

Black Ralph; or, The Helmsman of Hurlgate

J. H. Ingraham

Table of Contents

<u>Black Ralph; or, The Helmsman of Hurlgate</u>	1
<u>J. H. Ingraham</u>	1
<u>CHAPTER I.</u>	1
<u>CHAPTER II.</u>	8
<u>CHAPTER III.</u>	15
<u>CHAPTER IV.</u>	24
<u>CHAPTER V.</u>	32
<u>CHAPTER VI.</u>	39
<u>CHAPTER VII.</u>	42
<u>CHAPTER VIII.</u>	45

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- [CHAPTER I.](#)
 - [CHAPTER II.](#)
 - [CHAPTER III.](#)
 - [CHAPTER IV.](#)
 - [CHAPTER V.](#)
 - [CHAPTER VI.](#)
 - [CHAPTER VII.](#)
 - [CHAPTER VIII.](#)
-

CHAPTER I.

In contemplating the interesting scenes and events of the American Revolution, we are accustomed to view them as only affecting ourselves as Americans, and as occurring only within the boundaries of our own land; so that a story of the 'Revolution' to be laid in England or France would at first view startle and appear an incongruity of history. Yet the one being our foe and the other our ally, closely involve their interests as individuals with ours and throw as profound a degree of sympathy over the progress and issue of events on the common theatre of war, as if their own fields had been the scenes of contest. The war of the Revolution produced in the vales and homes of England and the vine-clad hills of France, many a scene of domestic trial and woe as touching as was daily witnessed among the rude forest homes of our own land. Brave warriors parted from wives and sweethearts in sunny France to join the issue with us for liberty; many a gallant soldier bade last adieu to a weeping maiden. ere, obedient to his king, he buckled on his sword to sail the seas to do battle against the rebels of the crown; and many a hardy patriot of our fathers shouldered his rifle, amid prayers and tears, to take the field to oppose the invader. Yet, beneath their armed breasts they wore human hearts all the foe, the ally, and the rebel! The tears of the one fell as sweetly in the eye of Pity as the other! The roar of every battle-field shook France and England as well as our own land, penetrating the remotest hamlet, and making many an expecting heart shrink. the pulses of the three great nations were for the time bound together and throbbed as one. The interest of each was equally deep, where wives, mothers, and maidens were the judges of that interest. The war was one the issue one to theme! And many is the tale still heard beneath the vintnor's porch in *la belle* France, whose theme is the war of our Revolution, and many is the sad memory of that contest yet preserved on the gossip bench of many a village ale-house in merry England. How many were the lives at that day, began in Europe that terminated in America. If every man's life, fairly written, be a romance out-doing fiction, how many thousands of truthful stories in that war opened in England or France to close their scenes here perhaps in blood.

We shall, therefore, make no further apology for opening our story, which professes to be a Romance of American waters on the shores of France. In doing it, we but follow in the steps of the circumstances of the time and of events which will bring us by and by to the more immediate scene of the Tale.

Our story opens in the month of June, 1777, on the north coast of France, in the neighborhood of Calais. It was one of those sultry days, so common in the tropics and which sometimes vary the monotonous heat of climates

Black Ralph; or, The Helmsman of Hurlgate

further north, that a young man was engaged with a hand-telescope in idly surveying from a balcony the expanse of water which lay between the smooth beach at his feet, and the white cliffs of England that appeared on the northern horizon like a snowy cloud sinking to its rest. The place on which he stood was a sort of ledge or platform, projecting from a window in a tower far over the precipice. It communicated with a large apartment within the tower, which itself formed the salient angle of an antiquated and highly picturesque chateau of the age of the Twelfth Louis. Though bearing the marks of time and of many a siege, it was not ruinous; but still wore the imposing and martial air of its old feudal state. Modern refinement had also added to its elegancies and comforts which the iron age of its founder knew little of.

After sweeping his glass once more indolently over the channel which was beautifully mottled with sunshine and shadow from dark detached clouds that sailed slowly over it, the young man turned it a moment landward upon the city of Calais, which with its grey walls, towers and stately citadel lay a league distant to his right, and then listlessly, yet with a slight impatient gesture, threw it aside.

'So,' he said pacing the balcony to and fro, 'this is a wearisome pastime enough; my eyes ache with watching the dull movements of fishing shallows and the rapid flight of snowy sea-gulls. The white chalk cliffs of Britain tire me with their sameness, and even Calais with its busy quay ceases to afford my wearied vision interest. I will take my horse and ride along the sands a few miles; perhaps from yonder headland I may get a sight of the van of the squadron before the sun sets. To-day is the third day since it was to have weighed at Havre, and for two nights the troops had been bivouacked on the beach waiting its arrival to take them on board. I am heartily tired of the land and pant once more to tread the deck of my ship.'

'Gallantly spoken this, for a youth who is the guest of a lady whose charms would have broken many a brave lance in the good old days of chivalry, and to whose youth and beauty even modern gallants do not fail to do homage.'

The young sailor slightly colored as he acknowledged the presence upon the balcony of his father and cousin.

'Nay,' he said gaily approaching them, 'I trust my fair cousin Josephine will not attribute my anxiety to depart to any indifference to her grace and beauty, but rather to the zeal and ambition natural to a young man, who is for the first time about to enter upon the warlike duties of his profession. Were I like my honored father here, an old warrior, I should be then too proud and happy to cast my leaves of laurel into your lap, cousin, and reclining at your feet, let you wreath from them coronals, and bind them on my brow. But I must first go and win them.'

'Fitly spoken, cousin,' said the maiden laughing; shall I give you a half-century's leave of absence, ere you return to honor me with the duty you have imposed upon me.' The last words were spoken in a lower tone, and conveyed a deeper meaning than they seemed to do.

The young man started, fixed a penetrating glance upon her downcast face, and then answered, coldly. 'Perhaps a half century were a suitable period, lady; nor in less time can I hope to win the laurels of a hero, nor in less time do I think you will make the wreath I idly spoke of.'

The brow of the lady glowed, and her eye at first flashed, and then fell heavily upon the cheek, with the weight of tears that filled them to the brim, yet were not shed. He bit his lip, as he saw the effect he had produced, yet did not attempt to alleviate it, and turning on his heel began coolly to survey the channel. The old Marquis Fernay was not so indifferent to what usually passed around him, as not to discover by their manner, that some misunderstanding, the grounds of which he was ignorant of, existed between his son and niece. He looked from one to the other, and shook his head with indecision and embarrassment. On one side Josephine was standing with her large eyes shaded by their tear-weighed lids, her head dropped, and her cheek half turned, and her whole attitude expressing graceful grief. On the other stood his son Louis, fingering nervously with the gold tassel of his sword knot, and with his back towards his cousin seemingly absorbed in the contemplation of the opposite cliffs

Black Ralph; or, The Helmsman of Hurlgate

of England.

‘Humph! humph!’ muttered the Marquis; ‘here is more mischief again brewing. There is no planning no appoplectic admiral now. I wanted to make them good friends, and to get them to marry, and keep the family estates together, they are determined to hate each other. But yet she loves *him* i’ll be sworn. I can see that with half an eye. It is all of this scape grace Louis! I brought her from the convent where I put her when her parents died, on purpose to see Louis when he came home on this visit, and that he might see her. Yet Jacques and Lisette, my valet and laundress both say that Captain Louis don’t care a fig for her, though she thinks a great deal of him. Confound the boy. If now I had kept her locked up in the convent, and he had happened to have heard I had a niece then rich and beautiful, devil a convent wall in all France would have kept him outside or her in. They would have flown away at matins like two pigeons. But just because I bring them together, they must turn up their noses to each other stand back to back one ready to cry, the other to sacre. I’ll lock him up the rascal and keep him on bread and water. Louis!’

‘Sir!’

‘You turn and say sir, as demure as if you had done nothing to offend me.’

‘I am indeed innocent of the intention, father,’ said the young man surprised.

‘But you *have* offended me.’

‘Then I am exceedingly sorry, sir.’

‘Sorry is not enough. You must do as I wish you to do.’

‘Certainly, sir. Your will shall always be my own.’

‘Very well, sir. Come to my room by and by. I leave you here with your cousin. Entertain her boy,’ added the Marquis in better humor: ‘ah, you lucky dog, if when I was a young man of your age but never mind; look after your cousin, and show her the prospect with the spy glass. Josephine I leave you to Louis’s care. You will come to dinner together, when you hear the chateau bell ring. Adieu, mes enfans!’

