accommodation ladder dangling above it.

"Boys," he exclaimed with some excitement, "we've been looking at that floe through the glasses. They're not seals that have taken passage on it, but walruses, a herd of them."

"Good!" cried Tom. "We'll get a fine lot of tusks to send home."

"Steady on, steady on," warned his uncle, "walrus hunting is a very different matter from chasing seals. An old bull makes a formidable enemy."

"Are you coming along?" asked Tom, who saw that his uncle had his rifle.

"Yes, I wouldn't care to let you lads go on such an expedition alone. Seals, as I said, are too tame to afford real sport. Walrus hunting is another thing altogether."

While the steamer lay by, the adventurous little party clambered down into the boat. From the bridge, Mr. Chillingworth, who had elected to remain on board, waved a farewell to them and shouted his wishes for their good luck.

Tom and Jack took the oars and rowed with strong, swift strokes toward the drifting berg. As they neared it, it was seen that its sides were higher than they had looked from the steamer's decks. It was no easy task to make a landing. Finally, however, Mr. Dacre scaled a four-foot shelf and then pulled Tom up after him. Jack followed, and Sandy, who had not much fancied a closer view of the big-tusked, formidable-looking walruses, was not sorry to be told to stay behind and look after the boat, which there was no means of mooring to the smooth, slippery floe.

When the hunters gained the top of the berg, they saw that had they rowed around to the other side, a landing might have been effected much more easily. A depression ran like a small valley down to the water's edge, making an almost perfect landing place on the ice floe. Jack was ordered back to tell Sandy to row the boat around the floe to this point and await the hunters there.

In the meantime, Mr. Dacre and Tom had crept cautiously forward, crouching behind every projection that afforded cover, for at the approach of the boat the big walruses had flopped clumsily to the other side of the drifting berg.

As Jack made his way back from his errand to Sandy, he saw Mr. Dacre suddenly crouch low, and Tom, who was at his side, did the same. The boy suspected that the game had been sighted and was within range. He made his way cautiously to the hunters' sides, and was rewarded with the sight of about a dozen huge black masses lying along the outer edge of a ridge of ice that ran into the "valley" before mentioned.

Mr. Dacre put a warning hand on Jack's arm to prevent his making any outcry. He pointed to the highest point of the ice valley. There, with his great, clumsy head erect, his hairy nostrils distended and his long tusks gleaming white against his fat, shiny body, was a huge bull walrus. The sentinel, perhaps the leader of the herd of formidable-looking creatures.

"We're on his wind," whispered Mr. Dacre, "we must creep along this ridge. Follow me and make no noise. He's scented us, but he hasn't seen us yet."

With nerves athrill the two boys followed their elder, wriggling cautiously over the ice.

Suddenly Mr. Dacre stiffened. His rifle was jerked to his shoulder. Taking careful sight, the hunter's weapon rang out echoing above the ice floe. Tom and Jack saw the great bull shake his head, roar angrily and emit a hoarse, shrill bellow of pain and rage. He had been shot, but he stood his ground. All about him the herd gathered.

"You hit him!" shouted Tom, half wild with excitement. He was about to run forward exultingly, but his uncle jerked him backward.

"*You stay right here,*" he said as he pulled the boy down beside him.

CHAPTER VI

A LIBATION TO THE TOTEM

Mr. Dacre rose to his feet and began scrambling forward over the rough ice. Slipping and bumping, he pushed toward the stricken bull, with the two boys close behind him.

"He looks ready for a fight," whispered Tom.

"He sure does. Wow! Look at those tusks! I'd hate to have them bite into me," rejoined his brother.

"Halt!" cried out Mr. Dacre suddenly.

Before them was the roaring bull. Behind him were grouped his companions. They appeared to be unsettled whether to fly or give battle. Apparently they were waiting to see what action their leader would take.

