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THE STORY OF A STRANGE CAREER

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THE STORY OF A STRANGE CAREER

BEING

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A CONVICT

AN AUTHENTIC DOCUMENT

EDITED BY

STANLEY WATERLOO

NEW YORK
D. APPLETON AND COMPANY
1902

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INTRODUCTION

THE story that follows this introduction is literally true. There died lately, in a Western State prison, a man of the class known as habitual criminals. He was, at the time of his death, serving out a sentence for burglary. For thirty years he had been under the weight of prison discipline, save for short periods of freedom between the end of one term and the beginning of another.

Because of this man's exceptional qualities, as contrasted with those of the multitude of criminals, he was induced, semi-officially, in a friendly way, to write the story of his life. He accepted the proposition made to him, though, consistent with his quality, not quite fulfilling his pledge, omitting, as he did, certain hard details of the later part of his criminal career. This was but natural, and, perhaps, it is the

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one incident which shows that the man realized, in some measure, the truth as to his own character.

The account which makes this book was written in 1897 and 1898, when its author was in the free world. It has been thought best, out of regard for an estimable family, to omit from the printed work the real name of the writer. Another name has been substituted for the actual one, but, with the exception of a few necessary technical corrections, and changes of names of people and of one vessel—the one in which the first voyage was made—the manuscript appears almost as it left the hands of its author.

As a true tale, as a study of sociology, as a picture of one human life somehow bent and twisted from the normal, this work, it seems to the editor, is one of the most surprising of productions. Its frank unconsciousness, its striking revelations, its absence from all pose, combine to make it unique among the writings of men. The Confessions of Rousseau appear, in phases, almost artificial compared with the

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simple but startling revelation which is here given.

It was not hopelessness, nor recklessness, nor penitence, which made this man write down unflinchingly what he remembered of the story of his life. A cheerful reminiscent vein runs throughout all he tells. His sense of humour is ever present. Nowhere appears a hint of the tragedy of his experience. Of that he was not conscious. He was as free from remorse and self-upbraiding as a wild animal or a tree.

The story, one would imagine, should appeal to those who think. From the beginning can be seen, in the character of the runaway sailor and one-time officer of the navy, traits which indicate his absolute failure, eventually, as a man. He drifts. He is irresponsible. He escapes from one dilemma only to get into another. He is thriftless, and takes no thought for the morrow. He has no regard for the truth, nor any for the rights of property. He lies and steals simply because lying and stealing are the obvious things for him to do. He does not think of doing anything else. The manner in

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which the story is told is characteristic, and should open the eyes of sentimentalists as to the real attitude of habitual criminals. Never, from first to last, is there an expression of genuine shame or the least contrition. There are, it is true, occasional sentences in which the man calls himself a fool, and betrays a glimmering of appreciation of the general want of sense and wisdom in his course, but there is no ring of sincere repentance nor of sorrow over a wasted life. This extraordinary character is simply of the opinion that he has not been clever enough. He never suspects that he has not been good enough to live a normal life among normal people. The truth is, he had no clear ideas of right and wrong.

Released from prison, and glad to be free, he always declared that now he was determined to "keep out of trouble." With him "trouble" meant "prison," and nothing else. Inevitably, surely, certainly, he was drawn into ways of crime. As water seeks its level, so he gravitated towards "trouble." To plan and execute an enterprise of robbery was the form

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of activity most natural to him. He was hindered by no scruples, schooled by no experience, tormented by no necessity. When arrested, and not before, he considered that he was "in trouble." He fretted over his punishment, but not over his offence.

And yet this was a human being, one not without good traits. He was not, physically, a coward; on the contrary, he was simply and naturally fearless. He was kind of heart, gentle to children, and tender to animals. Under discipline, he was patient and obedient, a model prisoner, the wardens say. What he could not do was to stand alone and be a man in the world.

Looking outward, this man was a shrewd and appreciative observer. His descriptions of natural scenes are vivid. There are few better stories of the life of a prisoner of war than his, and his characterizations of men and events are singularly apt. His eyes looked on the seamy side of life, and saw with clearness when fixed on any one or anything but himself. The conditions under which common sailors live have

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rarely been more vividly described. One can only wonder, while reading his plain story, told without heat or passion, how any man could follow such a life as he describes.

The work is without precedent in character. It is fascinating as a life story and as a study of human nature. It is a contribution to unconscious literature.

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THE STORY
OF A STRANGE CAREER

CHAPTER I

MY FIRST VOYAGE

On my mother's side I am of an old New York family. My great-grandfather served as colonel in the war of 1812. My father was born in Dublin, being a younger son of an Irish gentleman. He was educated to be a druggist, his father paying a large bonus to have him apprenticed to a celebrated firm in that business. His elder brother was ordained as a clergyman in the Church of England, and is now a high dignitary in the Church, if living. At the age of twenty, my father came to New York and started in business. My mother, then about fourteen or fifteen years old, became acquainted with him, and they were shortly afterward married, the match being a runaway

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one. I was born when mother was but sixteen years old. My parents lived comfortably; they sent me to boarding-schools at North Cornwall, Conn., Ballston Spa, N. Y., and the Military School at Danbury, Conn., and finally to one of the New York colleges. At that time I was very desirous to be a sailor, and have been sorry for it ever since. My parents objected, but afterwards consented. My father had many customers among the ship-owners and sea captains. At that time New York ship-owners had several vessels in the China trade, and sought to get well-taught American boys to educate them in seamanship and navigation, the idea being to make them officers of their ships as soon as they became competent. Seven boys were selected, I being one of them.

Father furnished me with a complete outfit for sea, and a set of navigation instruments and books. One thing I thought lacking — that was a pipe and tobacco. The sea-chest was sent to father's store. My younger brother, Charlie, was anxious to know what sailors wore at sea, so he examined the contents of the chest,

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and found a paper of cheap tobacco and a two-cent pipe.

Charles—"Oh, father, George smokes!"

Father—"Why, George, do you use tobacco?"

George—"No, father, I never have done so yet; but I always hear that sailors smoke at sea."

Father—"Well, George, throw that stuff away and come with me."

He then took me to a cigar-store, and bought me twelve half-pound papers of fine Turkish tobacco, some pipes, and a box containing one hundred fine cigars. What was the result? I never used a pipeful of that tobacco, nor a cigar, and not until years afterward, when I was forty-eight years old and in Joliet Prison, did I acquire the tobacco habit, first by chewing it and then by smoking pipes made out of tool handles on holidays—our only opportunity in that "hell-hole."

My father's friends had a full-rigged ship ready for sea at that time; there were the captain, first, second, and third mates, and a crew

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of about sixteen men of all nationalities. We seven boys were shipped on board as apprentices, at the rate of four dollars a month. The voyage was to be to Batavia, Island of Java, for a part cargo of coffee; from there to Shanghai, China, for the balance of the cargo, the new crop of tea, which would be ready for us by the time of our arrival.

The ship—we'll call her the Prospero—was to go out in ballast, as they had no cargo to send out. Three passengers were to go with us—a man, his sister, and her child. The sister was the wife of a pilot and opium smuggler in the Chinese waters. Ten kegs, containing five thousand Mexican dollars each, were also sent on board to be delivered to the branch firm in China. The fifty thousand dollars were placed in the male passengers' state-room, under his berth.

The ship was moved out from the dock, and anchored in the East River. Next morning, early, a large tugboat came alongside the ship. On board the tugboat was a large party, invited by the firm to have a pleasure trip

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while towing the ship out to sea. My father and mother were with the party, many of their friends, the captain's wife, and our passengers' friends among the number. It was a merry party. We weighed anchor. They gave us three cheers, and, wishing us a happy voyage, turned back for New York. We had commenced our voyage to the Indian Ocean.

No one had any idea how abruptly that voyage was to end, nor of the misery that was to follow. In less than two months this despatch was sent all over the country:

"CHARLESTON, S. C., *August, 1856.*

"The ship Prospero has arrived here, its captain having been murdered at sea. The first mate and two boys are under arrest by the United States officers, accused of having committed the murder." *

Now comes the story of the mysterious murder. It has never been solved to this day,

* Our passengers took passage from Charleston in another ship for China. They never reached their destination. The vessel caught fire at sea and all aboard perished. Not a soul was ever heard from.

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although many years have passed since it occurred.

The ship had been headed to the south-east, so as to get into the trade-winds near the coast of Africa. When near the Cape Verde Islands the captain was found dead in his bed, having been killed by being struck in the head with a ship's axe, having his throat cut, and being stabbed in the heart several times with a double-edged knife. The cabin steward went into the captain's state-room at eight o'clock to wake him for breakfast, and at once notified the first mate of the murder. The mate first went to the state-room, and then came on deck and ordered all the crew into the state-room. This is what we saw: the captain dead in bed, the only clothing on him being an undershirt, while the blood had stained all the bedding, had spurted up on the partitions around the berth for three or four feet, and also on the floor. Beside the body lay a small axe and a white handkerchief stained with blood, marked in one corner with the letter "L" embroidered in red silk, which letter had been partly picked

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out with a pen or knife, but was still discernible. The mate then informed us that he was acting captain of the ship. In our presence he wound up the two chronometers, which are always kept in the captain's room, for on them are dependent the daily calculations of the correct longitude.

We were finally ordered upon deck. The crew conversed together, and agreed among themselves that the ship should return to New York. The mate insisted upon continuing the voyage, and also asked the crew if they would allow him to place any one under arrest whom he believed to be the murderer. They assented, and he ordered Henry Leroy to be put in irons.

The boy Leroy's hands were put behind his back, and he was handcuffed, then rusty iron chains were fastened to them and around his ankles. He was placed in the second mate's cabin on deck and the door was locked.

He was kept there until we reached Charleston. The weather was extremely warm. When taken out, he was completely covered

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with iron rust, which had stuck to his body with the perspiration, and he was not allowed to wash himself.

Shortly after Leroy was put in irons, he called for the second mate, and had a long conversation with him. The result was that I was handcuffed, hands behind my back, was taken on the quarter-deck, made to sit down with my back to a stanchion, and lashed to it by the passing of a rope several times around my body and once around my neck. I remained in that position for forty-eight hours, and was then put into the first mate's cabin with my hands fastened behind my back.

The mate still insisted on continuing the voyage, the crew upon returning. Then he proposed going back to Fayal, Western Islands, and leaving Leroy and me there, to be sent to New York by the American Consul, for trial. The crew would not agree to that. Nothing would satisfy them but to return home. So the ship was put about and headed for New York. We never got there, but fetched up at

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Bulls Bay, about forty miles north of Charleston, S. C.

The ship was anchored close to shore and the sails furled. Shortly afterward a steamer was sighted coming down the coast. Signals of distress were hoisted, and the steamer headed for us. The mate had one of our boats lowered, and, with a boat's crew of four men, went aboard the steamer. He wished to go to Charleston himself for a tugboat, also to telegraph to New York, but the men with him would not let him go, so he sent an order to Charleston for a tug, and a letter to the captain of the revenue cutter, explaining the situation.

The knife was never found; no blood stains could be found on any clothing or person aboard the ship. The axe had always hung in brackets over the captain's bed, that being the only trace that was left. The man who did the deed must have been covered with blood. No noise had been heard, although a number of persons were sleeping close by, and one half of the crew were awake and on duty continually.

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The corpse was placed in a water-cask, which was filled with brine and salt from the beef barrels. After the inquest, it was shipped to New York for burial. Next will be related the evidence against Leroy and myself.

Henry Leroy was born in Poughkeepsie, N. Y., his parents being quite wealthy. The elder brother was lieutenant commander in the U. S. Navy during the War of the Rebellion. Henry was the "black sheep" of the family, and was sent to sea in order to tame him down. The captain was instructed to be severe with him. He was very flighty, had a wild look in his eyes, and was very quarrelsome. In less than three weeks he had had four fights with the boys, the last one with me. There being no cargo on board, the boys had quarters fixed up for them between decks. Henry was in one watch and I in the other.

One night, at twelve o'clock, Henry came below and I was to go on watch. It was then we had the fight. There being only a thin partition between our place and the cabin, the noise woke the captain. The next morn-

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ing the captain tied Henry to a dry-goods box and gave him a severe flogging with a rope's end. Henry afterward told some of the crew that he would be revenged for that flogging; that was the evidence against him.