The Marquis de Fernay, then quit the balcony by the oriel window leading from it, leaving the cousins alone. For a few moments they stood in the attitude in which we have described them. The tears which had filled Josephine’s eyes and which her pride restrained from falling, were forced back into their surcharged fountains, for wounded pride will quickly dry a dewy eyelid and restore the fire to the eye. Louis still kept his back towards her, though with a side glance observing her, and began to hum an air in the last Opera.

This young gentleman who chose to make himself so agreeable just now, was the only son of Le General the Marquis De Fernay, one of the eldest families of the *ancient regime*. His father had, like all his ancestors, distinguished himself in military life, and rose to the highest rank therein. He had now retired from active service to his chateau, there to pass the remainder of his days. Hospitable and convivial, he found sufficient society in that of the neighboring barons of the better classes of the citizens of Calais, as well as in the occasional presence of his son and niece. Louis had exhibited an early prediliction for the sea, originated and cherished by his vicinage to the ocean, and at a suitable age, the Marquis placed him on board of a ship of the line commanded by his own brother, Admiral Fernay. Louis became at once enthusiastically attached to his profession, and at the age of nineteen, a year after his admission into the Navy, he was regarded as one of the most promising youths in the service. He was handsome, frank, and full of that daring spirit which ensures success, as well as promises a life of danger. His uncle, the Admiral, was a man of stern and cold character, and had little sympathy with those beneath him in rank, or with youth. He had taken occasion in several instances to reprove his nephew with that licence of

Black Ralph; or, The Helmsman of Hurlgate

language which relationship is supposed to allow, but which Louis's spirit did not fail deeply to feel. He became prejudiced against his uncle, and took no pains to suppress his dislike to him. This increased the tyrannous exercise of power on the part of the former, which at length rose to such a height, that Louis asked and obtained leave to be transferred to another ship of war. But before he had taken his departure, an attack of apoplexy carried off the Admiral, and in him the only enemy Louis had on earth. This occurred two years before he is now introduced to the reader, on a brief leave of absence from his ship of war, which was attached to the squadron of Admiral D'Estaing, destined to the American states, then struggling for their independence, and with which France had just formed an alliance. D'Estaing's squadron had sailed from Toulon, and was to be joined at Gibraltar by a fleet of transports of troops from Havre and Calais, under the convoy of a line of battle ship and frigate. To this battle-ship Louis was attached as a third lieutenant, and learning that she would lay off Calais till the troops were embarked, he had obtained leave to post up to his chateau, and there await their arrival. With what impatience he was now watching for the first lift of the fore yard of his ship above the horizon, has already been seen. He had been at home now three weeks, and notwithstanding the amusements in doors, of the chase, of the Theatre in Calais, and the society of his fair cousin, he became ennuied the first week, and took no pains to conceal his impatience for the arrival of his ship.

To most young gentlemen the society of a very lovely girl for such Josephine Fernay certainly was would have made the wings of time full swift in their flight. What could be the cause of this indifference to her presence, this blindness to her beauty? Louis himself was a fine looking manly fellow of twenty-two, with black flowing locks, a large full dark eye, a noble figure and every way endowed with powers of mind and person to captivate and win; and in the presence of other ladies had more than once deeply betrayed the susceptibility of his heart. Yet his cousin Josephine for all the impression she made upon him might have been eighty years old, and lame and blind at that. Now this was very provoking to the Marquis, who had determined they should fall in love with each other and by and by marry.

The youthful Countess Josephine herself was an enchanting girl of eighteen summers: with soft hazel eyes in which a hundred little loves lay sleeping; a brilliant complexion; a cloud of the richest dark brown hair; a person beautifully rounded, a neck, hand and foot that were perfect. Her carriage was light yet full of sweet dignity, her voice musical and her heart susceptible. She had great sweetness of disposition yet was high-spirited and determined qualities that marked peculiarly the race from which she sprung. Moreover, Josephine had loved Louis when she first saw him three weeks before, on his arrival. And he had become wholly overpowered by her beauty at the same instant and was about to tell her on the spot how romantically he loved her, when the old Marquis seeing the impression made upon both by the other's presence hastened to take present advantage of the propitious moment, and said with great joy,

'Ah, boy I knew you would like each other! I planned it! I had her brought from the convent where she was at school, on purpose to surprise you. Its planned you are to marry her.'

'Then I shall be sure not to,' answered Louis quickly and firmly.

'Why what's the matter with the boy?' repeated the Marquis with a look of contempt.

'That I do not mean to love or marry to please other people. This is an affair in which I shall do all the planning myself, father.'

'But I thought you seemed to like her. Isn't she beautiful?'

'Perfectly but I won't marry nor care a fig for her if you have already planned before hand that I should. I suppose she has a hand in the plan too.'

'Not a finger tip! It is all my own and the Admiral's.'

Black Ralph; or, The Helmsman of Hurlgate

`What Admiral?

`Her father.'

`The late Admiral de Fernay! Is this his daughter?

`Yes, your cousin. Did I not mention her name!'

`You may be sure then I shall neither love, marry, nor '

`Nor what?'

`Nor trouble her long with my presence.'

Such was the first interview and denouement between Louis and his cousin. He might in consideration of her loveliness have got over the fact that she had been `planned' to meet him and produce an impression upon him which was to ripen into marriage; but he could never get over the fact that she was the daughter of his tyrannical uncle, the apoplectic Admiral. He from this time looked upon her with a sort of mingled fear and dislike. He could see in her sweet smiles only his sardonic ones; in her voice hear only *his* tones. Her air, manner and presence irresistibly recalled the idea of his old tormentor. He felt her beauty; he was not insensible to her worth as he saw more of her, and he would have reasoned himself into the absurdity of his prejudices against an innocent girl, so far, at least as to forbear betraying his feelings to the unconscious object which excited them. At length he in a measure overcame the feeling by nobly and resolutely adopting an opposite course of conduct to that which his emotions of strange dislike would have suggested. In this he had much to overcome, but he was so far successful as to remove from her mind those painful sensations which the sudden change in his manner towards her had produced. So, that the second week of his visit he found himself behaving with tolerable civility to his cousin; and in his engaging presence the smiles and roses which an undefined fear of having displeased him had driven from her face, came back again. In a good-feeling moment, too, he promised the anxious old Marquis that he would for the remainder of his visit endeavor to forget that his cousin was the Admiral's daughter, and regard her only in the light of his father's amiable ward.

When alone and reflecting upon these things Louis could not but acknowledge the beauty and grace of his sweet cousin and the claims she presented above all women he had ever seen to his admiration.

`Oh,' said he when returning to his room after an agreeable hour in her company on horseback along the sea-shore, `Oh that my belle cousin had been any other than my uncle's daughter! I can forgive my father's planning for our union, as it is natural for the old *noblesse* to wish to retain their lands in their own families. This is very well, and the young Countess Josephine's estate would prove no obstacle. But in all the loveliness of her looks, when I am ready to throw myself at her feet, some slight tone or glance so irresistibly reminds me of her father that my devotion is crushed my admiration, but for a strong mental effort, became instant dislike. This will never do to be haunted so by the old Admiral! Yet I feel a deep interest in the fair girl because I have discovered that she loves me!'

Yes, the Countess Josephine passionately loved Louis. She had heard much of him in earlier years and since her dear father's death when the Marquis became her guardian, the fond, partial accounts of his son she often heard from his lips so awakened her interest that at length her heart insensibly, as it often will in such cases when peculiarly susceptible, became interested in him. In truth she was taught to love him ere she beheld him: and, when, at length, this moment arrived this pre-created love was confirmed and sealed as well by his noble and generous appearance as by the kind manner and deep devotion with which her presence first impressed him. How deeply then must she have felt his altered looks his bearing of sudden dislike! How her pride her woman's chaste and holy love upspringing from the freshly broken soil of her heart and leafing, budding, expanding into beauty

Black Ralph; or, The Helmsman of Hurlgate

and fragrance only for his eye his hand.