The boys came to a standstill. As they did so, Mr. Dacre raised his rifle for a second shot. But as he was about to shoot something jammed in the repeating mechanism of his weapon. At the same time, with a roar of rage, the wounded bull threw himself forward on his awkward flippers.

"They're going to attack us!" called Tom. "Why don't you fire?"

"I can't. Something's gone wrong with the magazine of my rifle!" explained his uncle. "You boys run for the boat. These fellows are ugly customers when they get roused."

But Tom's automatic revolver was out of his pocket in a jiffy. He leveled it and then pulled the trigger. There was a spiteful crack as the weapon began shooting lead. The big walrus sank to the surface of the floe with an earpiercing squeal, but wounded as he was, he turned and managed to propel himself along over the ice on his clumsy flippers.

"After him. He's the prize of the herd!" cried Mr. Dacre.

As their leader had turned tail, the others had swung round. Now their great bulks were in full retreat across the ice. The boys ran forward while Mr. Dacre struggled to get his rifle into working order once more.

Tom swiftly reloaded and threw up his automatic. But as he ran his eye along the barrel he dropped the weapon with a gasp of alarm.

At the landing place to which he had been directed was Sandy, standing erect in the boat. Toward him, down the valley leading to the break in the ice, wallowed the retreating walrus herd. The boy was directly in their path.

"Look out! Look out!" screamed Tom, but Sandy, if he heard him, paid no attention.

Tom saw the Scotch lad pick up an oar and stand brandishing it as the herd, in full retreat and snorting alarmedly, bore down upon him. Behind them lumbered the great creature that carried the bullets of Mr. Dacre and Tom in his gigantic carcass.

Bloodstains showed that the monster had been severely wounded, but Tom did not dare risk another shot at it. Right in line of fire with it was Sandy's upstanding form.

"Gracious, they'll charge right down on him and maybe stave the boat!" cried Tom, almost sick with apprehension.

But Sandy appeared quite unaware of his danger. With uplifted oar he awaited the oncoming of the vanguard of the retreating herd. But it now appeared that they did not intend to attack the boat.

With noisy splashes they flopped into the water all about it, while Sandy, in a frenzy of excitement, waved his extemporized weapon and yelled at the top of his voice.

"Let 'em all come! Hooray!" he shouted, and whacked one of the animals between the eyes as it plunged below.

He actually appeared delighted at the novel combat.

"Whoop! Overboard with ye!" he shouted shrilly, "get along now"; and down would come the oar with a resounding thwack!

Mr. Dacre and Jack came running up. The former had got his rifle under control again.

"The boy's gone crazy!" he cried. "If he doesn't look out, one of those creatures will turn on him and then there'll be trouble."

"Look! Look!" broke in Jack suddenly.

The wounded bull had reached the water's edge. He raised his head and snorted as he glared with angry eyes at the upstanding boy. Then, with a snort, he lunged downward into the water out of sight.

"It's gone! The prize one's gone!" shouted Jack.

"What a shame," echoed Tom, and then the next instant, "No, see there! He's coming up again."

Sure enough, the next moment a bulky, hideous head appeared above the water close to the boat. The animal was gnashing his teeth as if determined to wreak vengeance on one at least of the party that had attacked him and his companions.

"Hoots!" yelled Sandy. "Take that, you old oomeroon!"

He brought down his oar on the walrus, but the creature caught the blade in his tusks and split it with a rending sound as if it had been merely matchwood.

"Look out for him!" shouted Mr. Dacre as, having accomplished this destruction, the monster dived once again. "He hasn't gone yet. Look behind you!"

But although Sandy turned quickly, he was not swift enough. The great sea monster had only dived a few feet. Now he came up like a battering ram. He drove his big, fleshy nose right against the boat's side. Had the craft not been of the stoutest construction, it must have been stove in.

As it was, caught unawares, the shock threw Sandy from his feet. He made an ineffectual effort to save himself, but the next instant, while his friends set up a shout of dismay, he toppled overboard into the cold water which was now alive with bobbing black heads.