Now for myself: All the boys would tell Henry all kinds of nonsense and he would believe it. I at one time proposed to him that we should kill everybody on board the ship; that we two should sail the ship to the coast of Africa, take the fifty thousand dollars in silver (weighing over four thousand pounds) and go home with it. Much to my surprise, he was willing to do so. Two or three times afterwards I amused myself with that yarn. That story, with some additions of his own, was the evidence against me. Some of his schoolmates afterwards stated under oath that it was impossible for him to tell the truth. A tugboat was sent to Charleston, and the ship was towed to that port. The United States Marshal came on board, and Henry and I were taken up to the city in the revenue cutter and put in the police station until the inquest was held. In a

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couple of days after our arrival the inquest was held on board the ship. Leroy and I were present. The captain's body was laid on deck and we were made to stand near it and look at the terrible sight while some of the jurors felt of our pulses, to see if we were unusually excited. Leroy testified that I had confessed to the murder at twelve o'clock the night it occurred, and that I had told him of it when the watches were changed. At my trial it was proved that I had not spoken to him from the evening before the murder until we were on the revenue cutter.

The coroner's jury ordered that we three be held for trial. So the mate was handcuffed and the three of us were taken to the Charleston jail, where we remained for about six months. As soon as the news reached New York, my father and Leroy's brother got letters of introduction to the most prominent men in Charleston and started for that city. In the meantime we had our examination before the United States Court Commissioner and were held over to the Federal grand jury without bail. The ship's crew

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were detained in jail as witnesses. It was a picnic for them, as they were each to receive one dollar and a half a day, comfortable quarters, the freedom of a large yard for exercise, and their food, with no work. On the ship it was hard labour with only twelve dollars a month for the voyage.

When my father and Mr. Leroy arrived they were welcomed by some of the leading citizens, and in a short time made many friends. They at once retained the four best lawyers in the city. We three prisoners were kept separate, but, as Henry and myself boarded with the jailer's family, we were together at meal hours. I made many friends, while Henry seemed to be disliked by everybody. The mate was kept in a cell by himself all the time. A leading Freemason came from New York to Charleston and retained a competent law firm for his defence. The Freemasons were the only friends he had, and they stood by him well.

No indictment was found against Leroy by the grand jury. He was released and put under bonds as a witness.

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My trial came first. It lasted nearly a month and created much excitement North and South. Leroy's testimony was all there was against me. In the cross-examination he was badly rattled, and told so many lies that everybody got disgusted with him. He was proved to be a liar by some of his old schoolmates. The jury acquitted me without leaving their seats. They all shook hands with me, and I was congratulated by everybody. I was put under bonds as a witness.

The first mate's trial then took place. Circumstances looked bad for him. His cruelty to Leroy and myself made a bad impression on the jury. When I showed how I had been tied with ropes for two days, with my hands fastened behind my back for seventeen nights and days in the roasting hot weather, it actually made some of the jury grit their teeth. The jury retired, and were out quite a number of hours. Finally, they brought in a verdict of "Not guilty," but for a long time they stood ten for guilty and two for acquittal. After that, he never could get a mate's position on

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any ship in the United States, so he went to Australia and, when last heard from, was captain of an English ship.

The Prospero, on one of her voyages, was dismasted by a typhoon in the China Sea, was towed into one of the treaty ports in China and used as a coal hulk.

I went back to New York with father and mother, was gladly received by all my friends, and remained there until I took a notion in my thick head to go on a whaling voyage to the Pacific Ocean.

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CHAPTER II

WHALING IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC

I WAS in the habit of walking around the docks of the East and North Rivers in New York and looking at the shipping. Fronting the river were a number of shipping offices for sailors, and some of them had a placard offering eighty dollars advance for men for the whaling service. So, one day, I went into one of the offices and stated my desires. I was very cordially received. That evening, with several others, I was sent to New Bedford, Mass. On our arrival there we were assigned to a sailors' boarding-house. In about two weeks afterward I was shipped on board the Courier, for a three years' cruise in the South Pacific Ocean, for the capture of sperm whales. I was to get one barrel of oil for myself out of every one hundred and ninety that we should capture.

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Sperm oil was worth about two dollars a gallon. No petroleum had been discovered at that time.

I was furnished with a seaman's outfit, which, with my board bill and expenses, amounted exactly to eighty dollars; that was the advance. I signed an agreement that the captain should pay that amount out of the first money due me. Captain Coffin, four mates, and four boat-steerers were the officers of the ship, with twenty-eight men before the mast, a cooper, blacksmith, carpenter, cook, and steward—forty-two men on the vessel, and the captain's wife and little boy.

The night before we sailed I wrote to my father and mother and let them know what I had done. I thought at the time that I knew more than they did. Well, the older I grow, the more I realize what a fool I have been all my life, and never a greater one than I am now at the age of sixty-two.

One morning early we weighed anchor, and were soon out of sight of land; then the voyage began in earnest. Much to my surprise, we had to take turns perched up aloft for two

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hours at a time on the top-gallant cross-trees, looking out for whales. Why, I never thought there was a whale within five thousand miles of New Bedford at that time, but I was mistaken. They are sometimes captured in sight of the harbour. The boat-steerers were kept busy fixing up their harpoons and lances, getting the boats ready, coiling the lines in the tubs etc. In the meantime the mates were watching the crew very closely to see which men were the most active.

After we were at sea about ten days all hands were called aft to the mizzen-mast. Then the mates, each in turn, picked out one man for his own boat's crew. Being light and active, I was made stroke-oarsman of the first mate's boat, and a lively job it proved to be, too. Soon we got in the warm latitudes and calm days, and then the boats would be lowered in order to give the crews exercise and practice in rowing. It was hard work, but we soon became expert oarsmen.

One day we sighted the Cape Verde Islands, and sailed among them for a few days.

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Boats were sent ashore; rotten tobacco—outfit quality—was traded to the natives for fruit; then I got in my work, so far as the fruit went. The ship then steered for the Island of Martinbas-Trinidado, 21° south latitude, for the purpose of ascertaining whether our chronometers were still correct, by comparing our observations with the longitude of the island, as that is known to a certainty.

Trinity Rock, as it is called also, is uninhabited, quite barren, and only a few miles in circumference. That is the place where we had our first adventure. The first mate's boat was to take the crew, with the captain, his wife and child, also three old muskets and ammunition, and land them in a seaman-like manner on the island. The boat's party with the old army muskets were to kill a number of mythical goats on land.

We pulled close to the shore, just outside of the heavy surf, trying to find a safe place to land. Finally we came to an opening in the reef. Inside, the water looked smooth and inviting, and there was also a nice sandy beach.

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To the left of the reef was the wreck of a French ship, the bowsprit pointing straight up into the air. While looking at the wreck, we saw a large green turtle just ahead of the boat. Then visions of turtle soup with our goat's meat dawned upon us. It chanced, though, that in trying to capture that turtle we made a great mistake, for just at that time a very heavy surf came over the reef and capsized our boat. Things were badly mixed for a time. Boat, oars, men, and the captain's wife and child were going in every direction. Finally things quieted down a little, and we landed on the beach. We got the boat and what oars we could, and then took a rest on the burning hot sand. The weather being very warm, the boat's crew all wore leather slippers and no stockings. We had to run up and down on the sand with our bare feet, as the aforesaid slippers were lost when the boat went over. I picked hard little short thorns out of my feet for days afterward. They came from dried-up vines that grew in the sand.

The beach was honeycombed with large

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holes, and each hole contained a big yellow land-crab. Every step we took, snap would go a big pair of claws for our feet. We had also lost our straw hats, so we had the full benefit of the sun on our bare heads. A number of wild land birds of a good, healthy size would swoop down upon us. It was anything but a pleasure at that time, and the muskets being lost also, the captain and mate changed their minds about the goat business.

The cause of our disaster was made clear to us in a short time. The surf for about ten minutes would run low, and then would be followed by three tremendous rollers in succession. It was the latter that wrecked us on a barren island. We soon got tired of life on shore. The question was how to get away.

In the meantime, while we were on the goat expedition, the second mate's boat had left the ship on a fishing excursion. They anchored the boat near shore, outside the surf, and were hauling the fish in at a lively rate. We needed their assistance. As the mate still had his shoes on his feet, he went quite a distance

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down the beach and made signals for the boat to follow him back. When they got opposite to us we explained the situation. By watching for a good chance, they pulled in quickly and threw us the end of a harpoon-line, and got outside of the reef. We fastened the line to the bow of our boat, and when a low surf came in launched it, were towed out by the other boat, and arrived on board the ship very much disgusted with the whole business.

The old Courier's yards were braced around and we were off for Cape Horn, 56° south latitude. One day, it being quite calm, the look-outs at the mast-head noticed a lot of sea-gulls flying around in a circle, and under them something floating in the water. We thought it might be a dead whale, so the mate's boat was lowered. We found it to be an old cask, which must have been in the water for years, as it was thickly covered with barnacles.

We towed the cask to the ship and hoisted it on board. As it came out of the sea we noticed that the staves were completely honey-

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combed by the sea-worms. The water was spurting out as if it were a sprinkling-pot. We had just got it over the ship's rail when it burst, and the contents fell on the deck. It proved to be palm-oil, probably from some vessel in the African trade that had been wrecked. It had, no doubt, drifted many thousands of miles. We saved two barrels of oil out of our catch.

The weather soon began to get much cooler, and storms were frequent; then we began to see the albatross and Cape Horn pigeons. The latter is about the size of a domestic pigeon, but has webbed feet and a hooked bill, and is the only wild bird having variegated plumage, no two being marked alike. We caught quite a number of the albatross, some measuring seventeen feet from tip to tip of wing. We caught them with large fishhooks baited with a big piece of salt pork. The bait would float on the surface of the water. We had them walking all over the decks, as they cannot fly unless they run on water to give them a good start. The large webbed feet make excel-

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lent money pouches when dried and properly dressed.

In the month of January, midsummer in the southern hemisphere, we sighted Staten Land, the extreme southern point of South America, and ordinarily designated as Cape Horn. For the first time we then saw the Pacific Ocean, "so near and yet so far," for just at this time we were struck by a heavy north-west gale. A close-reefed main top-sail and storm stay-sail was all we could carry with the ship headed as close to the wind as possible, so as to ride over the mountain-like waves. The helm was lashed hard down, as there was no steerage way.

There we were, drifting to the south for about three weeks before the gale broke, and we were able to make sail on the ship. It was daylight for twenty-two hours, and the other two hours of the twenty-four could not be called dark. Such days would be delightful for farmers in this part of the world. Soon after the storm we got fair winds, and were on our cruising grounds off the southern coast of

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Chile and northern part of Patagonia (the new boundary gives the whole coast to Chile now).

The ship's crew was then divided into four watches, with a boat-steerer in charge and only one watch on duty at a time, so we had plenty of leisure. Every night, all sail but two would be close reefed, top-sails would be furled, then the ship would be headed offshore until midnight, and would then go about and stand inshore until daylight, when all sail would be set again. At certain seasons whales come down the coast going south, and we were keeping a bright lookout for them.

Each whaleboat's outfit consists of three harpoons, two lances, one cutting-in spade, one tub with three hundred fathoms of five-eighths'-inch whale-line, one extra tub with one hundred fathoms, one tight keg containing boat compass, lantern, steel and flint, and some sea biscuit. The latter articles are used only in case the boat is lost from the ship, which frequently happens.

There is a number of different species among the whales. They are all mammals, bringing

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forth and suckling their calves. On attacking a cow and calf together, it is the custom to kill the latter first, as the cow will never desert her calf. The sulphur-bottom whale is the largest, but it is never harpooned, as it is too dangerous, and will always run all the line out of the tubs before it stops sounding. The sperm whale furnishes the most valuable oil. The sperm whale throws its flukes, or tail, up and down when attacked, so it is possible for a boat to approach one head, or fluke, on. The right whale furnishes the common oil, and in larger quantities; sometimes one fish will yield two hundred and fifty barrels of oil, as well as many pounds of whalebone, now very scarce and valuable. It hangs in large thin sheets from the jaws, wide at the top, and tapering to a narrow point with hair-like fringe on the edges. The right whale can be attacked only "head on," as they throw their flukes from side to side. They are captured in the cold northern seas, the sperm in southern waters. One hundred barrels is a large yield from one fish of the latter species.