Yet that eye turns coldly away that hand crushes the tendrils that sought to reach and entwine themselves around his heart. Poor maiden! sad and heavy was her heart till its own sense of the folly of his prejudices nerved him with resolution to combat it. Then she became happier and strove to win the heart which had already so thanklessly got possession of her own. In vain the sweet girl had sought in herself the cause of his antipathy. At length the Marquis told her. From that moment she resolved, by all the sweet power a lovely woman can wield with her heart in the purpose to overcome his prejudice and secure her own happiness by uniting it with his in whose life her own was irretrievably wrapped up. Quietly, deeply, perseveringly she pursued her object, with pride and delicacy, yet with the humility of unrequited love and the perseverance of passion.

Louis's prejudice lessened the stronghold of his pride was shaken, and the day we found him in the balcony, he confessed to his father, that 'if the Countess Josephine had not that peculiar way of turning the eye, like the Admiral, when she smiled, he could love her with all his heart and soul.'

'Let her wear specs,' said the Marquis, laughing.

'I should see it through a ship's side.'

'Suppose you begin then, by forgiving the old Admiral heartily. That'll square accounts, and then confound this cock in the eye of your cousin. You won't care whether it's the Admiral's or mine.'

'I have forgiven him even the blow he once struck me with the flat of his sword.'

'He was impetuous. But forget too.'

'I cannot, with such a resemblance to him as my cousin's face would daily call up.'

'Then I see no prospect of the union without putting out your eyes or her's.'

'No, I can never marry her, for I can never love her. She is a sweet, noble, generous creature I have found that out but I can't abide the Admiral! But more; now that I have discerned, she wishes to win my heart. I find myself fortifying it.'

'Then you deserve to have it carried by storm, or taken by treachery. You shall marry your cousin, or I will disinherit you.'

'I am willing to marry my cousin, but I feel a decided objection to taking the old Admiral with her. Lay the father aside, and I'll wed the daughter, that is, if on better acquaintance, we can agree to love each other.'

This conversation took place the day Louis came to the balcony to look out for his ship, and it was overheard by the fair object of it. From that moment she resolved to forget her cousin, and let her love die in the heart whence it had sprung. The Marquis who had long missed her, found her in her room sad and thoughtful, a few moments before appearing with her on the balcony, to which he invited her for the air and prospect, not expecting to find Louis there. His soliloquy, as we have seen, they overheard, and although the language of it pained her, Josephine resolved not to retreat or betray any emotion. But her heart was too full to conceal it, and in her reply, she was forced to laugh merrily to refrain from weeping, like an April rain. Never were two young people placed in more peculiar circumstances than the cousins, on being left alone on the departure of the Marquis, who resolved to give them one more opportunity of bringing about the consummation of his paternal hopes.

Black Ralph; or, The Helmsman of Hurlgate

They remained as we have described them, Louis with averted face yet watching his cousin's movements; she in a shrinking, pensive attitude, half lingering as love drew her, to half retreating as pride would have driven her from him. At length feeling the embarrassment of her position in the presence of so thoughtless a lover, and recalling her determination to conquer her heart, she made an effort to recover her self-possession, and feel at ease in his presence. Her pride was wounded that she had suffered him to know the true state of her feelings towards him, and she resolved to do away any impressions upon his mind that she was weak and simple, or what was equally to be removed, the idea that she was bold and scheming.

‘So, fair cousin,’ she said with a powerful effort that showed the mastery she had over her feelings, when she would call her power into exercise; ‘so you are soon to leave us! Do you love the sea?’

Louis was surprised at the cool and self-possessed manner of this address from one whom he had known only as timid and shrinking, and turning round he replied with courtesy and an irresistible feeling of respect:

‘Yes, Josephine; to-morrow or the next day, with this south wind my ship will be here.’

‘You will find it an agreeable change from this lonely chateau and its only inmates, an old soldier and a simple girl, for the deck of a battle ship with brave men around you. I am told that sailors love the sea.’

‘Yes, cousin, I already feel an affection for its tumbling waves and wide skies. It is now my home, and I love it as well almost as I love the green vales of France. For the wide sea is even as my native land to me, when my foot is upon a French deck, and the flag of France is flung to the wind above my head,’ answered the young man enthusiastically.

He advanced a step nearer his cousin as he spoke, who retreated a step timidly with down-cast eyes. He felt for a moment vexed, then pleased, as the idea occurred to him that she was no longer *pursuing*. He looked at her and thought he never saw her so lovely but the arch of her eye-brows reminded him of the appoplectic Admiral, and he did *not* throw himself at her feet! His glance at this moment caught an object on the horizon, and springing for the telescope he placed it to his eye for observation. After looking a few moments with an earnest manner, he dropped the glass with an impatient word of disappointment.

‘It is a brigantine, but carrying sail like a frigate.’

‘What did you expect to see?’ asked Josephine advancing.

‘A ship of the line.’

‘Look farther southward just coming round that headland,’ she said, looking without the aid of the glass, and pointing with her glove in the direction indicated.

‘It is the Liner; and astern of her the frigate just shows her fore and main royal above the cliff,’ he said, observing them through the glass. ‘Confound her!’ he muttered, ‘she is more like the old Admiral than ever for he was always the first to discover a sail, and could see farther with his naked eye than any officer that sailed under him with his eye-glass. No, it is settled I can never think of her as my wife. I should see the old Admiral’s head carved on all the four bed-posts.’

‘You will not leave us at once,’ said Josephine, who had been watching the magnetic advance of the vessels of war as they sailed near shore.

‘Before night, cousin. Excuse me now. I must ride to the quay.’

Black Ralph; or, The Helmsman of Hurlgate

Thus speaking, Louis hastily quit his cousin, and in a few minutes was seen by her, galloping on horseback along the road to Calais.'

'Let him go then ' she said between pride and grief; 'he has no heart and my love would wither upon his bosom like the tendrils of the vine, which in seeking a fair green tree for support, entwines around some inhospitable rock, and there perish.'

CHAPTER II.

After the departure of Louis to the quay, and when he had finally disappeared from her view, the young Countess Josephine retired to her chamber, which overlooked the channel, to give vent to her mortification alone. She felt that she fondly loved her sailor-cousin, and that her happiness was intimately involved in the issue of this love. As a woman she felt wounded vanity, that her charms produced upon him so light an effect, and that her powers of pleasing were not sufficiently great, to do away from his tenacious mind, the memory of her father's tyranny.

'I will yet conquer this foolish prejudice in Louis,' she said with spirit, dashing an unbidden tear from her eye, 'he has a noble nature, a generous warm heart, and if woman's love can win it without overstepping the limits of maidenly beseeching, Josephine de Fernay shall yet reign its mistress. I know I have a great task before me, trammelled as I am by a maiden's reserve, but I do not despair one day seeing him, proud and wilful as he now is, suing at my feet.'

Thus determining, this gentle girl, in whom profound and intense love had suddenly awakened a resolute and active spirit, walked to her window to watch the progress of the ships of war, with the movements of which she now began to feel her own happiness was so closely interested.

The detached masses of clouds which all that sultry afternoon had hung low over the channel, alternately falling in dense columns of rain, or sailing along with gleams of sunshine darting between upon the sea, had now gathered in a huge embankment above the promontory which the line-of-battle ship and frigate were doubling. It was driven across the sky by a strong south wind, and as Josephine looked forth she saw that it covered half the southwest, and threatened a thunder storm. As its shadow swept along the water, she saw the fishing-boats hoist their small brown sails, and run for Calais and the nearest shore; and farther out from land the large vessels which in great numbers dotted the channel sailing on all courses, take in their lighter sails, and signifying their preparations for the coming danger.

Turning from them, her eyes watched with a new and deeper interest the movements of the ships of war. They were both a full league to windward, and being nearer the source of the tempest, the other vessels would feel it first. She saw, however, that they had yet made no preparations for it; that the line ship carried her main and fore-sky-sails, and that the frigate had everything set from deck to truck; for the wind was still light and fitful. They were evidently fully aware of the coming storm, though partly sheltered from it by the promontory they had just doubled, and were taking advantage of the little breeze that blew, to try and reach anchorage ground in the outer road of Calais, before it should burst upon them. This was the opinion of Louis, who seeing the gathering clouds had reined up about half a mile from the Chateau upon a point of land washed by the waves, to take a view of the vessels and for a few moments to watch their motions.