Directly they had recovered from their first shock at the accident, the boys, followed by Mr. Dacre, set off faster than ever over the rough ice. As they ran they shouted encouragement to their chum. Sandy's head could be seen in the water. He was striking out for the side of the boat. But behind him came the blunt head of the big walrus. The others appeared to be taking no notice, leaving the task of demolishing the boat and Sandy to the wounded animal.

"Good boy, Sandy! Strike out! You'll make it!" roared Tom, all a-quiver with apprehension.

"Swim for your life, my boy!" shouted Mr. Dacre. "Make the boat and you'll be all right. I'll attend to the walrus."

Sandy was a good swimmer and he struck out valiantly. But the monster head, with its huge gleaming tusks, was terribly close behind him as he made his way through the water.

Mr. Dacre raised his rifle. He was going to try a desperate shot. The head of the walrus, huge though it was, was moving too swiftly to offer a good target, and yet it was the only chance to save Sandy. Steadying his aim with an effort, Mr. Dacre drew a careful bead on the creature, aiming for a spot between the eyes.

Between his sights appeared the oily head, the bristling whiskers and the fierce tusks of the creature. He pulled the trigger. In the churn of the water and the wave of spray that succeeded the sharp report, it could be seen that the wounded walrus had been struck again and had sunk from sight. But his tenacity of life had been such that they were still by no means sure that he was dead.

"Get into the boat! The boat!" called Mr. Dacre as he saw the blood-stained swirl of waters where the walrus had last been seen.

Sandy was clinging to the bulwark of the craft, and after some difficulty climbed on board. Just as he reached safety, there came a shout from his friends.

"Behind you! Behind you!" shrieked Tom.

Sandy looked. Coming toward the boat was once more a swirl of water. The old bull was rushing down on the boat, rearing his head aloft. His ugly creased neck tilted back. His great tusks impended above the boat's side ready to crush on it as a terrier seizes on a rat. But before the ponderous jaws could close, "Spit!" came from Tom's automatic, and dazed and finally wounded unto death, the huge bull slipped back harmlessly into the water.

As the craft careened in the swell of the sinking body, Sandy almost went overboard for a second time. But he managed to save himself just as the carcass came bobbing up alongside. He seized the boat hook, jabbing it down into the great body, and gave a yell of triumph.

"I got him," he yelled, as the others came running and stumbling toward him. "Come on, and get your dead walrus!"

A cheer answered him. Not long after, with the shivering Sandy wrapped in what dry clothing they could spare, the boat, with its prize in tow, was sculled back to the ship where, as you may imagine, all hands had a thrilling tale to tell.

Sandy was made to gulp down boiling coffee and was hustled into a change of garments, while the others examined the body of the monster in whose slaying it might be said that they all had had a more or less active share. Tom felt not a little proud of his part as they gazed at the dead bull and admired his huge proportions. Soon Sandy joined them.

"Aweel, I'm thinking that we'll have a christening the noo," said he.

While the sailors were skinning the walrus and cutting out the four foot tusks, Sandy snatched up some strips of blubber and vanished. In a quarter of an hour or so he appeared with a cooking pan in his hands. Its contents was steaming and emitted a rank and fishy odor.

"What in the world have you got there?" Tom wanted to know.

"Give you three guesses," rejoined Sandy.

"It smells like sixty," observed Jack.

"Yes; keep to leeward of us, my lad," put in the captain.

"Well, what is it?" asked Mr. Dacre.

"Soup, – walrus soup," guessed Jack.

"If it is, I don't want any of it," declared Tom, sniffing the fishy odor.

"Don't worry, *you* won't get any," chortled Sandy.

"What are you going to do with it?" asked Jack.

"As I observed some time ago, we'll have a christening the noo," was the rejoinder.

"A christening!"

"Aye! That native said that old 'Frozen Face' needed a shampoo wi' seal oil, but I'm thinking that walrus oil will be just as good or better."