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We saw several whales, but could not get near them. Finally, one big fellow was sighted, and all boats were lowered, the first mate's being in the water first. Having a good fair wind, we set the boat's sail. In a short time we were close to the whale. Being stroke-oarsman, it was my duty to keep the sheet of the sail in my hand, having one turn around a cleat. The boat-steerer stands up with a harpoon ready. Soon we were right on top of the fish, the sheet was "let go," a harpoon was thrown just as we were going over the whale's back, and then the fun began. The line leads from the tub to a post in the stern of the boat —two turns around it—and thence through a cleat in the boat's bows. The tub was alongside me. I was kept busy throwing water on the line, so that the friction would not set fire to the post, or "loggerhead." The mate was holding that rope in his hand all the time, just keeping all the strain on it possible without sinking the boat. If he had let a kink get into that line, as it came from the tub, the boat and crew would have gone under water in quick

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order. If he had let the line slip off the "loggerhead" it would probably have killed every man in the boat. The noise and sawing of that rope, with the smoke and steam from the "loggerhead," I can remember to this day. The whale stopped sounding at last. We were watching which way the line would point as the whale was coming up, and discovering that the line was directly under us, we got away from that spot in a very lively manner, as that was a sure sign that his whaleship intended to have a fight with the boat. They frequently play that trick, and the crew have to jump into the water, provided they have a chance to do so. In a few minutes our friend came to the surface, spouted water, and then started off "dead to windward"—they invariably do so—at a terrific speed. The boat-steerer and mate now changed places, and all the men except myself reversed positions, so as to face the boat's bow. They hauled in the line, and I coiled it carefully back in the tub. When alongside of the whale, the mate threw a lance as often as possible, aiming at a point just behind the fin, at

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what is called the "life." It is a mass of very large veins just under the backbone, that is used by the whale as a reservoir for the extra blood which it requires while under water. When that is once cut, a whale spouts blood instead of water. Down he went again. We had to keep up that sort of work for about two hours, until finally the blood was thrown from the spout, and we were completely covered with it. In a little while our capture began to swim in a circle and on one side with one fin out of water, and soon he was dead. Sharks made their appearance in the water so close to the boat that we could strike them with our oars, and hundreds of large sea-birds were wildly flying around us, all attracted by the blood. In the meantime the other boats had been rowing hard to overtake us if possible and assist, or pick us up, in case of accident. As we were dead to windward, and several miles from the ship, all the boats had to fasten on and tow the whale back, and a big contract it was.

On the ship everything had been made ready

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for "cutting-in." The fish was fastened alongside by heavy iron chains and, with heavy tackles from the main masthead and loading to the windlass, the blubber was slowly hoisted on deck. The captain and the mate did the cutting with long-handled blubber spades. They kept cutting one continuous strip two feet wide, and at every eight feet would cut a hole and hook in the next tackle; and so they kept on hoisting and lowering until the blubber was all on board. It was a process similar to peeling an orange. The strain from the windlass kept the whale's body revolving in the water as the blubber was cut. The head was cut off and hoisted on deck entire. The chains being removed, the carcass, weighing many tons, sank to the bottom, the sharks voraciously following it.

Then a fire was built under the try-pots, with wood. As the oil was boiled from the blubber it would be put in a cooling-pot and thence into casks, the scraps being used for fuel. That work lasted for about a week, everybody working hard. It was nothing but oil all over the ship—clothing, food, and water—all had a lib-

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eral allowance. Eighty barrels was the total of that catch. A few weeks later we sighted a school of young whales. Several other ships being close at the time, it was boats, whales, sharks, and everything mixed up.

Our boatswain got knocked overboard while we were fast to a whale; another boat picked him up. We got only two whales out of the lot, fifteen barrels of oil out of one and twenty out of the other. Some of the other ships got five and six. About that time the season on that coast ended. The captain concluded to make for port and get fresh provisions and water, and then make a trip north of the equator. The water in our casks was getting rather stale; it tasted and smelled like a strong decoction of dead rats. San Carlos, Chiloe Island, was the port we anchored in. I took a look at the shore and made up my mind that if I ever got my feet on dry land they would stay there.

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CHAPTER III

A SAILOR ASHORE

THE water casks were hoisted up from the hold, lowered overboard and towed ashore, to be filled with fresh water. In about a week's time we finished that job, then all hands were to have twenty-four hours' liberty on shore—eight men at a time. My name was one of the first to be called. We received two dollars cash for spending money. Taking my chum aside, I quietly bid him good-bye, and then got into the boat. Everything was strange to me on shore—the customs, language, and sights. I got acquainted with a young American from another ship, by the name of Amos, and learned that he also was desirous to quit the oil business. During the day we kept with the other sailors, visiting the dance-houses. When evening came we both struck out for the woods.

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The natives were very kind to us, knowing that we were runaway sailors. They would invite us to sleep in their houses during the nights, when they would teach us to talk Spanish. It must have been very amusing to them, as they were continually laughing and saying "Bueno" (good). In the daytime we would go down to the beach to see whether our ships had left harbour yet. In about three weeks' time we had the pleasure of seeing both vessels standing out to sea. It was the last time that I saw the Courier on that coast. Her old ribs now lie in the sands at the mouth of Charleston Harbour, South Carolina. During the war the Government purchased a number of condemned whalers and fitted them up for sea, when they were loaded with stone and taken to Charleston Harbour, dismantled, and sunk in the channels, in order to blockade the harbour more effectually. The whole world made a fuss about it. That blockading experiment was a dismal failure, as it was only a short time until the waters of the Ashley and Cooper rivers, combined with the ocean currents, washed out much deeper and

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better channels. I saw the ship just before she was sunk and bade the old Courier a last farewell.

A few days after our ships had left San Carlos we walked into town, interviewed the captain of the port, and asked for our discharge, saying that our ships had gone to sea and abandoned us in a foreign port. Well, we got our papers all right. We needed them at that time, as nobody could go from one town to another without having documents to show who they were—not even the natives. The country is under strict military government, the army having control of everything. My friend and I finally came to the conclusion that we were in a bad fix, being in a foreign country, not able to speak the language, and having no money. There was no work to be obtained. After a while we made up our minds to work our passage to Valparaiso on some merchant vessel. We remained around the landing-dock for several days. Every captain we spoke to replied to us kindly, but they had no places for us. In the meantime we had

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taken trips to the beach, digging clams to eat. The people in the town were not so liberal to us as were the natives who lived at a distance.

While loafing around the dock one day we got into conversation with an American, a runaway whaler. He told us that he was a carpenter, had been living several years in the country, and was married to a young Chilean woman. He wanted Amos to go to another of the islands and work with him. My friend would not go without me, so Tom, the carpenter, proposed that I should also go, as there was a blacksmith by the name of Bill who would be glad to have me as a helper. Now was the formation of a fine quartette of Yankees begun! Amos was a graduate of a Down East reform school, very handy with tools, a fine-looking young fellow, but he could not read nor write, and he never could learn the Spanish language; reference to a terribly ugly temper and vicious disposition completes his description. Our new friend took us to his house, gave us an introduction to his wife, a

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very pretty young woman about sixteen years old. (They marry as young as eleven and twelve years of age.)

Manuela was not educated and was exceedingly lazy, with lax ideas as to morality and virtue. Tom informed us that the next morning we would start for the Island of Calabucco, as he had house rent free there and a contract to lengthen a boat for a priest. During the night Amos got out of bed, went to another house, and stole the only double-barrelled shotgun in that town. Tom hid it in a mattress. After breakfast, we carried what household goods there were down to the dock. A tool-chest, a couple of pots, some dishes, a few clothes, and the bedding completed the outfit.

Everything was put on board a sloop, and then we started for our new home. During the trip Señora Manuela was watching my friend Amos; the result was that Tom told me that I should live with him, and Amos would have to go to Bill's house. On our arrival we soon had our house in order. Opposite to our place was the residence of the

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priest. I saw a number of dirty children—about eight—running about the place, also a woman. As I got better acquainted I had every reason to believe that poverty, piety, and celibacy were omitted from the Father's creed.

After a rest of several days, we went to his reverence's yard and had a look at the boat. It was an old yawl from some ship, very short and broad. We were to make it three feet longer by piecing it in the centre. The boss asked me for my advice. I knew a lot about boats then. Oh, yes; a very easy job—if we only knew how! We waited a few days longer before going to work. Money was very scarce in that town, so they used a small cedar-board for currency. The size was about six feet long, six inches wide, and half an inch thick. The value of each was about six cents. The stores were small, and, for that reason, the cedar-boards were piled up in the back yards until some merchant would buy them at the market price—seven dollars a hundred—and ship them to Valparaiso. There were no lights

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in the streets at night-time, and the night watchman would call out the hours and half-hours and the state of the weather during the whole night, so that one could always know exactly his whereabouts. My friend Amos, with his past experience, took advantage of that fact, and induced me to go into the lumber business with him. Night after night we were busy climbing over fences and carrying off cedar-boards. About thirty-five each was considered a fair load for a trip. In the day-time we took them to different places and made our purchases.

One day we at Tom's house got excited. The double-barrelled shotgun was gone. We watched our chance and stole it back from the house presided over by Bill and Amos; however, they stole it back again in course of time, and kept it. Tom's ranch did not suit me, so I went to work for a native shoemaker. Amos quit Bill and went to Tom. I quit the shoemaker and went with Bill. About that time Tom concluded it would be easier to make a new boat out and out. The padre was of the

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same opinion. He told Tom he could have the old boat for his own use. So the job began in earnest, but our friend was not a very good man for that kind of work; he could not do anything until he took the old yawl apart for patterns to work by. It was about one year before the new boat was finished. In the town was a man who owned a launch—a home-made affair, with planks two and a half inches thick. For oars he had rough, heavy poles with pieces of boards fastened on the ends for blades. Nothing but a boat-race would settle the point as to which was the faster. Our padre was quite a sport. At any cock-fighting, gambling, horse- or boat-racing he was always the umpire and prime mover. Eight sheep and one barrel of cider were the stakes to be raced for. One Sunday morning, just after mass, the race took place. The padre's boat came in about a half mile ahead—the whole course was not two miles. Tom's reputation as a boat-builder was away up in consequence, and he got the "big-head" badly. That night he gave a select party at his house in honour of the event.

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Aguardiente was the only refreshment served; and towards midnight all were drunk, Tom especially so. A thin partition separated the bedroom from the main apartment. Our host, in staggering around, fell against the door, and tumbled on to his own bed, only to find it already occupied. Then there was a row; the guest jumped out of the window, with the other occupant a close second.

My new employer, the blacksmith, was a fine-looking man of six feet two inches in height, and built in proportion. He had a fair complexion and light hair hanging in ringlets down his shoulders. He was from Baltimore, Md. Swearing, drinking aguardiente, and talk—that was all he was good for. His wife was a widow seventeen years of age when he married her. They had three little boys, the most vicious little wretches that I ever came in contact with. As for their home, it was squalid and filthy. No floor, and the fire was in the centre of the only room. On each side was a board resting on stone: that was the only place we had to sit down. A most cheerful

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family circle we made. The children were continually raising Cain, and Bill swearing at them in Spanish. As yet none of the bosses had ever said anything about wages. However, I never had any work to do, so that equalized affairs.

One day Bill—or Guillermo, as he was called—was wanted at a saw-mill on the mainland. A freshet had made a wreck of the mill and dam. None of the natives was willing to work, so Bill induced Amos and me to go with him. At last I was working for fifty cents a day. After a while we got the dam repaired, and then fixed up the mill. It then dawned upon Don Fernando's mind that he had no one to run the aforesaid mill. So he made a contract with us to do the sawing at two cents a board, we to "find" ourselves in food and cooking utensils. Bill sent for his family; Amos and I occupied a small room in the mill for a living apartment, where we were to keep bachelors' hall. Our stock of provisions was furnished on credit from the employer's store. Wheat flour was worth eight cents a

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pound, but wheat was worth only fifty cents a bushel. This seeming profit was used up in sending the wheat to Valparaiso for grinding and then having it shipped back as flour, as no railroads were there then.

The mill was a most primitive affair; the amount of labour was astounding, the results of our toil much more so; a hundred boards was our largest day's work, and I will guarantee that not any two of them were of equal thickness at the end. Some days we would have no logs to saw; other days there would be no water in the dam. Bill had one cent as foreman, Amos and I each half a cent a board. Our average was about twenty cents a day each.