Slowly and majestically the line of battle ship followed by the frigate a cable's length astern, approached the offing of the Chateau, and not half a mile distant in a direct line. Josephine could see distinctly the men moving about in her rigging, the officers in uniform upon their quarter decks, and at intervals as the wind died away the far off cry of the leadsmen as the ships felt their way along the shore, which in that neighborhood was rendered dangerous by sunken ledges. She was so much interested and wrapt up in watching their progress that she did not take notice of the rapid and powerful march of the tempest of clouds which came triumphantly on, like 'an army

Black Ralph; or, The Helmsman of Hurlgate

with banners.' She was only recalled to it, by the sudden darkness that grew around her, and a flash and crash of thunder that shook the rock upon which the Chateau was founded, till it reeled. The lightning blinded her for an instant and the thunder had so confused her senses, that it was several seconds before she could recover her recollection and command self-possession to look around her. When she did so, she beheld a stream of flame rising like a meteor from the foremost of the line-of-battle ship, and darting high into the murky heavens which were now all overcast, save a fine bright space far to leeward towards which, the clouds were driving with wild velocity, their edges streaming like hair blown out in the wind. She gazed with silent horror as the flame grew larger, and shot higher, and its lurid glare fell reflected in a long red line across the water. As she looked, she saw it fork outward, seize the mainmast, and wrapt it in flames, and then dart like a fiery serpent along the cordage in all directions till the whole of the loftier sails and spars of the majestic battle ship, were enveloped in fire and rolling clouds of black smoke that in darkness and horror seemed to mock the storm clouds that rolled on above, upon the wings of the wind.

As yet there had been no wind in motion, in the lower stratum of the atmosphere, though the velocity with which the tempest was sweeping above the channel, showed the strength of the blast that raged in the region in which it reigned. The slight breeze which had held until a few moments before the fall of the thunderbolt upon the ill-fated ship was now followed by a profound calm the sure precursor of the wild commotion of the elements that was to follow; in this silence the roar and crackling of the flames reached the terrified maiden, and ever and anon came shoreward a wild confusion of sounds of human voices.

'Ha, the frigate is warping away from her,' said the Marquis, pressing with energy his niece's arm, having flown to her chamber on hearing the near peal of thunder, and approached the window undiscovered some moments before, where he had stood so absorbed in the sight of the burning vessel, as to forget to address her or give her notice of his presence until now.

'My dearest uncle,' she cried with trembling and gratitude, 'I am so glad you are here. This spectacle is horrible.'

'It is my child! Yet how sublime in its horror. Oh, the wives made widows this hour.'

'Will they perish then? Cannot the other ship save them? Oh, God, let not so many creatures, made in thine own image, thus miserably perish in the sight of their haven!' cried the maiden, lifting her hands and eyes imploringly to Heaven.

'I fear many will be lost. The frigate is hauling off from her out of reach of the flames, lest she may share the same fate. See the topsails have caught, and the burning masses are falling upon the deck and into the sea. Hark! there is a gun! another! They call loudly for aid that ne'er can reach them! Another gun! Hark! there peals the thunder, Heaven's artillery mingling its sublime roars. What a scene and hour of sublimity. Oh, this is fearful!'

'Cannot we aid them! See they lower boats on every side, and they are fast filling with men! Look! how madly they leap into them, and methinks as many miss them and fall into the water as into the boats! What an agonizing scene! Yet I cannot turn my eye away, while my heart seems to burst with its wild efforts to implore Heaven's mercy for them. Cannot, Oh! cannot, we save them uncle?'

'No, my child! I, alas, am too old to venture in a boat if we had one! You cannot aid them. Listen! The tocsin is sounded in Calais! What a glorious glad sound that! The city is up! And see the frigate's boats are approaching to their consort's relief with the speed of all their oars. The most of them will be saved if the storm withholds its approach a quarter of an hour longer.'

'Oh, for a prophet's arm and prayer at this hour to intercede for them and bid it stay!' cried the maiden earnestly, as her eyes were cast upon the black heavens, which threatened each moment to burst with all their magazines of destructive elements upon the hundreds of her fellow beings, now either combating with the flames or exposed in

Black Ralph; or, The Helmsman of Hurlgate

the boats.

The fire had now reached the fore-castle, and wrapped it in a sheet of flames. The boats had all been lowered, as fast as they were filled with the men, put off at a short distance from the ship, and there lay on their oars. The frigate's boats came with timely relief and took off many others, but ere they were all rescued, the tempest which had been seen a few moments before to strike the sea half a league astern of the vessels, now came on with a resistless fury, driving before it perfect cataract of foam many feet high. Guns were rapidly discharged from the frigate, recalling the boats with their crews, several of which that were nearest reached it in time for shelter; but nine boats containing four hundred men were still exposed; and, unable to reach the frigate, rowed, impelled by fear, for the shore. Many, including the officers, were still on board the burning ship with the storm within half a mile, which rendered almost inaudible the thunder. The frigate had previously taken in all her light sail and reduced herself to a close reefed fore and mizzen top-sail and gib. She had time to get the few boats in, that safely reached her when the tempest struck her. She was laying at the instant with her weather quarter to the direction of its approach, and the first shock threw her almost flat upon her beam-ends, and completely enveloped her hull in a cloud of foam and spray. She plunged terribly to recover herself from the imminent peril of her situation, and after seeming once or twice as if she would have foundered bows foremost under the waves and gone bodily down, she righted, shook off the showering spray and bending to the blast, drove before it under her top-sails, without the loss of a single spar, or the parting of a rope. This struggle had been witnessed with deep interest not only by the Marquis and his niece, but also with the intensest anxiety by young Louis, who from the headland where he had lingered, had seen as well as his cousin all we have described. The frigate was soon lost to sight, driving in the roar of the storm, and now the spectators from the chateau and the young horseman, who had remained seated in his saddle, almost paralysed at the spectacle of the burning battle ship, turned their attention to this ill-fated vessel.

'Execrations upon the dastards!' cried Louis, as he beheld from his post several barges which had come out from Calais to their relief, put back for the storm.

The ship's boat, loaded to the water's edge, were pulling from it towards the shore as if life as truly it did hung on every dip of their swiftly flashing oars. The ship was now, except the quarter-deck and waste, enveloped in sheets of flame. The guns of distress had long since ceased to be discharged. But the heat now ignited the powder, and those on the fore-castle-deck began to fire themselves as the tempest came on. The scene was now terrific, too appallingly sublime for human eyes to endure for the human heart to fear! The heavens had grown black as midnight, and wild with the driving storm, their agitated surface livid with excitement, lightning its vast concave, echoing and re-echoing with thunder! The sea for leagues to the windward, was white with foam, and mingling its roars with shrieking winds! The conflagration of the battle-ship spread a baleful glare on land, water and sky, and the incessant discharge by the flames of its heavy ordnance, with the shouts of despair or encouragement that were heard at intervals, added new terrors to the scene.

In the midst of this reign of death and horror, the officers of the battle-ship had all retained their coolness and self-command. Their attention had first been given to the safety of the men, and their authority had been only exercised to this end, when it was discovered the conflagration could not be stayed, and that the flames were rapidly enveloping her. They had seen all the boats filled, and ordered them to lay off at a safe distance to await the issue. Thus the storm which they trusted would hold back a while, was close at hand, and threatening to fall upon them before they had taken any thought of themselves. There were seventeen officers including the commodore, and eighty men still on board; the latter crowded fearful, yet under discipline, upon the quarter-deck or in the waist. There were two more boats still attached to the ship, one afloat and the other a life-boat, in the mizzen rigging. In a few minutes they felt that their fate would be sealed. They saw the boats on all sides hastening to the shelter either of the frigate or the land, and the commander, with emotion, gave orders for deserting the brave ship he had commanded in so many battles. The order was obeyed with alacrity, yet without disorder. The boat was brought along side, and the seamen ordered to get into it. It held but seventy.

Black Ralph; or, The Helmsman of Hurlgate

'Let the remaining ten take the life-boat with the officers,' said the commander. 'Put off there in the boat and make for the shore before the storm bursts upon you. Now launch the life-boat.' It soon floated light beside the ship. The heat now became so intense, and the danger grew so imminent from the blazing spars and canvass, that fell in showers about them, that the officers and men were instantly ordered to enter the boat. 'I will be the last man on the deck of Le Minerve. Come, my child,' he said, taking in his embrace a lovely girl of nineteen, who had hitherto been reclining as he gave his orders, almost insensible upon his shoulder.

'Oh Henri the prisoner! the prisoner! oh, my father,' she shrieked. disengaging herself from him and clinging to a stay with both hands. 'Will you be so cruel as to murder him thus.'