A shout broke from the boys.

"Good for you, Sandy," cried Tom. "Come on, we'll give the old boy a bath in it. He surely looked out well for you to-day."

While their elders looked on amusedly, the lads doused the long suffering totem with the ill-smelling oil and danced around the aged figure with mock solemnity, intoning what was meant to be a mystic chant:

"Oh, totem in our hours of ease,
Uncertain, coy and hard to please;
Now you have had your walrus bath,
Be nice and kind, and smile and laugh;
And kindly watch our destiny,
Northward, toward the Arctic Sea."

CHAPTER VII

AN ADVENTURE OF JACK'S

"What's that yonder, uncle?" asked Tom.

It was the morning after the adventure with the walrus and the *Northerner* was steaming steadily on toward Valdez, her next port of call on her voyage north. At that place she would take on coal for the final stage of her journey to St. Michaels near the mouth of the Yukon, where the party would be left after the small steamer had been put together.

Tom was a great boy to lean against the rail scanning the sea in search of something that might prove exciting. He had been gazing steadily against the far horizon for some minutes. Mr. Dacre hastened to his cabin and came back with a pair of binoculars.

He raised them and looked fixedly in the direction that Tom had indicated.

"It's a whale," he declared, "or rather a whole school of them, if I'm not mistaken. They are dead ahead of us. If we keep on this course, we shall run almost squarely into them."

He hastened off to inform the captain and Mr. Chillingworth while Tom set out to find his chums. He found them in the wireless room practicing on the key. At his news they speedily jumped up and joined him in the bow.

Within an hour they came into plain sight of what appeared at first to be so many giant logs rolling about in the sea. All at once, among the "logs," which of course were the whales, appeared splashes of white water. The leviathans swam swiftly here and there as though in fear.

"What's the matter with them?" wondered Tom.

"Maybe it's the ship's coming that has scared them," suggested Jack.

"It's the totem at the bow, mon," declared the Scotch boy solemnly.

The captain leaned over the bridge rail and shouted to them.

"There's a school of killers in among them."

"Killers?"

"Yes, the killer whales. They are the enemies of the other kind and just naturally take after them when they meet. Watch close now!"

The boys needed no second bidding. Strangely fascinated by the turbulent scene below, they leaned far out to watch the thrashing water. It was a strange combat of the sea. The monster fish appeared, in their panic at the advent among them of the killers, not to notice the oncoming steamer.

"Look close now and you'll see tall, upright fins moving about among 'em," sung out the captain.

"I see them!" cried Tom. "Are those the killers?"

"That's what. Sea tigers, they ought to call 'em. They're as bad as sharks," was the reply.

Mr. Dacre joined the boys. One of the biggest of the whales appeared to be an especial target for the "killers." They pursued it relentlessly in a body.

"Wow!" cried Tom suddenly, "look at that!" The big whale had leaped clear out of the water, breached, as the whalers call it. Its body shone in the sunlight like a burnished surface. They saw its whole enormous bulk as if it had been a leaping trout.

"He's as big as a house!" cried Jack.

"I've seen houses that were smaller!" laughed Mr. Dacre; "your bungalow, for example."

Down came the whale again with a splash that sent the spray flying as high as the *Northerner's* mast tops.

"How do they fight the whales?" Tom wanted to know, when their excitement over this episode had subsided.

"They tear them with their teeth," replied his uncle. "They get round them like dogs worrying a cat. They literally tear the poor creatures to bits piecemeal."

"Looks like one of the whale hunts that old 'Frozen Face' here must have had a hand in," said Jack. "Here, old sport, take a look for auld lang syne."

He loosened the lashings that held the totem in place in the bow, and while they all laughed, he tilted the old relic till "old Frozen Face," as they called him, actually appeared to be gazing at the conflict raging about them.

"See, the big fellow is acting kind of sleepy!" cried Jack suddenly.