We found ourselves gradually getting into debt for provisions and clothing. After talking over our financial affairs one evening, we came to the conclusion that our prospects looked gloomy. About bedtime Amos put on his hat and coat and invited me to do the same. He was always sullen, so I never asked him any questions. When we were outside the

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room he informed me that in future he would live a —— sight cheaper and better than he had been doing in the past. All I could say was, "Amen, brother!" My friend proved to be a good forager; before morning we had a nicely dressed sheep hanging up in our room, also a big supply of potatoes under the bed. That was the only time in my life that I was guilty of sheep-stealing. We lived high on roast mutton and potatoes; but, alas! we were found out. They blamed Amos for the whole business; but, on attempting to arrest him, they made a mistake, as he pulled out a big knife, and coolly walked away from that part of the country. Afterward he stole a horse; that was the last we heard about him in Chile.

Every one called me "Bueno muchacho" (good boy), while Amos was designated "Muy picaro" (great rascal). Don Fernando Andrade was over sixty years of age; he had a fine-looking wife and quite a number of children—the oldest one twenty-six years, and the youngest six months old. He took quite an interest in me, as I was always very quiet,

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polite, and strictly temperate. Finally, he had me live with his own family, and treated me as if I were one of his own sons. They used to laugh and make fun of me because I washed my hands and face twice a day. In that part of the country they never wash themselves at all: "Se maltrata el cuero" (it ill-treats the skin) was their reason, I presume; laziness also. About that time I wrote to my father and mother in New York. The postage then on a foreign letter was fifty cents, with only one mail a month on that coast. In about four months I received an answer from San Francisco, Cal. My father had failed in business in New York, indorsing notes, and a panic ruined him. He was doing well in California, and wanted me to come there. Don Fernando had a contract for a large number of rail-road-ties for Peru. The natives would cut and pile them on the beach ready for loading. A schooner was sent up from Don Carlos for a cargo of them. The captain was an Englishman, and we became quite friendly. He offered to take me to San Carlos whenever I wished to

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go. By the time the schooner was loaded I got homesick, and, all at once, I made up my mind to go home, so I bid Don Fernando good-bye. He was sorry to have me leave, but would not coax me to remain away from my parents.

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CHAPTER IV

I TAKE TO THE SEA AGAIN

At San Carlos was a large ship receiving the ties as they were brought from the different islands. The captain shipped me as an ordinary seaman at ten dollars a month. The vessel was the Androkolis, of Copenhagen, Denmark. Our destination was Callao, Peru. I never reached San Francisco, although I sailed eighteen hundred miles towards that city. San Carlos was 42° and Callao 12° south latitude. The crew of the Androkolis was composed of Danes, Swedes, Norwegians, two Hollanders, and one Englishman, every one of them speaking a different language from mine, except the man from Liverpool, Jimmy Kincaid by name. Now Jimmy and I became chums. He was very short and broad, and possessed unusually large hands and feet. He was about

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twenty years old. We little knew what hardships were in store for us when we became friends. If he is alive to-day, he remembers, beyond all doubt, the night we saw the Flying Dutchman while rounding Cape Horn on another vessel.* We both saw that vessel—of course it was only an illusion—but we were both badly scared for a few minutes, as certain death appeared imminent. I will explain it in time. There are a few thousand miles of sea to be sailed over before we come to the story of that night.

We had a very pleasant voyage. Sailing north towards the equator, the weather was gradually getting warmer. In about four weeks' time we sighted the Island of San Lorenzo, an immense, high rock which formed the western side of Callao Harbour. The ship's sails were taken in and furled, all but the topsails. At last we came to anchor. Where our ship lay in the bay was directly over the old

* Like the Wandering Jew on land, there is a ship at sea sailing on and on until doomsday, manned by a crew of very old Dutchmen, who are expiating some sin.

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city. A number of years ago, during one night, an earthquake submerged Callao and raised up San Lorenzo from beneath the waters. Five miles inland is the city of Lima, the capital of Peru and the burial-place of Pizarro, the conqueror of that country. The only railroad on that coast at that time was the five-mile track connecting the two cities. Jimmy and I rowed the captain ashore in the ship's boat. Sitting on the steps when we arrived there was my old friend Amos. We were much surprised to meet again. He told me all about himself since leaving the saw-mill in Chile so abruptly. He invited me to visit him at the hospital, although there was nothing in his appearance to indicate that he was an invalid.

Lighters came to the ship, and the unloading of our cargo commenced. Jimmy and I were promoted to be cook and steward of the vessel, I being the latter. One Sunday we had an afternoon holiday on shore. The captain let us have only one dollar each out of the wages due to us. The first place we visited was the hospital, in quest of Amos. It was a

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terribly hot day. On a large grassy plain fronting the building were a number of healthy-looking men playing a very lively game of ball. You can imagine our surprise when Amos informed us that they were the patients belonging to the hospital. The explanation was simple enough. Every man aboard of an American ship has to pay twenty-five cents a month to support the marine hospitals. A ship cannot get clearance papers until it is paid. That entitles the sailors to admission to any marine hospital in the United States when they are taken sick. If in a foreign port, the American consul is obliged to pay for their keeping at whatever hospital may be found in that place. The consul for Callao was a kind-hearted old man by the name of Mills. Any American sailor who would go to him and say, "I am sick, Consul," would get an order for admission at once. A number of seamen imposed on him. It was an object for them to get their board and clothing free while they were waiting only for seamen's wages to rise as high as possible; then they would ship for some long voyage.

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The hospital authorities were easily enough satisfied, as they were well paid, and the patients were able to attend to their own ailments.

After our return to the ship, Jimmy was continually coaxing me to remain in Peru with him, and live among the natives for a while. I was anxious to get to San Francisco, but no ships in harbour were bound in that direction, although a number arrived from there, loading with guano and going around Cape Horn. At last I promised to go with Jimmy. He had eighty dollars due him, and I twelve, but the captain would not discharge us and pay us off. Then we got mad and determined to go anyway. We got our clothes packed up in bags, ready for any chance we could get to leave the ship. With the ship's telescope we took a good look at the shores of the bay. At one place the beach looked as if it would be a good landing-place for us; it appeared like the edge of a mill-pond. Our chance soon came. The boat had not been hoisted up out of the water, as was customary, but had been left overnight fastened to the ship's side. Each sailor in turn had to

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stand "anchor watch" during the night for one hour. He would then wake up his relief and go to bed. There was a Dutchman whose turn would be at three o'clock in the morning. I told him when he was called to awaken me, then he could go to sleep again, as Jimmy and I had to make fresh bread for breakfast, and we would do the anchor watching. Sure enough, "Dutchy" woke me up; then I called Jimmy, and in a short time we had our clothes in the boat, also a good double-barrelled shot-gun, a pair of pistols, a silver watch, and a couple of dozen of clean shirts belonging to the captain. We wished to have something for the money that was due us.

Away we went for the landing-place that we had selected. It was dark, and quite difficult to see the beach; it appeared to us as though we were close to a wall, several feet high, of rocks. The noise of the surf also made us careful about landing. At last we discovered that it was low tide, and the wall was only the wet cobble-stones left uncovered at low water. We pulled hard, so as to run

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through the surf, and we went up the beach on a heavy roller. Jimmy stood in the bow of the boat, ready to jump and hold the rope, or "painter," as it is called, as the surf receded. He was a little slow in jumping, consequently the boat went back with the surf in a hurry, Jimmy's feet went from under him, and he landed head first on the rocks. The next roller brought the boat in again; this time we succeeded, and got everything on land. The boat was pushed out in the surf, and was found the next day floating bottom up. We heard afterward that it was reported we had both been drowned.

About nine o'clock I went to the hospital and told Amos what we had done. He agreed to introduce us to a friend of his, who would take care of us for a few days. That afternoon he brought a man with him to our camping-place. In the evening everything was taken to a house in the city. It very soon dawned upon us that we had got into the worst sailors' "robbers' roost" that was in the town. Our clothing and possessions were all locked up in a

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room. We were made to understand that to remain in the house would be the best thing we could do. From what I afterward saw in that place I had reason to believe they meant what they said. The Vigilance Committee in San Francisco had driven all the tough characters out of the city. Quite a number of the worst ones went to Callao and started sailor boarding-houses and saloons. They formed a "ring" for mutual benefit. The English consul and a number of the Peruvian port officers were in with them. A fine crowd of robbers they were. They kept the sailors' wages high, beyond doubt, but only for the reason that they would have more for themselves when they cheated the seamen out of two months' advance pay. It is always customary to give that much on long voyages, or "deep sea trips," as they call them. After a few days' sojourn in our quiet boarding-house, we concluded that any change would be for the better. The landlord informed us that a small English brig was going up the coast, and that he could ship us both as ordinary seamen. In the English

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merchant marine a man cannot be shipped unless he has a discharge from another vessel; in the American service no papers are needed. We obtained discharges belonging to other sailors, who had no use for them. The landlord took us to the English consul's office. My name was to be Michael Murray. The clerk read the law, as is customary; one rule especially—that any man assuming another name would forfeit all wages. We had given bogus papers. When I went to sign the articles I was rather embarrassed, as I had forgotten my new name, so they had to tell me what it was. We were taken to our new ship, which was anchored out in the bay.

I was not greatly pleased when I found what was in store for me. The wages were twenty-five dollars a month. The landlord had received fifty dollars—two months' pay—in advance. He was to deduct my board bill and give me the balance of the money, but I never got a cent of it. I had been "shanghaied," as the sailors call it. Instead of going up the coast, as I was told we were to do, I

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found we were bound for Cork, Ireland, a voyage of eighty-five hundred and twenty miles. The vessel itself was a "holy terror," very heavily rigged, while everything on board was old and played out, the rusty blocks, with heavy running gear, making it very hard work for us, especially as we had a crew of only six men, where twelve seamen, at least, should have been a crew for that old tub. The cargo was guano in bulk, as a scow would be loaded with dirt. Our sleeping quarters were in the forecastle, situated in the bow of the vessel. Everything was covered with guano. As we had to live below, it was our first object to clean up the place. Buckets of water were passed down the scuttle, and the place was cleaned up as well as we could do it; but it was of no use; the smell of ammonia made us sick. Some would vomit, others bled at the nose, and a thick black phlegm would form in our throats. The weather being warm, we slept on the deck, as we could not endure it in the forecastle below.

Guano is the droppings from sea-birds, which

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have been accumulating for thousands of years. The Chincha Islands, belonging to Peru, have an inexhaustible supply. No rain ever falls in that country, consequently nothing is washed away. The depth of the guano is from four to eight feet. When a ship is to be loaded with guano, it has to go to Callao first for a permit, then to the Chincha Islands. The cargo is put in by Chinese coolies, and then the vessel returns to Callao for a clearance, also to pay a certain amount per ton.

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CHAPTER V

ON THE BRIG GRENFALLS

THE brig Grenfalls, of Sunderland, was our packet. Just before getting up anchor we asked the captain if he intended to get more men for the voyage. He curtly said "No." Then we came very near having a mutiny. Finally we agreed to get up the anchor, especially as the captain threatened to make a signal to the British man-of-war for assistance, so we had to go anyway. I remember seeing the United States frigate Merrimac in the harbour and wishing myself aboard her. The next time I saw that vessel it had been transformed into an ironclad by the rebels, and had destroyed the Congress and the Cumberland. The first week at sea we had very pleasant weather. After that it became gradually colder and stormy. No more sleeping on deck. The forecastle was the only place for us then.

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Two quarts of water a day was our allowance, one pint each for breakfast, dinner, and supper; the remaining pint was for drinking during the following hours of the twenty-four. The hardtack that we had to eat was covered with green mould and full of large white meal worms. The salt pork was red with rust and filled with white spots. Probably the hogs were killed on account of measles and pickled for sailors' use at sea. The salt beef, or horse-meat, as it was called, was rather tough eating; besides, everything we ate or drank was highly flavoured with guano.

Off the coast of Patagonia we encountered a heavy northwest gale of wind; then our misery began in earnest. In harbour the deck was only sixteen inches above water; in rough weather the seas were continually washing over the decks. It was necessary to make gill-guys by fastening ropes diagonally across the deck from forward to aft. In going from one place to another we could take hold of the guy nearest to us, then get over and reach for the next before letting go of the first one. That was the

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only way to keep from being washed overboard or thrown against the ship's rail.