'No good God, no! I had forgotten him. He is confined in the gun-room! Who will release him. If a seaman, he shall have a hundred loundo'r if an officer, promotion.

'A brand has fallen against the magazine door, and half burned it through,' exclaimed a sailor, returning with breathless terror.

'Then he must perish,' cried the commander; into the boat all, and pull for your lives. De Saussuse, take my daughter from me!'

'No no he shall not perish,' cried the young lady with determined energy.

And as she spoke she broke from her father and the officer who was lifting her into the boat, and flew across the heated deck amid the roar of guns, the crackling of flames and the terrors of so appalling a scene as that wild conflagration presented. She descended into the sumptuous state cabins now deserted and in confusion, and opening a trapdoor, descended still farther to a deck below. She heard the voice and footstep of her frantic parent in pursuit, and dropped the trapdoor leaving herself in darkness. Her foot had trodden there before in silence and darkness, and well she knew how, in danger, to find the place she sought. She had to go forward some distance along a narrow passage. The roar of flames, and the thunder of canon above and around her was fearful, yet she trembled not.

'No, he shall not perish, or I perish by his side, she repeated energetically. The air was close and hot, and charged with smoke, so that it was with difficulty she could breathe. Still she pursued her intricate way to the gun-room. Suddenly a fearful shock convulsed the huge fabric of the ship to its centre, and the upper decks above her head were torn open their whole length, and the confined atmosphere rushing out ignited with instant combustion. The masts had fallen, carrying the decks with them! For an instant she stopped to recover from the shock, and then darting down a ladder, flew across the gundeck, her way lighted by flames darting into the port-holes, and came to a door in an oaken wainscott. To her surprise it was unbarred and open.

'Oh Henri! Henri! she shrieked, with a cry between joy and hope.

'Madeline, bless God, is it you who have made this sacrifice for me?' answered a young man who was lying in an open cell chained to a bolt.

'And should it not be me, from whom you have been thus cruelly confined! Come, fly with me! Life hangs upon a thread! The ship is in flames!'

'So a seaman informed me, who, humanely as he fled by, threw open my door; but I could not move! Fly, dear Madeline. Save your own life, and leave me to perish!'

'I live only in you and if you die I die!'

Black Ralph; or, The Helmsman of Hurlgate

`This is madness.'

`Let me see your chains. They are fastened to this bolt. Let us with our united strength try and draw it from the deck. See, it is loose, and may yield!'

The words of hope the love of life, inspired him, though against hope, to make the effort. Once, twice, *thrice*, was their combined strength exerted, and the fourth time the bolt yielded! for love and life are strong.

`Now fly we may yet live for each other!' cried the noble girl taking him by the hand, and dragging him from the spot. `Fly, for the conflagration has reached within a few feet of us. A moment's delay, and we are both lost.'

The young officer for such his uniform bespoke him smiled faintly as the red glare of the flames shone through the door, upon his features, and he pointed to his fetters.

`See, Madeline, I cannot walk. My feet are chained together!'

`My cruel father!' she cried in despair. `But you must not perish. No, no! I have strength I have energy I will bear you hence in safety.'

`No, rather let me die here. Save your own dear life, while there is yet time.'

`Only with your life do I save my own, she answered decidedly. `I am strong God will aid me I will save you! Come, dearest Henri, let me bear you in my arms.'

`And whither?' he asked, between doubt and despair. `Hear the roar of the flames! feel the heat of the deck above us! hark! the gun within ten feet of us has discharged itself! how can you *alone*, how can we *both* escape but to perish in a watery grave!'

`The life-boat is waiting. My father would never leave the ship without me! I can bear you along the decks as I came! The flames may burn me the heat may scorch my face but I shall heed nothing so that I save you. Oh, Henri, if you love me, yield!'

`I do,' he answered as a loud crash told the falling in of a portion of the main deck: `Heaven nerve you to the task, noble creature.'

`Love never doubts,' she answered, taking him in her arms for confinement and illness had made him lighter than he otherwise would have been. The burden was heavy, but energy and resolution with the thought of all she was striving for, made it light. Bearing him along the deck by the way she had come she reached the ladder in safety. This he ascended himself with ease without her aid. On gaining the next deck she found the tempest had burst upon the ship, and that the flames of the crushed decks which she expected to have to meet were extinguished by deluges of spray that broke over the ship and poured in torrents into the holds. The roar of the hurricane was now deafening above and around them, and instead of smoke and fire, the heroic girl with her burden had to force her way by wading along the decks in deep water. She however, was undismayed, and thanking heaven for this temporary suspension of the conflagration in her pathway, she retraced her steps towards the foot of the ladder leading to the trap door of the state cabin by which she had first descended. But here she encountered new flames from the fierce effects of which her loose garments, thrown around her face and that of the helpless and fettered young man, in a measure protected her. At every foot-fall as she advanced she could feel the ship rock and heave beneath her as the storm shook its massive frame, and momentarily she feared it would part and engulf them. She reached with him the ladder and the state room in safety.

Black Ralph; or, The Helmsman of Hurlgate

‘Now one more effort and we are upon the quarter deck and shall know our fate,’ she said. ‘Nay, Henri this is no time for you to say I shall carry you no further.’

‘The ship reels as if she were foundering,’ said the young man, with energy; ‘Oh these fetters that make me at this hour dependant for life on one who needs my protection for her own safety. Cannot you find me a file, Madeline? I would die at least free.’

‘Before you could use a file we should perish. Here, oh, here are the keys! Behold! Now you are free!’ she joyfully exclaimed, her eye having caught sight of several bunches of keys hanging over the captain’s transom, one of which she knew was that entrusted to the keeper of the prisoners, and flew to obtain.

‘Thank God for this mercy,’ said the youth as he discovered among them several keys for fetters. He tried one it would not fit the ward of his own; another and another with equal want of success.

‘Will Heaven let you perish with liberty and life thus within your grasp,’ she cried with anguish; ‘come, let me bear you to the deck, and if my father has deserted me we can at least die, as he has forbid us to live together,’ she cried, embracing him passionately.

‘No, we shall both yet live and be blessed, dearest,’ he joyfully exclaimed as the trial of another key proved successful. ‘*See! I am free!*’ and casting aside his heavy chains he stood upon his feet and caught her to his heart.

‘Now, *now*, I am to be your preserver, not you mine!’

She clasped her hands with gratitude, and falling upon his shoulder wept the full tide of her joy. Thus he raised her up and hastened with her to the deck.

Fearful and wild beyond description was the scene that met his eyes. The sea around him was boiling with foam, and the mad wind was sweeping over it with a deafening roar! The skies were black as midnight save when riven by the forked lightning, and the mingled thunder and wind and roar of the waves formed a sound such as human ears had never before heard. No land was visible for the murky gloom that made sky and water seem to meet close around them. Through this empire of the king of the tempests the hull of the line of battle ship was driving furiously; rolling this side and that like a drunken man, but still plunging onward to its destiny. The masts, sails and spars had all been consumed, and the bowsprit and bows were only now on fire the sea, which had been swept over her at the onset of the storm, having put out the conflagration further aft. The flames of the bows instead of ascending or turning towards the stern were driven straight forward by the force of the winds, notwithstanding the velocity at which the ship herself was driven.

On the quarter deck all was confusion and rum, and the charred deck and bulwarks, showed that those who had last stood there had fitally been driven from it by the flames, before they were extinguished by the waves. The young man having taken a hasty view of the scene and his position, felt that there was now little chance of life for he knew the ship in those waters could not drive far without going ashore, and shipwreck in such a storm presented few chances for escape. He sighed as he gazed upon the pale and exhausted girl who had risked so much for his safety, and to whom he now owed his life. She looked up and raised her head from his shoulder, upon which she had leaned insensible since he had left the state room with her, and as divining his thoughts said, as he bent his ear closely to her lips to catch the words in the noise of the storm.

‘Fear not, Henri, God has not given me courage and strength to save you to permit either you or I to perish now. We shall both be saved. But my poor father!’

‘The life-boat is not aboard! He probably left the ship before the chances of safety were quite gone. Be not apprehensive for him for a life-boat will live even in so terrific a sea as this.’