"Yes, he must have got his death warrant," declared Mr. Dacre.

"Look! He's coming right across our bows!" yelled Sandy.

"Hey! Look out, captain, you'll hit him!" roared out Tom.

But even as he spoke, there came a heavy jar that almost stopped the sturdy steamer. Her steel bow had struck the whale amidships with stunning force. The craft appeared to quiver in every rib and frame.

The party on the fore deck, taken by surprise, went over like so many ninepins. They recovered themselves in a jiffy.

"Goodness! Don't run into any more whales! You'll have the ship stove in the first thing you know," cried Mr. Dacre. "I don't think –"

But a shout from Tom checked him.

"Jack! Where's Jack?"

"He was there a minute ago. By the totem."

"I know, but the totem has gone!"

"Great Scott, it must have gone overboard when that shock came and carried the boy with it."

They darted to the rail where Jack had last been seen. The next instant they set up a mingled cheer and groan. The cheer was in token that Jack was alive, the groan was at his precarious position. Clinging to the totem as if it had been a life buoy, the lad was drifting rapidly astern, and toward him was advancing the mad turmoil of waters that signified the battle royal raging between the killers and their huge awkward prey.

As he saw his friends, the boy on the floating totem waved his hand in a plucky effort to reassure them. He shouted something encouraging that they could not catch. But the peril of his position was only too plain.

Only a short distance separated the killers and their frightened quarry from the drifting boy. Once in the midst of that seething turmoil his life would be in grave danger.

It was a moment for action, swift and decisive. Within a few seconds, although to Jack's excited friends it appeared infinitely longer, a boat had been lowered and the steamer's way checked. This latter was the more easy to accomplish for the huge carcass impending at her bow had almost brought her to a standstill.

Manned by two sailors, the boat flew toward the imperiled boy. In the stern, with pale faces, stood Tom and Sandy, side by side with Mr. Dacre and Mr. Chillingworth. All carried rifles. Jack's position was a grave one as the school of whales, pursued by their remorseless foes, rushed down upon him. But those in the boat were in equal danger. One flip of those giant tails or a chance collision, and the stout boat would inevitably be sent to the bottom with a slender chance of its occupants being saved.

No wonder that little was said as they rowed swiftly toward Jack and that many anxious glances were cast at the waters astern, which were boiling like a maelstrom as the huge bodies of the whales and their foes dashed blindly hither and thither!

CHAPTER VIII

"THE TALE OF A WHALE."

"Give way, men!" implored Mr. Dacre anxiously, as the sailors bent to their task vigorously.

There was small need to admonish the men. The affair had literally become a race for life between the boat and the surging, battling whales. As they came alongside Jack, who was clinging to the totem, he gave an encouraging wave of the hand.

"Gee! I'm glad you've come. This water is pretty cold, I can tell you."

He was hauled on board with all swiftness.

"Don't forget old 'Frozen Face,'" he begged anxiously as he heard his uncle give orders to take to the oars again.

"No time to wait for him now, Jack," declared Mr. Dacre; "look there!"

He pointed behind them. Rushing toward the boat with the speed of an express locomotive was a mighty head. It parted the water like an oncoming torpedo boat. The boys gave a shout of alarm.

"It's coming straight for us!"

The sailors pulled on their oars till the stout ash wood bent as if it had been bamboo. Suddenly there came a loud crack. One of the oars had snapped. No doubt, as sometimes occurs, there was a flaw in the wood. The man who was pulling it rolled off his seat into the bottom of the boat.

As he did so, there came a second loud cry of affright. The whale was almost upon them. On either side of its enormous blunt head was a mountainous wall of water. Even if it did not hit them, the mighty "wash" that its onrush made was likely to swamp the little craft, deeply loaded as she was.

The snapping of the oar had cost valuable time. A collision appeared to be inevitable. The second sailor seemed to be paralyzed with fright. He stared stupidly at the great bulk bearing down upon them.