One night we heard water swashing under the forecastle deck. We told the mate about it. There was a bulkhead dividing the forecastle from the main hold; on the other side was a short half-deck. We cut a hole in it and lowered a lantern. A lot of water could be plainly seen. The vessel rolling would mix the guano with it. By working all of the men we got it out. All the crew supposed it to be the same water that we used in cleaning out our quarters, but we said nothing about it to the mate. We used plenty of it and let it run into the hold. The next night we heard the same swashing again; then we knew there was a leak somewhere. From that time the muddy water had to be taken out in buckets and thrown on the deck twice a day. The seas would wash it overboard. The leak was found at last. A long iron bolt in the foremast rigging chains had become rusty and worked loose. The bolt went through one of the knees which supported the deck beams. Being below the loading line,

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the water would come in and drop on the guano. It could not drain through and get to the pumps.

All our clothing got very rotten; shoes and boots became very hard; any cuts or bruises on our bodies would not heal up; the palms of our hands were full of black holes the size of a pin-head; the skin became very thick, and would crack open at each finger-joint; our hair fell out, so that we became prematurely bald. The windlass also, every time the brig rolled, would slide a few inches from side to side, and would make the deck-seams open enough to allow the water to drop through on our beds. For three months our beds and clothing were dripping wet. When I went to bed I would get to sleep at once, and it was hard to wake me up. Going from a wet, steaming hot bed to stand watch on deck in that cold weather was no joke. Each watch changes every four hours. Jimmy and myself were in the mate's watch: two hours each at the wheel and two on the lookout. The officers were the worst cowards that I ever came in contact with at

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sea. At one time the captain did not come on deck for two weeks. There being no sun visible in that storm, no observations could be taken, so we had to sail by "dead reckoning." The mate would sneak into the cabin during most of the watch, and leave Jimmy and myself to take the chances of being washed overboard. When it was my lookout I would go to the cook's galley, and let the brig do her own watching. My chum did the same as I. Two hours at wheel-steering would knock a prize-fighter out. There was a very short iron tiller in the rudder-post. The wheel-chains were iron and slack; consequently, every time the rudder would jerk, the helmsman would be raised up a couple of feet, and then landed back again almost quick enough to snap his head off. I was thrown clear over the wheel several times. I tried the experiment of letting go a few times when the wheel commenced to gripe; then I did come to grief; it would whirl around one way and then back again. In trying to stop it, the spokes would hit me a good rap on the knuckles. One eighth of

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a point off the course is considered bad steering, but our old packet would "yaw" off five whole points each way in spite of us. It seemed as if the stern were trying to get ahead of the bow. Whenever I see a mule turning his head back to look at his driver, it always reminds me of the old brig Grenfalls. Besides the leak, a new danger confronted us.

As we neared Cape Horn the seas became much higher and the storm increased. The sun would rise at nearly ten o'clock in the morning, and go down at two in the afternoon. The clouds were very heavy, and seemingly close to the water. Heavy snow-storms were common. The wind, however, was in our favour. Sometimes there would be a lull in the gale; then more sail would have to be set to keep us ahead of the immense high waves, else one might come over our stern and sink us. On the other hand was the danger of going too fast; in that case the vessel would run under and, loaded as it was, must go down like a piece of iron. Another trouble was

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that we had to heave-to frequently, and that was very dangerous. Now going before the wind and then swinging around head to wind, as near as possible, compelled us to get into the trough of the sea. If we had been struck by one of those huge waves broadside on, the voyage would have terminated just then.

The gale that brought us to Cape Horn followed the Pacific coast to Staten Island, and then up the Atlantic Ocean. One day, as we were sailing too slowly, a great wave almost broke over our stern. The main top-gallant-sail was set in a hurry. A few hours afterward the wind increased, and the light sail had to be taken in. Before Jimmy and I could get aloft to furl it, there was nothing left. The wind had blown it away in small pieces. That night we were compelled to heave to again. No matter which way the tub's head was pointed, we were going in the right direction, even if it were stern first, drifting before the wind. Our cook and steward was a wild, red-headed fellow—Darwin's

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missing link. My chum accused him of cheating us out of our pint of drinking water. They were quarrelling all day about it. That night Reddy came to the forecastle scuttle while I was getting some hard-tack ready for eating—that is, hunting for meal worms. Reddy commenced the row again. He was just going to paralyze Jimmy! I had not said a word yet, but my chum was not going to be hurt if I could help it. At last the man became quite brave. He told Jimmy he'd lick him and his chum together. The chum was myself. So we invited him to come below. He lost no time in doing so. Before he got half-way down we jumped for him. What a good thrashing he got for his trouble! When we got through pounding him, he was dragged to the opening in the bulkhead. Our intention was to throw him down the hole into the water and the guano. We pushed too hard, so that he went a-flying over the right place, very luckily, as he would have been smothered in the guano-water. Reddy stayed in bed for two days. He told the captain that the whole crew had tried

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to kill him. When he got out of bed his face was blue, green, and yellow; this, with the eyes nicely blacked and his red hair, made a fine combination of colours. Neither one of us had been struck once, and there was no more trouble about water.

One night, just after being relieved from watch, all hands were called to shorten sail. On deck I had to go again. There we were kept for thirty-two hours, tending to the sails and bailing out water and guano. A few nights afterward I was at the wheel. The mate sneaked into the cabin; Jimmy was in the galley. There I was, tired out, my clothes dripping wet with sea water and the wheel nearly jerking my arms off. Suddenly the brig yawed off and was struck by a heavy sea. I could feel the vessel quivering under my feet; with one hand I could not move the wheel either way. I thought we were sinking and that my day had come. The water on deck was above my knees. Suddenly the wheel began its old tricks again, very much to my relief. The port bulwarks from the main to the

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fore-rigging had been carried away even to the deck. Spare spars had to be fastened there by ropes until we got into port. The second mate said it was my fault on account of bad steering.

One day all hands were busy bailing water and guano out of the hold. I was at the wheel again, trying my best to steer straight. It was of no use; the old tub yawed around and was struck by a heavy sea. A large quantity of water went down the scuttle and made more mud, all of which had to be bailed out. How everybody did swear and growl! But I derived some consolation on account of the second mate being nearly killed. The water had knocked him off his feet and dashed him against the bulwarks. When he came aft, rubbing his arms and legs, I had to grin. That was the only time I ever felt really happy on that packet. Shortly afterwards he took the wheel and sent me to help the bucket brigade. Very soon the brig yawed again. I knew what would happen when I saw a heavy wave coming, so got down the scuttle and shut it very quickly. After the

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commotion was all over I got on deck. Very much to my joy, the starboard bulwarks had been carried away. My friend the second mate had nothing to say about bad steering after that.

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CHAPTER VI

THE FLYING DUTCHMAN

That night we were compelled to heave to, for the waves were almost sinking us. At two o'clock in the morning my chum was to relieve me at the wheel. He was rather slow about doing it, too, as it was very comfortable for him in the galley. I was about played out holding the helm hard down, there being no steerage-way, as we were drifting to the leeward. Our object was to keep the vessel head on to the seas as nearly as possible, so as to ride over them as they came along. So much guano had been taken from the forehold that it caused the brig to settle by the stern and raise the forward part up, consequently every time the bow dipped into a wave the water which came over would rush aft on the deck, strike the taffrail, and give the man at the wheel a good shower-bath. That

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happened every few minutes. Between drenchings we had the cold wind for a variety. The ship's clock was in the cabin skylight, visible to the helmsman, whose duty it was to strike the bell one stroke for every half hour. At four bells he was to be relieved; at eight bells the watches would change; thus it would be four hours on deck and four hours below until we arrived in port. Now I had been watching the clock very anxiously for two hours, my whole body stiff and numb with the cold and wet. Nearly a half hour after the right time, my friend Jimmy very reluctantly made his appearance. I waited until he had hold of the wheel and then I chided him in very impolite language. When I had said everything that I could think of to hurt his feelings I stopped. In the meantime I was holding on to a rope and sharing the shower-baths with him. It helped to loosen my jaws, at any rate, even if it did no other good.

The cook's galley is a small house built on deck, in size about four by six feet, with a sliding door on each side, the one to windward being always kept shut except in very fine

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weather. Now I was hustling along as fast as my stiff joints would allow me to get into the galley. There, at least, I would be sheltered from the cold winds. I had got inside and was turning to close the door, when I saw a sight which simply paralyzed me. A large full-rigged ship with squared yards, all sails set, even to the royals and studding-sails rigged out on both sides, was coming straight for us, and distant only a few hundred yards. Our brig, being hove to, was helpless to get out of the way. Certain destruction seemed inevitable, with no possible hope of escaping a speedy death. I yelled out at the top of my voice, "A ship on the lee beam!" Jimmy, at the wheel, got a glimpse of the ship, and let out a yelp that brought the mate on deck. The mate, who had been loafing in the cabin and shirking his duty, also did some tall yelping when he saw our danger. There was no chance to get on our knees to pray then. The decks were too wet and slippery, besides, we had to use our hands to keep from being washed overboard. As we could not do the proper thing in ortho-

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dox style, we did some tall cursing, as being the next best thing under the circumstances. Swearing is a sailor's balm for many ills.

We were terribly excited; only a few seconds and all would be over with us. Our brig was drifting north at the rate of three miles an hour. The strange vessel was heading south in that gale and with all sails set; she should have been racing through the water at a twenty-knots rate. You can imagine our surprise when we observed that the other vessel was rapidly going backward and disappearing in a hazy mist. Suddenly there was a break in the clouds, and we had a glimpse of the full moon for a few minutes, for the first time in several weeks, although the nights were nearly twenty hours in length. Soon we were in darkness again. That was our first experience with the ship Flying Dutchman. The whole affair had happened so suddenly and unexpectedly that we had no time to think. The idea of a ship carrying all sail in that gale was ridiculous, but to sail dead against the wind was still more so. We were very much disgusted

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with ourselves for being so badly fooled, but, at the same time, we were a greatly scared lot of sailors. The explanation was simple enough. The clouds were black and heavy, flying low down near the water. A rift in them allowed the moon to shine dimly between the edges and cause the illusion. A few nights afterward we were running before the wind. All hands were close-reefing the main top-sail. Off the port bow we saw what appeared to be a ship on fire. Our course was altered to that direction, and it proved to be the old Dutchman again. At last the gale from the south broke up. We had got into the "pamperos"—westerly winds from Buenos Ayres. The days were increasing in length, and the weather became much warmer. The wind being on our beam, we could steer straight, compared with what we had been doing before the wind. Besides, the heavy rolling and lurching had diminished greatly. The effect of heavy cargo, so much below the water-line, was greatly counteracted by the wind striking us sideways. Going before the wind, the old brig rolled terribly at

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times—so much so that we often expected the masts to be snapped off, on account of the sudden jerking from side to side. The forecastle was always wet and muddy, and, while eating, we would sit on a chest, holding our pans in our laps, a cup in one hand, and conveying the food to our mouths with the other, with both heels firmly braced on the deck. Time and again an extra lurch would send us a-sliding to the other side, bang against a chest or bunk, the food flying in every direction. Back and forth we would go a dozen times before we could stop. The sulphur and brimstone would hang in festoons from the deck beams by the time we had stopped cursing the old brig.

On the first clear day, instead of going to bed in my morning watch below, eight to twelve in the morning, I went aloft to the fore-top, and remained there the four hours enjoying the luxury of an airy wind-bath. It was the first time in nearly three months that my clothing was dry, and not so very dry then, either. The mates had been throwing out hints about

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going into port for repairs. We had passed all the Pacific harbours, and were doing the same with the Atlantic harbours, when, very much to our joy, we sighted the Sugar Loaf, a very high conical rock, it being the southern point of land at the entrance to the harbour of Rio de Janeiro—River of January—Brazil, South America. So, much to our joy, we were bound for port. My chum and I were of one mind—that was, to quit the guano business P. D. Q.

The entrance to the harbour was very narrow and well fortified. There were steep rocks on each side. We were hailed from one of the forts and asked the brig's name, destination, and last port. Our sails were gradually taken in. At last we rounded to and dropped anchor. Rio is admitted by all sailors to be the finest harbour in the world, and I will guarantee that our old tub of a brig was the most dilapidated and dirtiest specimen of the shipbuilder's handicraft that ever anchored in it. It is a generally well-founded belief among sailors that rats will desert a sinking ship. We often remarked that

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a rat had not been seen on the Grenfalls during the voyage. I must say the rodents made a very close calculation, if that was the reason for at some time quitting their cosy quarters. My first act in port was to tie a rope around my wet blankets and lower them into the water. By swashing them up and down for awhile, I got considerable of the mud removed. Hanging in the hot sun, they became dry by evening. So I enjoyed a good night's sleep on deck. It was quite a contrast from what I had been doing for weeks past—namely, getting into a soaking wet bed with all my clothes on, dripping with water, and the sea dropping on me in small instalments through the leaky decks.