Black Ralph; or, The Helmsman of Hurlgate

'I have no hopes,' she answered despondingly. 'He has perished. There were many in the boat and with him have perished this day all who two hours since sailed with us in hope and pride. How many gallant men will lie in the deep sea to-night whose voices and foot-tread were but now heard on this deck.'

'All may be saved! Think only of your own preservation now,' said the young officer.

'We seem to be the only persons left in this mighty fabric which has become the sport of the wild winds and waves. Let us secure our self-possession and be prepared to take advantage of whatever opening for safety Providence may point out.'

His words gave her fresh energy, and after hiding her face a few moments longer to commend herself and him she loved so well, to God, she stood up beside him and calmly surveyed with him the sublime spectacle of the tempest through which they were driving as if impelled by the wings of destruction. Above them, around them, before them, all was one elemental chaos. By degrees the fire from the bows ate its way aft and reached the bulwarks about the gangway. This was a new subject for alarm. Hitherto there had been no rain amid the storm for the violence of the windy tempest drove the water in sheeted rain horizontally through the upper regions of air ere it could fall upon the sea. But now it began to descend with great vehemence and soon completely deluged the decks and extinguished the flames which had again become a source of painful anxiety. It drove them for shelter to the helmsman's house, a strongly built covered shed, and here they remained calmly waiting the fearful issue. Night was rapidly setting in and both expected it would be their last on earth. Seeing her perfectly comfortable in her narrow quarters, from which was visible the whole ship and sea before her, the young officer left her to examine the compass and found that they were driving N. E. by E.

'You say we were near Calais, dearest Madaline, ' he asked, 'steering parallel with the shore, when the ship took fire by the lightning?'

'Yes. I was in my state room at the time, and hastened on deck. There was a large chateau close to us, not half a mile distant, and I could see the towers of Calais over the land.'

'Then we must now be near the Hague and driving into the North Sea for on this course we should otherwise have driven ashore long since. If the ship's bottom is sound and we safely weather the head land of Zuyder Zee we may be, if the gale lasts, wrecked in three or four days on the coast of Denmark.'

This calculation was coolly made and stated with frankness to the companion of his danger, by the young man. He had hardly communicated it to her, however, before the rain which had beat against their shelter behind, came suddenly in their faces.

'The wind has chopped round,' he cried 'and we shall stand a chance of being wrecked on a coast at least nearer home.'

The ship herself now began to labor heavily and shear as if struck by a head sea, and he felt satisfied that the wind had shifted to the opposite quarter, as it often does in an instant in violent hurricanes. The sea which had been raised by the former direction of the gale now being beaten back and agitated by conflicting force, became confused and tumultuous, and tossed the hull fearfully as it strove to make head against it. The young officer now saw by the compass that their course was changed and that the unwieldy mass on which they depended for safety was driving south west. He saw this would bring them land in the vicinity of Calais if they did not before.

He cheered the noble girl by his side with assurance of safety, and after having brought her from the cabins such refreshments as he could find, they remained watching the storm which had increased in violence from its new quarter, and trying, which poor human nature finds it hard to do in danger, to put their trust in Providence for a safe deliverance from the imminent peril of their situation.

Black Ralph; or, The Helmsman of Hurlgate

From the window of the chateau the Marquis de Fernay and his niece, and from his saddle upon the height upon which he had halted, Louis, had seen the progress of the storm. The former as we have seen beheld the frigate driven out of sight into the gloomy shades of the tempest, and turned all their thrillingly wrought attention to the fate of the line-of-battle-ship. The Marquis with a glass beheld the two last boats lowered into the water and the group of officers about her. He had also informed Josephine that a female in white leaned upon the arm of the commanding officer, whose rank he recognised by his uniform.

'Ah, there is some commotion,' he said earnestly; 'I see one boat is filled with men and putting off while the other delays and there is a rushing to and fro.'

'Do you see the lady still?' inquired his niece.

'No. She is no longer visible. The commander is also disappeared. How madly they delay. The flames are approaching them on one side and the tempest is almost upon them upon the other. Yet they linger. Oh, that they would escape! Now I see the commander again. Two of his officers and his men are forcing him into the boat'

'And the lady, uncle?' asked the young Countess breathlessly seizing his hand.

'She is no where to be seen. They have forced their officer down into the boat and have left the ship. The poor lady, I fear me, has somehow perished. 'Tis a fearful scene. The boat has left her, and now all the crew, full five hundred men, are upon the water striving for life in open boats. God be their preserver! Hark, that fearful thunder crash! How dread that roar of the wind! See the sea lift its angry mane and lash itself into foam! Look! the boats! how they are tossed and the waves leap over them? Hark to the shrieks!' cried the Countess sinking upon her knees, 'Oh, God! what a moment of agony! There has one boat filled with living men gone down! Another has disappeared! See! a cannon ball from the ship itself has sunk a third! But four survive! There disappears another! Merciful heaven! spare thy creatures!'

'Let us fly niece! This is too dreadful! Let us fly to the chapel and pray for them, and afterwards when the storm will permit, hasten with aid to the shore. Alas! see the sea is sheeted with foam and in the warfare of the elements none are longer visible, yet, I trust all will not perish in such fearful misery!'

With these words the Marquis dragged his niece from the window to which they had both till now lingered with that fascination which irresistibly and unaccountably binds the senses to the contemplation of scenes of suffering and horror from which the heart shrinks and under which reason totters.

CHAPTER III.

Towards midnight the gale before which the wreck of the line-of-battle ship had been driving for so many hours, now in the direction of the north sea, now back again upon her former course, began to lull. The spray ceased longer to dash over the stern and fall upon the deck where the young prisoner and the maiden were sheltered, and the ship rolled less heavily, as the waves gradually sunk to repose. At one o'clock in the morning the hurricane had terminated and Henry with pleasure informed his companion that the clouds were breaking in the north-west, and that their chances of safety were now secure.

With deep interest they now watched the clearing away of the approaching clouds, and as the heavens became lighter their hopes brightened. While they were looking abroad upon the sea which now heaved and broke into waves which momentarily grew less in size; the full moon suddenly broke through the dark masses of clouds above their heads, and shone brightly down upon the sea. Its bright beams continued to shine for a moment only, when they were withdrawn; but it was the smile of hope to their hearts and they drew from it an omen for their safety but alas, not to prove so to both of them!

Black Ralph; or, The Helmsman of Hurlgate

At length the storm cleared away and the moon ruled in the heavens' and lighted up the sparkling sea with a brightness that seemed like that of noon-day, contrasted with the late gloom and horror that prevailed over sky and ocean.

'Look hither, Madeline,' said the young man who had taken a stand upon a gun upon the quarter-deck which overlooked the bulwarks; 'there is land and from the direction of it, it is France; but whether south or east of Calais, I cannot tell. It is not more than a league distant. How fortunate that we were not driven upon it in the midst of the gale! We should inevitably have perished.'

'What bright light like a rising star is that so near the sea?' asked the young girl.

'It is a light-house. Ah there is another to the east. I know these lights. We are near Calais; the centre one is its harbor light.'

'It is not far.'

'Not five miles. But we have no chance of reaching that port unless taken off by some boat or vessel. I find the ship is drifting shorewards very rapidly, and there is some danger yet from breakers. If she should drift with this heavy landward roll upon a rocky beach the ship would certainly go to pieces. She is very much strained in her timbers and I find on just sounding the well that she has five feet of water in her hold. She may founder ere we reach the shore, or go to pieces on striking it. I acquaint you, dear Madeline of these dangers that you may nerve your mind to meet them.'

'I thank you Henri; but I have little hopes of escaping with life. I feel my heart heavy with foreboding, and all my hope which in the midst of the storm buoyed me up has died within my bosom. We shall never be saved.'

'This is superstition, dearest, and you should not let such feelings fill your mind at such a time, when all the energies of your soul are called for. Every man who has been saved from danger, has saved himself by the combined exercise of hope and action. See how rapidly the ship drifts. The outlines of the heights can be distinctly seen. See to the south there is visible the towers of some building.'

'It is, I think, the same chateau yes it is that was abreast of us when the lightning struck the ship. Yes, there are the faint towers of Calais to the east. Strange that the storm should have driven us so wildly away from the spot and then left us here again.'

'Yes, I can see Calais distinctly with the moonlight reflected from its turrets. There are lights moving in yonder chateau. Perhaps your father may have been saved and is now there.'

'No, no! Some painful emotion tells me that he has perished. The same sensation forewarns me of my own death. Henri, dear Henri, I shall never tread yonder shore.'