With a sharp exclamation Mr. Dacre seized an oar out of the fellow's hand. In the stern of the boat was a "becket." He thrust the oar through this, and with a few powerful strokes moved the boat forward. It was then out of the direct path of the whale, but still in peril of the mighty wave the great body of the creature upreared.

It was at this juncture that Tom proved his mettle. He grabbed the other oar from the stupefied sailor's hands and thrusting it overboard on the port side tugged on it with all his might.

"That's right! Good lad! Head her into it!" cried Mr. Dacre, perceiving the object of Tom's maneuver, which was to force the boat bow first against the towering wave sweeping down upon them. It was the only thing to do, and Tom's experience had taught him to act quickly.

Hardly had the boat's bow been swung till it was facing the onrushing wave, than, with a roar and smother of foam, a huge black bulk shot by, drenching them with spray. Carried away by excitement, Jack did a foolish thing. Raising his revolver he fired point blank at the huge wet side of the whale.

Instantly, as the bullet struck it, the great creature spouted. From its nostrils two jets of water shot up with a roar like that of escaping steam.

"Duck your heads!" roared out Mr. Chillingworth.

He had hardly time to get out the words before the spouted water came down with the force of a cloudburst upon the boat. It was half filled, but they had hardly time to notice this before the great wave that the speeding whale had caused to rise swept under them. The small boat, half full of water and overcrowded, rose sullenly. To the boys it seemed that they were rushed dizzily heavenward and then let down into an abyss that was fathomless. But a few seconds later a glad cry from Mr. Dacre announced that the danger had passed. The boat had ridden the wave nobly, and as for the killers and their quarry, all that could be seen of them was a fast receding commotion in the water.

"Phew, what a narrow escape!" gasped out Tom. "I thought we were goners sure that time!"

"Same here," agreed Sandy with deep conviction.

The strained faces of the others showed what they had thought. Mr. Dacre relieved the tension by ordering all hands to get busy and bale out the boat with some baling cans that were under the thwarts. They were in the midst of this task when Jack gave a sudden outcry and pointed over the side.

"What's up now, another whale?" cried Sandy, his face showing his alarm.

"Whale nothing!" scoffed Jack. "Look, it's the 'Good Genius of the Frozen North!'"

"The mascot!" cried Sandy.

"The mascot, sure enough," declared Mr. Dacre. "It undoubtedly helped to save Jack's life."

"Yes, after carrying me overboard first!" snorted Jack.

Sure enough, alongside the boat old "Frozen Face" was bobbing serenely about.

"We've got to take him back to the ship," declared Sandy.

"Yes, since he's inviting himself we can't be so impolite as to leave him," said Mr. Chillingworth.

Accordingly, a line was made fast to the totem and he was towed back to the ship and once more restored to office as official mascot in the bow of the *Northerner*. But the ship did not get under way at once following the adventure of part of her crew. The body of the wounded whale still hung limply to her bow. Sailors with tackles had to be called into requisition before the vast obstruction could be cleared.

By this time, as if by magic, thousands of birds had appeared. They fell upon the carcass, paying scant attention to the men at work on it, and fought and tore and devoured flesh and blubber as if they were famished. The captain said that they were whale birds, such as haunt the track of ships engaged in whale trade for weeks at a time.

"Gracious, we certainly are having exciting times!" said Tom as the ship once more got under way bound for her next port of call, Valdez, to the east of the great Kenai Peninsula.

"I expect you boys will have more exciting times later than any you have yet experienced," remarked the captain, who happened to be passing along the deck at the time. "Your adventure with the whales reminds me of a yarn that a certain old Captain Peleg Maybe used to spin, of the perils of whaling. Like to hear it?"

The boys chorused assent. They knew something of the captain's ability as a spinner of yarns.

"Well, it appears, according to the way old Captain Peleg used to tell it, that his ship, the *Cachelot*

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