Our worthy captain was an entirely different man from what he was at sea in the Cape Horn regions. Warm weather, with no danger to be feared, made quite an improvement in his personal appearance. He was also more self-important and domineering. The two mates and he were small men, about five feet two inches in height. The way in which they

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murdered the Queen's English was something simply terrible. "Mike, 'ow's 'er 'ead?" was the question often asked at the wheel when they wished to know the point of the compass I was steering, so as to enter it in the log-book. The disabled condition of the brig had been reported to the English consul. He appointed three ship captains to "survey" our vessel, and report whether it was seaworthy or not. They came on board and examined everything. We, the sailors, took our knives and showed them how rotten the remaining bulwarks were, how the decks leaked; in fact, we did all we could to get the old tub condemned. It was estimated that one hundred tons of guano had been dumped overboard; however, nothing was said about the quantity of water that went with it. The captains looked very wise, but said nothing. Finally, they got into their boats and returned to shore. My shipmates and myself were in great hope that the vessel would be condemned as unseaworthy. That meant our release and three months' extra pay on account of being dis-

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charged in a foreign port. Greatly to our disgust, the report was briefly: "The brig Grenfalls, with necessary repairs, is fit to continue the voyage."

In a few days we hoisted anchor and sailed up to a small island close to the city. After considerable trouble we got the old tub fastened to a small dock. Then we were allowed time to dispose of a mighty poor dinner. All the remaining guano was to be taken out and placed on the dock, a job which we did not like. Jim and myself, while eating, had a quiet talk on the chances of getting our discharge from the vessel. We both decided to declare war. No more guano work for us! We were eating our last dinner on that boat, but we did not know it then. The war took place in earnest, and most unexpectedly. Two explanations are necessary before I proceed with the narrative. There was an able seaman in the other watch, more intelligent than the average English sailor. His vessel had been wrecked on the Pacific coast, and he had shipped with us in order to return to England and sail in his

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former employer's service again. From him I learned some facts in regard to English marine law. English sailors always carry large jack-knives, a shackle at the butt end, to which is fastened a lanyard, the latter going around the neck. The knife, when not in use, is stuck in the waistband of the trousers. With American sailors, a long knife, carried in a sheath and strapped around the waist, is the fashion. It is a very necessary and useful article on shipboard, used in cutting food—there are no forks—scraping masts, repairing rigging, and so forth. It is always ready for instant use in case of danger or accident. After dinner we had plenty of work to do. Towards evening extra lines from the bow and stern were run ashore and fastened to large rocks. Old canvas was cut in narrow strips and wound around the ropes in every place where they were liable to chafe on the sharp stones on the beach. We were still at that work at nine o'clock, with no sign of supper yet. I made up my mind to quit work, and had just got on deck when I heard the first mate and Jimmy talking rather loudly

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by the cabin door. Too much work and nothing to eat was the cause of the row. My chum was mad all over. Suddenly the mate caught him by each wrist and gave his arms a quick, downward jerk. It was an old trick, and very painful to a person whose arms were hanging down loosely. In an instant Jimmy had his knife open and made a lunge for the mate. The lanyard prevented the free action of the knife, but the blade had scratched the skin on the mate's throat and made a long cut in the neck of his tight-fitting, heavy knit undershirt. The mate began to run and yell "Murder!" Around the deck he sprinted, with my chum after him. Every few steps Jimmy would make a dig at him with the knife, only to receive himself a jerk in the back of the neck from the lanyard. There was an old box on the main hatch. Without being noticed by any of us, our old enemy—the red-headed cook —was standing on it, with an iron bolt in his hand. The mate took in the situation, though, and, on the last lap, he crossed the deck at the main hatch. As Jimmy came along, the cook

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hit him a whack on the head with the piece of iron that laid my poor friend on the deck *hors de combat*. The cook had no time to gloat over his victory. He was howling out, "Wurrah, wurrah!" and made remarkably quick time for the cabin, landing below without his feet touching the stairs. A sailor was after him with a sheath-knife minus the lanyard attachment. Our disabled shipmate was carried forward and laid on deck. Having no fine Turkish sponges or decorated wash-bowls, we could not dress his head according to modern style. We did the best we could, however, which was to lower a bucket over the vessel's side and fill it with dirty sea water. His head received several good bathings. The treatment was liberal and heroic, the contents of a full bucket being dumped on him at a time. It helped to revive him and to wash off the blood, simultaneously.

At last success rewarded our efforts. The patient sat up. When he had got the salt water out of his mouth, he wanted to know "what in —— we were trying to do with him?"

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The Flying Dutchman

It being nearly ten o'clock, all hands concluded to have supper. The cook was afraid to come on deck, so we went to the galley and took all the food in sight. It was carried into the forecastle. The chandelier—a tin cup full of grease with a rag for a wick—was trimmed and lighted. Our frugal repast was interrupted by the captain's sticking his head down the scuttle and inquiring if Jimmy wanted a bandage and salve for his head. Jimmy very curtly told him to "Go to ——." The captain was desirous that the crew should desert and forfeit the money due to them, for he could get other men for one third of the amount we were getting. Nine dollars a month for ordinary, and eleven dollars a month for able seamen was the rate in Rio; while our pay from Callao was twenty-five dollars and thirty-five dollars per month. My chum and I had about forty dollars due to each of us, and I intended to get it if possible. The rest of the men wanted to remain on the vessel on account of the big wages, and the hardest part of the voyage being over. Immediately after breakfast the next morning Jimmy

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and I went aft and called for the captain. We requested permission to see the English consul, but received an evasive answer. It was to be a game of bluff beyond all doubt, so my recently acquired knowledge of marine law was to be tested. I stated plainly to the captain that seamen were allowed by law to see the consul "if they had any complaints to make." We demanded to be at once taken to the consul's office, as we were not satisfied with our food and treatment, and wished for an investigation. We said that he would have trouble if he refused to comply with the law. Very reluctantly, he told us to get into the ship's boat, and we rowed over to the city. On landing, he gave directions to the consul's office, where, on arriving, we found that the captain had taken a short cut and got there ahead of us. Consequently the consul gave us a very cool reception and asked us what we wanted of him. He got a brief synopsis of the trip around the Cape to commence with, then a description of the food, next of the short allowance of water; and last, we charged the captain with ignoring the law in

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regard to giving each man the legal allowance of lime-juice a day.*

The captain had considerable to say, himself. At last the consul refused to discharge us. We were informed that we should have better food for the future. The captain smiled with satisfaction, for a short time only. All was not over yet. My last card was to be played and it won. "Well, Consul, this man and I do not propose to go back to the captain's old tub. We volunteer for Her Majesty's service!"

The consul laughed, and informed the captain that he would be expected at the office at two o'clock in the afternoon with our discharges and the money which was due us.

What clothing we had was badly rotted by the effect of salt water and guano; therefore we had no reason to return to the Grenfalls for our old rags. Out of the office we went in high glee. The first sailor I met on the

* Years ago canned vegetables and fruit were unknown at sea; for that reason lime-juice was served to the men daily, as a preventive of scurvy. English vessels were nicknamed "lime-juicers" on that account.

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street gave us directions to a sailors' boarding-house. Portuguese Joe was the landlord's title. No time was lost in making his acquaintance. The mere fact that we were two sailors to be paid off that day was sufficient recommendation.

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CHAPTER VII

IN HER MAJESTY'S SERVICE

No money in advance, nor baggage as security for our board, was required. Nothing in the house was too good for us; we could have anything we wanted, and, oh, how glad the other boarders were to see us! I almost felt at that time as if I had met about twenty long-lost brothers. All that affection cost Jimmy and me several rounds of drink for the "house." That afternoon we went to the consulate and received our discharges and pay. The money was in Brazilian currency, and, together, our money amounted to a hundred and fifty-five thousand reis—twenty reis equal to a cent of United States money. Bookkeeping in that country requires the use of a large number of figures.

Our first venture was to get new suits of

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clothes and enjoy the luxury of a much-needed fresh-water bath, when "Richard was himself again." What a change in our mode of living! Fruit of all kinds to be had for almost nothing; comfortable beds to sleep in; fresh food and vegetables to eat. The only thing I objected to was that we had too many newly found friends. I was strictly temperate at that time. Jimmy made me his banker, with the condition that I should give him money only in small amounts.

Brazil is a very large country, and at that time was the only empire in South America. Dom Pedro III was emperor. His palace was close to the city of Rio. I saw him several times, as he frequently rode through the city in his carriage, always escorted by his body-guard of thirty cavalrymen. He was a very fine-looking young man with fair complexion. No doubt he was the most progressive ruler Brazil ever had. Now he is dead and Brazil is a Republic. Rio de Janeiro is the capital, and a most beautiful city it is. Viewing it from the bay in the night-time, it resembles the dress-

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circle in an immensely large theatre, the street-lights forming the rows of seats. The language is Portuguese, much similar to Spanish. I had very little difficulty in making myself understood when conversing with the natives. There was not a sewer in the city. Large tubs about three feet high, eighteen inches in diameter, were used in the houses for all refuse and waste material, and, when filled, they were carried on the heads of slaves at night-time and emptied into the bay. A large building at the water's edge was the public dumping ground. The slaves were nearly all genuine Africans, naked to the waist, the breast and face tattooed in different designs, by scarring the skin with a knife.

When one of those fellows came down the street on a dog-trot, singing "Hoo! hoo! hoo! hoo!" I would get out of his way quickly. It was a wonder to me how they could balance those heavy tubs on their heads and keep swinging their arms at the same time.

The native liquor is cashass, distilled from sugar-cane. Take equal parts of pure alcohol

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and water, put in a very liberal quantity of creosote, and you will have a good sample of cashass—flavour, smell, and strength will be the same as the genuine article. One evening, on returning to the boarding-house, there was quite an excitement in the dining-room. My friend Jimmy was laid out on the table, with three men holding him down; he was in spasms and frothing at the mouth. My impression was that he had been poisoned. After a while he quieted down and went to sleep. The next morning he confidentially remarked to me that he had no more use for any of "that —— cashass." My reason for describing the liquor is to give an idea of its strength. Once, when I was on an English man-of-war, it was probably the cause of a friend's being drowned and of getting me into a serious scrape.

I would frequently take a stroll down to the military dock where the boat from the man-of-war landed. It was interesting to observe the peculiarities of the different nationalities. The Americans were the most intelligent, very neat in appearance, their clothing of

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fine material and well made, dark blue flannel shirts embroidered with black silk, a white silk star on each corner of the wide collars, a silk ribbon with the name of the ship in gilt letters on the sailor hats. When their boats landed the officers would get out, then the boat's crew, with the exception of one man, going where they pleased, returning after a time, and pulling off to their ship. Next were the Englishmen. Their clothes fitted awkwardly. In appearance they were not so bright and cheerful. No going ashore for them! A midshipman was always in charge of the boat, every man being required to remain in his seat. The Italians, Spanish, French, and Brazilians were a dirty, barefooted lot, probably not one in ten being able to read or write. The English always had difficulty in getting men for the navy. Low wages, flogging with the cat-o'-nine-tails, and no chance for promotion, were the chief reasons. A law was passed allowing any seaman in the British merchant service to volunteer in any part of the world for Her Majesty's service. That was the reason why I

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got my discharge from the Grenfalls. I remained at Portuguese Joe's for two weeks, my money being spent in sight-seeing. Then I went on board Her Majesty's frigate Madagascar and shipped for five years as an ordinary seaman. My pay was one pound sixteen shillings—about nine dollars—a month.