'Do not give way to such fancies,' answered the young officer, tenderly embracing her. 'We are now within two-thirds of a mile drifting towards a rocky headland not far from the base of the chateau. I will now fire the upper deck guns at brief intervals as a signal for succor. A boat can live, the water is so smooth between these headlands, and if they put off from the shore before we strike, we shall be saved.'

'And if we strike?'

'We shall strike very heavily and I fear go to pieces. In this alternative I must save your life as you have done mine.'

Black Ralph; or, The Helmsman of Hurlgate

The maiden was silent and the young officer saw her clasp her hands in prayer as he left her to get a match and powder for priming the guns he intended to fire to bring aid. There was, indeed, most imminent hazard in remaining on board the wreck until she struck; for there was a heavy landward roll on which she went surging and laboring now and then pitching violently, and threatening each moment to founder. The young sailor feared either alternative, and began to feel as the crisis approached, deeply solicitous for the safety of the life of one who was so dear to him. These two youthful persons partners in such a peril, were not only lovers but were betrothed. Henry Monteith was the son of a Scottish gentleman of fortune who had resided long in France, having purchased an estate adjoining that of Captain Navarre, the commander of the line-of-battle ship *Le Menerve*. His son was an officer in the British Navy and during a period of amnesty, visited his father.

He there accidentally beheld Madeline Navarre, and found means to become acquainted with her, though secretly, for Captain Navarre not only secretly had a singular dislike from some cause or other to Scotchmen, but he had managed to quarrel with his neighbor about certain land-marks. Therefore, Henry Monteith who very soon won the affections of the lovely Madeline, had to keep his love secret from her father till such time as he could claim her for his own, which he resolved to do when he should get a first lieutenancy, he being then a third lieutenant. Thus their true loves run smoothly. Henry making two cruises and returning at the end of each to renew his vows of affection. At length war was declared against France by England, and Admiral D'Estaing was ordered with a fleet to America, to help the colonies to achieve their independence. The Captain of *Le Minerve* received his orders, and informed his daughter that he should take her with him, hinting at the same time his suspicions of Henry Monteith. Madeline had nothing to do but silently acquiesce and then secretly to send word to her lover, who was at his father's, who had the same day received orders from the French Government to retire into the interior. This intelligence filled the young suitor with grief, while it inspired him to action.

He had a private interview with her and was made happy by her consent to fly with him the next day to the altar, leaving her father and all else for his sake. The hour was appointed for the flight, and Henry made his appearance at the mansion of his lady-love to receive her. It was deserted and shut up and to an inquiry put to an old servitor who was in charge, he was told that Captain Navarre and his daughter had gone on board the line of battle ship *le Minerve* the evening before, and that she was to sail the next morning. '

'This is sudden,' said the surprised and distressed young man on hearing this astounding intelligence.

'Yes;' answered the old servitor dryly, 'but the captain got wind of some Englishman lurking about here to run off with his daughter, and so he thought he'd take her on board, as the safest place.'

'Not if I had a good British frigate to lay alongside of her,' thought the chagrined lover, turning away from the old man who, from his demeanor he believed knew both himself and his object.

Henry Monteith was not a man, however, to be defeated by obstacles in the pursuit of an end so dear to his heart as that he had in view. He formed his plan and proceeded to put it into execution. Purchasing the hat, coat and sword of a boarding officer, which he put on over his own undress uniform, he walked down to the quay and boldly calling for a custom house boat he leaped into it and bade the oarsmen pull him on board the *Minerve*. The men obeyed without a word and rapidly the barge approached the line of battle ship, which lay off at anchor a mile and a half from the city in full sight of the quay. Pleased at the success thus far of his exceedingly bold and skillful step the young man encouraged the rowers, till at length they came near the *Minerve* and were hailed from her fore-castle.

'Custom House boat, with a message to Captain Navarre,' returned the young man.

'Pull away men, and bring me without delay alongside the gang-way.'

Black Ralph; or, The Helmsman of Hurlgate

A rope was thrown him, and quitting his boat with the order for his men to lay off on their oars, he soon stood upon the ship's deck. A midshipman received him and conducted him to the state room where he beheld Captain Navarre seated writing.

‘An officer of the customs with a message, sir,’ said the midshipman bowing and then stepping aside for Henry to advance.

‘Well, sir deliver it. I am getting ready to sail and am occupied each minute,’ said the the captain without looking up, though our young hero's face was unknown to him.

‘A schooner has just got under way in the upper part and as some suspicions are attached to her the captain of the port would esteem it a favor if you would bring her too and not let her put to sea. She is beyond the range of any of the port guns.’

‘This is a singular request to make of the captain of one of his Majesty's line of battle ships,’ answered Captain Navarre looking at the speaker. ‘Where are his own armed schooners to look after such suspicious craft?’

‘Put to sea this morning in chase of smugglers.’

‘Very well, I will give orders. What is her name?’

‘The Madeline.’

‘Eh! Why that's the name of my daughter. Do you hear that, child,’ he called towards an adjoining state-room; ‘some pirate or smuggler has named his vessel after you, the scoundrel.’

‘Sir,’ answered the young lady who having heard her name repeated by Monteith in his own tone (for this beloved name had been purposely given by him that he might speak it to reach her ear,) and half-doubting, half-believing his presence, she came bounding forth from her room. Her eyes instantly met his and recognized him. Her color fled and sudden trembling seized upon her. He gave her a look of caution and intelligence and she recovered herself before her father discovered any thing to arouse suspicion.

‘I said,’ repeated Captain Navarre, ‘that this officer has been sent in behalf of the Customs to request my services in stopping a vessel which bears the name of Madeline. You heard him for he called the name loud enough.’

‘Yes, sir.’

‘I'll stop the vessel and blow her out of water for daring to take your name. Tell the captain of the port so, sir.’

‘Yes sir,’ answered the young man who had interchanged several glances of hope and encouragement with Madeline, who each moment trembled lest he should be detected. ‘That is your daughter, sir.’

‘Yes, what then?’ gruffly answered the captain, looking at the speaker with a scowl.

‘I am glad to have found her, sir.’

‘Found her, sir? What do yo mean, sir. She has not been lost, though it's not her own fault she wasn't.’

‘I meant to say, sir, that I discover in her the owner of this bracelet which a lady dropped yesterday evening on the quay. I was so fortunate as to pick it up, and before I could follow her to inform her of her loss and return it she had disappeared. I now recognize this young lady to be the loser. Here is the bracelet, Mademoiselle.’

Black Ralph; or, The Helmsman of Hurlgate

`You are an honest person. You must have lost it coming down to embark, Madeline. Strange you have not missed it. It is my daughter's bracelet, I recognize it. What reward shall I give you?'

`None other sir, than the honor of reclasping it upon the fair wrist to which it belongs. '

`Let him, girl,' answered the captain laughing, seeing that she turned pale and retreated. `It is a reward easily paid.'

`Permit me this honor, lady,' said Henry, approaching her where she had arrested her retreat, (shall we say designedly?) at some distance to the right of her father and near her own state-room door. He knelt with his back to the captain who, taking up his papers again, did not watch them, and fervently pressing his lips to her hand, he added in a quick low tone,

`I was at my appointment and learned you had been removed hither and in this disguise have sought you.'

`Oh, Henri, you will be lost. How could you be so rash! My father will suspect who you are? Fly!'

`Could I think of myself! To-night I will have a boat beneath the state-room window. Have a rope let down by which I can ascend and I will draw up a firm ladder made of wooden cross pieces I shall provide, by which you can firmly and easily descend with my assistance into the boat.'

`We shall be discovered and then `Oh, no, no! This place is too wild. I could never reach your boat from the lofty windows at the stern. No let me go with my father and save yourself. We shall meet again in America. '

`I am resolved to secure your escape, dearest. We are drawing the attention of your father. I will be at the stern to-night when you hear four bells struck. Your clasp has been bent and comes together with difficulty, lady,' he said in a loud tone. `I did not think to make this use of your gift, dear Madeline,' he added smiling. `Depend on me and be true!'

`You are long, sir officer,' said the Captain who for a moment had forgotten them, and now turned round to see what was the reason of the officer's delay.

`Yes sir; it clasped with some difficulty. The lady is very grateful, sir.'

`No doubt, no doubt; women think much of such baubles. You have a foreign accent to your French!' he added, eying him sharply.