I had to retain the name of Mike Murray on account of the discharge from the last ship. Cloth was furnished to me—flannel and other articles—for clothing, everything being charged to me excepting hammock and bag. With the assistance of the other sailors, I soon had clothing made and became a full-fledged man-of-war's-man. The Madagascar was a very large frigate with two tiers of guns, and had been stationed at Rio for a number of years without leaving the harbour. The admiral of the South Atlantic station made her the flag-ship of the fleet. Only about one third of the full complement of men was on board, and, consequently, we had no drilling at the big guns or making and furling sails. But we had "holy-stoning" decks enough to make up for it. At

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four o'clock every morning we were routed out of hammocks to wash decks. Sand and a little water would be sprinkled on the deck, each man would have a piece of flat sandstone, and then, on our knees, we would do some mighty hard scouring, hence the name of "holystoning." Afterwards, with the use of plenty of water, the sand and dirt would be washed off. Then, with swabs, the deck would be dried and afterwards swept with brooms. By that time it would be seven o'clock, and then we had breakfast.

Jimmy came on board and shipped a few days after myself. We both belonged to the same mess. He had a picnic, as I gave him my share of grog to drink. Each mess was composed of fourteen men, each man in turn being cook of the mess for one day. His work was to set the table, draw rations, and bring the food from the galley. At twelve-thirty he would take a bucket and get the grog. The grog was one half gill of Jamaica rum and three half gills of water, mixed, making one half pint. Each mess had a measure holding a little less

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than that quantity. The cook would give each man his allowance, and the difference in the measures after fourteen men had been served would be considerable; that would be the cook's perquisite. Orders had been given to refit the Madagascar with entirely new rigging. The Brazilian Government had given permission to use one of their ship-houses to work in. Every day a gang of us were taken ashore to fit up the standing rigging. We were at that work for two months. The experience and knowledge I acquired in that brief time made me a good sailor. The English Government had the lease of a small island in the harbour on which were erected a number of buildings containing supplies for the navy. As we returned to the ship at night, our boat would stop there and bring off the paymaster. One evening we had to wait for him. As was the English custom, the boat was rowed a few hundred yards from the dock, then "Peak oars!" was the order, each man holding his oar straight up, the handle resting on the bottom of the boat, the blade in the air. It was the second cutter with

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fourteen oars, two men on each seat, quite a fine sight, but very tedious for the men. We had a sudden change from the sublime to the ridiculous that time. Two of the crew had got into an argument. One of them, getting excited, emphasized his remarks by lifting his oar and bringing it down on the bottom of the boat. That ended the debate abruptly. The boat, being old and rotten, could not stand such treatment. The force of the blow knocked a big hole in the bottom. In a few seconds all hands were in the water, men and oars badly mixed up. Those of us who could swim struck out for dry land, the remainder saving themselves by clinging to the wreck.

We had very little work to do after the old frigate was newly rigged. I would look out of the gun-ports and watch the shipping in the harbour. One day the United States brig Perry came in from a cruise on the African coast and anchored close to us. She was a beautiful vessel. All the crew appeared to be happy and contented. They were a fine, active lot of men. I should have liked to exchange

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places with any of them. Finally they went on another cruise in quest of slavers. The next time I saw the Perry was in Boston during the war, and I was then one of her officers, in a position I little dreamed of holding when I watched her leaving the harbour of Rio de Janeiro.

I soon became discontented and homesick on the old frigate. My messmates, knowing me to be a "blawsted Yankee," as they called me, made me ill-natured. I usually returned what they gave. After several fights they let me alone, but I was punished by being put on the black-list for fighting. That meant being kept at work all day long cleaning brass-work, etc. At dinner hour I would be on the quarter-deck with my bowl of grog, an extra half pint of water being introduced, and I then received a spoon with holes in it with which to sup the grog. With my cap under my arm, I would be ordered to drink Her Majesty's health. It was a tedious job sipping that infernal stuff out of the bowl with the spoon. It would run out as fast as I dipped it up. Some-

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times there would be ten or twelve men undergoing the same punishment. In the evening I would have to stand one hour on the quarter-deck, toeing one of the seams. Poor Jimmy got into a scrape, so I had him drinking Her Majesty's health with me. This was also the case with a half-breed American Indian from Massachusetts, and a greenhorn from England, and a very troublesome quartette we proved to be. That night all four of us deserted. The first lieutenant had his gig condemned and got a new one to replace it. While we were doing the seam-toeing act he came on deck and ordered us to get into the new gig and pull around the ship, so that he could see how it set in the water. A conversation between us while rowing made it plain that all were anxious to run away. We went on the gun deck and had a quiet talk. Everything was arranged for going ashore. The boat could not be hoisted up, as there were no spare davits for it. That just suited us.

At bedtime we got into our hammocks with our clothes on, and about three o'clock we got

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our bags containing all our clothing and took them on the gun deck. Matt, the half-breed, got into the boat from the gun ports and hauled it around to the bow port. The bags were then handed down. Jimmy had gone back for something and we were waiting for him. At last he came and handed me a pocket-book. All of us got into the boat, and away we went. No one had seen us leaving. There were three decks in that frigate, the spar, the gun, and the lower or berth deck. The crew swung their hammocks on the latter. What few officers and men there were on duty at night would be on the spar deck, so there was no one on the gun deck to bother us, and all below were asleep. Had there been a full crew, arrangements would have been different and our plan frustrated. When we got into the city, Matt and the greenhorn went ashore. Jimmy and I concluded to take a trip up the bay. By seven o'clock we were quite a distance from the city. The boat was run ashore and our bags were taken out. The dry land was good enough for us. Something to eat was next in

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order. The pocket-book was then examined and found to contain eighty thousand reis, Brazilian money—forty dollars. Then Jimmy explained how he got it. A new man slept next to my worthy chum, and every night he would place his pocket-book between the mattress and the canvas hammock, and lie on the whole affair himself, feeling secure against all loss. Just where the pocket-book lay there was a lump bulging out in the canvas, so Jim cut a slit in the right place and the booty was his.

A short distance from the landing-place were a number of slaughter-houses, and the butchers were very much surprised to see two man-of-war's-men with their baggage in their neighbourhood. One of their number could speak Spanish, so a friendly conversation took place which ended in their purchasing our clothes—bags and all. We received a fair price, both parties being satisfied with the bargain. After eating a good breakfast in one of their houses, we bade our new acquaintances good-bye. With plenty of money in our pockets, and on shore, everything seemed quite pleasant. Our plans were

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soon agreed upon—to take a walking tour to the south, have a view of the country, get to the seaport of St. Catharines, and ship on some vessel for the United States. It was necessary to make a détour of the city to get on our right road. After awhile we met a market-woman with fruit and bought enough for our dinner. Sitting under a tree, we enjoyed our picnic very much. All our money was then counted; there proved to be one hundred and seventy thousand reis altogether. A fourteen-thousand-reis bill I put inside the lining of my hat, the balance in my pocket. During the rest, Jim proposed going into the city to make some purchases for our journey. We went—and that was a grand mistake. When we passed the Hamburg House, kept by a Dutchman, we were reminded that we were thirsty, so we went in and sat down at a table and ordered a bottle of English ale. Just then I noticed a young fellow go out of the door. After awhile I asked about the ale—why they did not bring it? They replied that they had to send out for it. Shortly afterwards the English consul's "runner" came in with two vigi-

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lantes and, pointing to us, said, "Esas dos"—"Those two." That settled it! We had been "given away" for the reward, three pounds sterling—about fifteen dollars each—being the amount for apprehension of deserters from Her Majesty's service, and off to the calaboose we were marched. About twelve hours' liberty on shore was all we had enjoyed. We were taken into the office and searched, and the money was taken out of my pocket and carefully counted. They gave me a receipt for it. Very greatly to their disgust, no big bank roll was found on my chum. I never saw a cent of that money again. Our loss was somebody's gain that time, sure enough. We were put into a cell with about fifteen other prisoners, among them two sailors, deserters, from the English sloop-of-war Siren. From them we found out the rules of our new quarters. No food was furnished to prisoners —either to buy it, or have friends bring it, was the custom. As they had been locked up for two days without food, they had a yearning for something to eat. I called the turnkey and made him understand in Spanish that I wanted

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coffee and rolls for four. In Portuguese he made me understand that money would have to be furnished first. I showed the receipt for money in the office, but that would not do, so I took the fourteen-thousand-reis bill out of my cap and handed it to him. He gave a queer, astonished look and then a sickly smile, but we got the coffee and rolls, however. That little luncheon cost me just two thousand reis. I considered myself lucky to get the change back. They got nearly all of it, though, the next day. Finally, we four deserters were taken outside the city limits and, much to our surprise, landed in the penitentiary. Not having committed any crime against the country, or having had a trial, we found ourselves convicts "doing time" for nothing.

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CHAPTER VIII

THE CAT-O'-NINE-TAILS

No red tape was wasted upon us. The formalities were few. Being taken into a small building, we took off all our clothing, which was tied in bundles with our names on them; then, after we had each received a pair of blue overalls and a blue shirt, the change was complete. Barefooted and bareheaded, we were marched to the cell houses and locked up. Food was scarce the first day. We had nothing to eat, as no rations had been issued for us. The second day only one meal was provided, a small one at that. The third day, however, we would get all the law allowed. My appetite was getting quite keen about this time. When the prospect of getting something to eat looked promising, they found out that a slight mistake had been made in our case.

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The English consul had leased a small building on the premises as a lock-up for British sailors who got into trouble or refused to do duty on their respective ships. When the vessels were ready for sea, the sailors would be put on board and all the expenses deducted from their wages. So we were dressed up again and marched over to the consul's pen. The same trouble about the food occurred there. If they had made just one more mistake we certainly should have starved to death. In a few days we were marched to the consulate and then returned to the Madagascar. Our experience on shore had been a novelty but not entirely a pleasant one. A warm reception was given us on the frigate—twenty-eight days each of solitary confinement on bread and water, twenty-one days on the black-list and lying in irons from sunset until sunrise. The value of the lost boat and all expenses, including the reward, was to be deducted from our wages, and, besides, we would have to pay for a new outfit of clothing. At nine dollars a month, it would be some time before our accounts would be squared up.

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Jim and I swore point-blank that we knew nothing about the boat, and they never got it back. Somebody was ahead a new boat, anyhow. I never paid my share of the loss, either. Matt, the half-breed, was caught in a coffee-saloon before ten o'clock of the same morning and at once taken back to the ship. On our arrival he was doing "solitary." The greenhorn was the only one of the party to get away. Aft, on the lower or third deck, was the midshipmen's and clerks' mess-room, on one side of the deck. Abaft that was a bulkhead or partition which left a space to the stern that was used as a store-room for the admiral's and captain's supplies. In there was also a room used as the "solitary." Forward of the partition was where the prisoners were kept in irons. Iron bars ten feet in length, a knot on one end, a padlock on the other, and a big lot of shackles completed the outfit. The men would sit on deck in a row, each one placing a shackle on each ankle. The first man would run the end of the bar through the eyes of his shackle and then the next would do the same, the padlock

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was fastened, and we would be secure for the night. The bar lay underneath, resting on deck. Walking or standing was impossible. The midshipmen and clerks swung their hammocks above us. Once in a while we would rap on the partition and, through the crack, would inquire about Matt's health and comfort, "If the hardtack and water agreed with him, and how would he like a nice beefsteak?" As Matt was in the "solitary," Jim and I had to wait for our turn. So we were doing the black-list and iron punishment together. About the time my black-list was half over I got into more trouble.

The captain lived on shore, near the Sugar Loaf. His boat had left the ship and some article which he wanted had been forgotten. Such a dereliction was simply terrible. The captain of a man-of-war in those days was a trifle more despotic than the Czar of Russia. A cutter with fourteen oars was "called away" in a hurry to rectify the mistake, but a man was short for the crew. The lieutenant gave orders for some one to get into the boat. Just then I

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was working by the companion-way—the ladder on ship's side. Much to my surprise, I was told to be more active in obeying orders and to get into the cutter. I did so. My being a prisoner at the time seemed not to have been taken into consideration. It was quite a distance to shore down the bay. The man next me on the thwart gave me a nudge and said, "Mike, my mon, show 'em your 'eels on shore." The others near me also had something to say, much to my annoyance, as I did not want any one to suspect what my intentions were. We landed soon after the captain's boat did. There being no midshipman in the cutter, we all stepped on shore. One of the men spoke to the coxswain in a low tone, and I was ordered back into the cutter. I refused and stated that I was going to a saloon for a drink. I walked away rather quickly. Looking back, I saw that all the men excepting one were running after me. Then I ran as fast as possible towards a steep rocky hill. I was gaining on them rapidly. Some perpendicular rocks prevented my going farther in that direction. Then I turned

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around, intending to run down the hill and break through the crowd for another race. Just as I got near them, I stumbled, falling on my face and rolling over into a hole full of muddy water. I was badly hurt and my nose was bleeding freely. They took me to the cutter and pulled off to the frigate.

On our arrival all had to go on deck and stand in a line toeing a seam, to be searched for smuggled liquor by the ship's corporal, the lieutenant looking on. Then the coxswain reported me for attempting to run away. The lieutenant saw that I was covered with mud and blood. He asked me if the report was true. I answered "Yes," and told him that the whole boat's crew were a dirty lot of curs for bringing me back after inducing me to run. The lieutenant looked at them all slowly, and then at me. With a contemptuous sneer, he said, "Thank you, men," and sent them forward, at the same time ordering me to be put in irons. The ship's corporal led me away below, at the same time growling about the trouble he was having on my account. About half an hour

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afterward my old friend, the corporal, made his appearance. He released me from irons and escorted me on deck. The lieutenant asked me if I was badly hurt, and all particulars in regard to my running away. Much to my surprise, he told me to resume my work, that he was to blame in a measure himself, as he had no right to allow a prisoner to leave the ship.

My first business was to see the coxswain and some of the boat's crew and give them a good plain cursing. In a few days afterward, Matt's time in the "solitary" expired and I was locked up in his place. One half pound of hard-tack per day and one quart of water was my allowance. Nothing very interesting occurred during the time, excepting once when the captain's steward came into the store-room one day for some wine. He spoke to me through the small iron-barred window which was in the partition on the store-room side. He told me to get my tin cup and hold it up to the bars. With a piece of paper he made a funnel and filled my cup full of good sherry wine. Crackers and raisins were also given me, so I had a high old

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time all to myself that day. The twenty-eight days expired and all my punishment was over. Jimmy relieved me, and when he went into the door it was the last time we ever saw each other. After all the hard times and many scrapes we had got into together, we parted without a chance to shake hands. I never heard of him afterward. Twice while in Liverpool, England, I went to his address, 17 Lower Frederick Street, but no one knew anything about him.

Matt, the half-breed, and I got to be friendly and both of us were determined to get away from the frigate. Our only chance was to swim ashore, we not being trusted in any of the boats. It was necessary to wait for a night when there would be no moon and a flood-tide running in from the sea. In the meantime, to avert suspicion, I started making my new clothing. The blue cloth for my best trousers at Government prices was one pound sterling. That I had smuggled from the ship and on shore, to be sold. I was to receive half of what it would sell for. In a few days I

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received five milreis and a long skin of cashass. The cashass is put in skins such as are used for bologna sausage. In that form it can easily be secreted about a sailor's clothing and smuggled on board. The cashass I gave to Matt for safe-keeping, as we should need a good drink before taking our long swim. The five milreis in silver I put in a small bag hanging round my neck. Every night we would sneak up to the gun deck. The prospects not being favourable, we would postpone our trip. One night while I was awake, the ship's corporal came to my hammock with a lantern in his hands. He took a look at me and then went away. I knew then that our plan to go was known. After that I remained in my hammock and let Matt do the prospecting. Finally, one morning, we concluded to make the attempt that night. During the day I had my bag from the rack to do some sewing, and Matt came to me with a blue flannel shirt and asked me to put it in my bag for a while, which, unfortunately, I did. That night the corporal came to my hammock twice

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before midnight; then I dozed off to sleep and was awakened by some one feeling my face. It was Matt. He was quite drunk and insisted upon my taking a drink from the skin. He said he was then going to the gun deck to get a rope ready for getting into the water and would return for me when all was ready. That was the last I saw of him. I waited for a while. The effects of the strong liquor put me into a sound sleep. The next thing I knew was that the crew were holystoning the gun deck. The noise of the stones right over my head had awakened me. I put on my clothes and tried to sneak in among them unobserved, but the attempt was a failure. The boatswain saw me. "Hello, Mike, where did you come from? I thought you had gone ashore with Matt," was the salute I received.

It seems that when all hands were called, we were missed at once. Matt's hammock, being the nearest, was examined. He being gone, it was concluded that I was with him. I tried to play innocent, but it was of no use. After breakfast I was ordered before the first lieu-

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tenant and reported for not turning out to scrub decks, and then for aiding and abetting desertion. My bag was brought from the rack and examined. The blue cloth was missing. A stolen shirt, with the owner's name under the collar, was found. Matt stole that shirt. It was the one he had asked me to keep for him. Con duct detrimental to discipline in Her Majesty's service was another charge. The lieutenant then laid down the law to me in splendid style, and ended thus: "Now, Michael Murray, you have made considerable trouble on this frigate, and I shall see that you get 'four dozen.' Then you can desert—that is, if you get the chance. Corporal, put him in irons." When the corporal put the padlock on the bar, he said: "Mike, my lad, you're in for it now!"

About five days afterward I was taken on the quarter-deck again. The lieutenant wanted to know who brought the cashass on board to Matt and myself. I replied that I knew nothing about it and that I had never seen Matt with the liquor in his possession. Then I was told that Matt's body had been found floating

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in the bay. He had on all his clothes excepting cap and shoes. Inside of his shirt was found the skin containing a small quantity of cashass. He must have been quite drunk or he would not have tried to swim such a distance with his clothes on; or it may be that he fell overboard and that that was the reason he did not come back for me as he promised.

"Four dozen" on an English man-of-war means flogging with the cat-o'-nine-tails. The "cat" is a hardwood handle eighteen inches long, to one end of which are attached nine pieces of hard lines, about one eighth of an inch in diameter and eighteen inches long. At the end of each tail is a hard knot. When punishment is to be inflicted the "tails" are soaked in strong brine. That makes them hard and heavy. A wooden grating from a hatchway is placed on end, resting against the bulwarks. All hands are called to witness punishment. Everybody must be present, from the captain to the powder boys. The prisoner is stripped naked to the waist, his feet are lashed to the bottom of the grating, and his arms are stretched out full

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length and fastened. The face and breast are then close to the grating, with no chance remaining of moving the body. The ship's surgeon watches to see that the prisoner does not die while being punished. The boatswain's mate is on the left side. He swings the "cat" over his head with the right hand, at the same time drawing the tails through his left hand. At every stroke nine stripes are cut on the prisoner's back, the knots at the same time making little holes in the skin, about two seconds elapsing between each stroke. After two dozen strokes have been given, the boatswain's mate steps to the other side of the prisoner and gives the remaining two dozen, the skin being cut by that means into diamond-shaped pieces. By the time the punishment is over the man will be covered with blood and greatly exhausted.

I had been keeping very quiet for the last few days in order to avert suspicion. I had been examining the old shackles, and found two that would release me from the bar at any time. One was quite large. By taking off my shoe I could squeeze my foot from the bar.

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The other shackle must have been an odd one, as it had extra large eyes, and would slip nicely over the knob at the end of the bar. I laid them on the deck to have them handy, then I sent for the corporal to take me to the water-closet. When I returned I picked up the shackles that I wanted and placed them over my ankles. When he had gone I put all the other shackles away out of reach so there could be no mixing up. My mind rested easy then. I was having a chance to go before the flogging, instead of after, as the lieutenant proposed. At last, the day for my punishment was set. The captain had come on board the frigate and my conduct was reported. I was brought before him and the charges read to me. Orders were given to have me flogged with the "Thieves'" cat-o'-nine-tails at eight o'clock the next morning. "Four dozen lashes on the bare back." The "Thieves' cat" meant two knots in the tail instead of one. I was to receive extra punishment for a crime I never committed, but the finding of the shirt in my bag had been sufficient.

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CHAPTER IX

THE ESCAPE

When the corporal took me below again I asked him to let me get some clean clothes from my bag. I selected a pair of white duck trousers and a white shirt. I wanted the lightest suit that I could get. The corporal probably thought that I intended dressing neatly for the whipping in the morning. I was very particular in putting the shackles on my ankles, the one with the large eyes going on the left leg, so as to be at the knob end of the bar. The big one went on the right leg. I could not prevent myself from grinning while he was so carefully locking the end of the bar. He gave the lock an extra pull, to satisfy himself that it was fast, and walked off. My hammock, instead of being lashed up sideways, as customary, was merely rolled loosely and left on deck,

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so that I could spread it out for sleeping at night-time. I made a sort of lounge with it and took life easy, for the time being. At nine in the evening, the midshipmen and clerks got into their hammocks, leaving their clothes on top of their sea-chests. I spread out my bed and lay down. My position had to be straight out, on my back, as the iron bar had to be taken into consideration. Soon all but myself were asleep. Time passed very slowly. I knew the corporal would have a look at me about midnight and that then I should be ready for my trip. I could tell the time by hearing the ship's bell striking every half hour. About one in the morning, I was getting very uneasy in my mind, as I knew it was about time for the tide to change and run out to sea—a very serious matter for me. At last my friend made his appearance. Everything was secure and satisfactory, so he went away. Then I commenced operations. First, I got out of the shackles, and taking off all my clothing, tied it in a neat, flat bundle. My money and knife I left hanging to my neck. Next I gathered up

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some clothing belonging to the midshipmen and laid it on my bed. Two pairs of shoes went next. One pair was stuck in the shackles, the other pair was stuck, heels downward, into the first pair. Then two caps were stuck together for a head. The whole, being covered over with my blanket, made a very good dummy. I was highly pleased with my midnight work. The toes, sticking straight up, gave a very artistic effect to the job. Taking my hammock lashing and bundle, I went to the midshipmen's messroom.

With a stool to stand on, I took a view of the harbour from the small port-hole—about twenty inches square. These holes are open in harbour only for ventilation and light on the lower deck. At sea they must be kept closed and lashed securely. As I expected, the tide was ebbing out to sea. The ship had swung around "head on" to the city. I had no choice but to go, however. Fastening my clothes to the end of the lashing, I lowered them about eight feet, not intending to get them wet. Securing the lashing to an eyebolt, inward, I got

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out of the port-hole and let myself down into the water. The clothes had been dropped too low and got wet. That made them too heavy to fasten on the top of my head as I had intended. I released the bundle from the lashing, keeping it in my left hand, and then I drifted past the frigate's stern with the tide. In a few minutes I commenced swimming at an angle from the frigate, and then headed for the city. After a long swim I began to get tired and was breathing hard from exertion. The bundle worried me, and the now swift tide became too much to contend with. I had got only a short distance past the frigate, and was convinced that I could not reach the city. Then I turned back, repassed the frigate, and headed for the southern shore. The tide, at the same time, carried me towards the entrance of the harbour. I was in hopes of getting to land before I should be carried past the Sugar Loaf. As a last recourse I could let the clothing go, and that I would not do until it became a necessity. As I was swimming at an angle with the tide, not so much exertion was needed. Much to

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my relief I saw the dim outline of a vessel to my left. I then swam with the tide, and in a few minutes I was holding on the anchor-chain. I had a good rest and, at the same time, thought what was best for me to do. I could easily get on board at the bow, but if it were an English vessel my name would be "Dennis," sure enough. I proposed to take no more chances than necessary that night. Finally I let go of the chain and drifted to the stern. There I found the vessel's boat in the water. I got the bundle into the boat and climbed in myself.

The first thing I did was to read the vessel's name. I was then satisfied that she was a Brazilian coaster. I wrung the water from my clothes and was soon dressed up. There were no oars in the boat; if there had been I would have cut the painter and sculled with a single oar for the western shore. When I felt strong enough, I climbed up the painter to the taffrail and got on deck. No one was to be seen, so I commenced an investigation. She was a brig. On each side of the quarter-deck was a cubby-

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hole—a small white house with sliding-doors, just large enough for a man to sleep in. The starboard one was empty, so I knew the captain was on shore. In the port side was the mate, asleep. The cool night wind blowing on my clothes made me quite chilly. Not having decided exactly what to do, I was standing by the wheel making up my mind. A crisis was at hand. The mate crawled out of his hole, about half awake, rubbing his eyes. He caught a glimpse of me, all dressed in white, standing close to the wheel. Before I could say a word he gave a terrible yell; then he stuttered out, "Por Dios, que es esta?"—"For God's sake, what is that?" Staggering back a few steps, he turned around and ran forward, disappearing down the forecastle scuttle. Then I went to the taffrail and got the boat's painter ready for being cast off in an instant; taking my knife from my neck, I opened it and fastened the lanyard around my right wrist. If there was to be a hostile reception, I intended to cast the boat loose and jump overboard. With the wind and strong tide, I would land

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