`Yes. I was educated partly by an English tutor, and he spoiled my vernacular.'

`Humph! The English spoil everything. If it had been a Scotchman he would have spoiled you altogether.'

`Yes, sir. You will bring the schooner to.'

`Aye. The Madeline, you say. The scoundrel! I'll have him under my lee, and her captain swung at my ship's yard-arm, if I find any wrong in him. I detest suspicious characters. '

`So do I, sir.'

`I hate spies and smugglers and Scotchmen. '

`You have reason to, sir.'

Black Ralph; or, The Helmsman of Hurlgate

‘Now go on shore and tell the Post-Captain I shall certainly oblige him, and give him my respects.

‘Yes sir.’

Thus replying, our successful lover quit the state cabin of the *Minerva*, leaving her Captain busy at his desk as he found him, but with an uneasy suspicion of something wrong, he knew not how or where, but he connected it vaguely with the schooner, which he began to believe had something to do with his daughter's elopement, if it did not actually contain the young Scotch lover himself.

‘Yes, he said throwing down his pen, I see into the whole of it. I have got my suspicions on the right scent, which something in the words of this custom house officer roused. Yes, the schooner that he says has suspicious movements, has got underweigh with some object in view, with which my daughter is concerned. That accounts for her strange movements. I'll bet my head that Scotchman has hired her and is lying in wait to run off with my daughter, or she with him. I see it. It is a good fortune the Port Captain should have sent to me. I shall have him right in my hands! Oh, the villain. Pierre!’

‘Monsieur,’ answered his servant.

‘Say to the first Lieutenant I wish to see him.’

The officer sent for, made his appearance in the state cabin.

‘Who has charge of the deck?’

‘Beauregard.’

‘Where is Fernay? It should be his watch. Send him hither if you please.’

‘You gave him permission to join the ship at Calais.’

‘Oh, ah, very true. Go on deck and see if you see any suspicious schooner coming down the harbor. Stay! Give my orders to Mr. Beauregard to bring to every schooner that attempts to pass or approach the ship this afternoon. I will be on deck by and by. Go, you have my orders.

‘Yes, I see it. This schooner is going to carry off my daughter,’ he said rising and pacing the deck. ‘Yes I've got my suspicions roused. Madeline,’ he called to the maiden, who had retired the instant Henry Monteith had left her.

‘Sir,’ answered Madeline coming in the state room and looking alarmed and anxious.

‘There is a conspiracy on foot, and you at the bottom of it I suspect.’

The young girl thought she should have sunk through the deck of the cabin for she believed Henry had been discovered, and the whole had been exposed. She was silent, and it was fortunate that she was, for an unlucky word might have betrayed her. Her father continued, and each sentence he uttered, relieved her.

‘Yes, a schooner is getting underweigh under suspicious circumstances. This custom-house officer who found your bracelet, came on board with a message from Mr Perot, the Port Captain, to advise me of the fact and desired me to bring her to. He did not know what made her suspicious, but *I do*. You know too.’

‘Indeed, sir, I am at a loss,’ she answered, greatly relieved at finding her father did not suspect Henry, or his plan of escape, but had got upon another track.

Black Ralph; or, The Helmsman of Hurlgate

‘Well then, this schooner is, I’ll be sworn, under charge of your Scotch lover, and his plan is to come down alongside with the evening tide, and then if he can, get you out of the cabin here, smuggle you on board, and leave me to shut the cage door.

Madeline again became embarrassed. She now believed her father had got some accurate intelligence, and that to come near in a schooner and then send a boat from it, was Henry’s intention. Her heart failed her and she knew not what to say or do, to maintain her self-possession. She felt all was lost. That the discovery had been made, and that Henry would be taken as in a trap. She rapidly devised in her thoughts a hundred ways of communicating to him information, and preventing the catastrophe she now certainly foresaw. But she could decide on none; for she was a prisoner without any means or resources at command.

Captain Navarre had, however, received no information, other than Henry himself had given him, in his invented tale of a suspicious schooner, which his mind, naturally suspicious, and now particularly so, on account of his daughter’s late attempt at elopement, conjured up into a vessel expressly prepared to carry off his child. These suspicions working in his active mind, at length produced a result which came very near the truth.

‘I know of no schooner, father.’

‘No, perhaps you didn’t: but that don’t althe case. It is not your fault that you did not; but I have kept you so close that no one could tell you your Scotch gallants’ movements, unless a sea-gull flying past the cabin windows. No, no. I shall watch you sharply until we get off soundings. Now go to your state-room. I must go on deck and look for this schooner. If I catch him I’ll put him in irons and send him to the Bastile.’

Madeline returned to her state-room, where she gave herself up to unavailing tears for the fate of her daring lover, whose arrest she now felt to be certain.

In the meanwhile, the captain went on deck where he had no sooner arrived, than his attention was drawn by his lieutenant to a schooner with long tapering masts, and a red and black hull which was slowly moving round the head of the pier, and laying her course down the harbor.

‘That’s the suspicious schooner, my life on it,’ said Captain Navarre, levelling his glass. ‘She is not a French build, and her canvas is English cut. She carries a small green flag at her fore peak, and sails well. Have a gun ready to bring her too when she comes within hearing.’

‘There is another schooner getting under sail, under her lee,’ said the lieutenant.

‘Yes, I see her a droger for dried fish! She is not suspicious, M. Beauregard. Keep your eye only on this fellow with the green flag.’

‘I see a third vessel schooner rigged, and foreign appearance, abreast the telegraph,’ said the captain looking with his glass; ‘she is coming out. She carries a large top-gallant sail and heavy main-sail with a red cross in the centre. I don’t know which is the most suspicious looking, this or the green flag. Ah, there she sets Sweedish colors. She is peaceable enough besides I see a Custom House boat just quitting her.’

With intense interest the captain watched the graceful approach of the schooner first seen, and which he truly believed had something to do with his daughter’s presence on board of the Minerve. Under a light yet steady wind she came down the harbor, and was within half a mile of the Minerve, when a gun was fired at her from a cruiser at anchor in the current, and then another, but of which she took no heed.

‘By Jupiter, they are trying to bring her up the harbor. How is it that this Custom House officer told me the port captain had no vessels in port. There she fires again at her. We’ll stop the rascal here. Run off with my daughter!’

Black Ralph; or, The Helmsman of Hurlgate

Level your piece, M. Bouregard.'

The schooner as she got further out from the quay felt the wind a point or two more freely and came down towards the line ship, parting the waves and heaving the spray before her at six knots speed. Gun after gun was fired from the cruiser, and seconded by the fort, and the shot threw long wakes of foam upon the surface of the water, but without touching her. She made no alteration in her course, and the only notice she seemed to take of it was to set her flying jib.

'She is a bold craft,' said Captain Navarre, 'and means to run past instead of skulking awhile till dark about us and then running off with my daughter.' This last sentence he muttered to himself. 'Now he is in range. Let him have a shot across his fore-foot.'

The thirty-two pounder shook the ship to the centre in its discharge and the shot was plainly seen to pass over the schooner, and strike and bury itself in a bank on the opposite side of the harbor, throwing up a large cloud of dust.

'The gun is too elevated, sir.'

'Mon Dien! charge a lower deck gun blow her out of the water.'

In the meanwhile, the schooner kept steadily on her course and was abeam of the liner when a second shot struck the water half a cable's length on the side of her next the ship, and throwing up the water high into the air, bound clear over the schooner dive beneath the surface fifty fathoms beyond on the other side. The fort and cruiser now ceased firing leaving the issue to the ship-of-the-line. A third gun from the lower deck better elevated, struck the water close beside her and covered her in a shower of spray, wetting her canvas forty feet from the deck.

'That must have taken her hull,' said Captain Navarre, levelling his spy-glass; 'no, it must have glanced beneath her! She is taken care of by the devil! Let me see who is at her helm and on her decks. By Heaven! a meer boy is steering her, and a man is standing beside him with folded arms looking coolly at the ship as if calculating the chances of being hit by the next shot. I see four men only on her fore-castle. Every thing is hauled home and in its place! She has a seaman to command her, if he be what I suspect, cloven footed. I see tarpaulins on her decks which I am sure conceal guns! Let her have another shot! she is dead abeam!'

A fifth gun was discharged, and the captain eagerly watched its effects with his glass. It struck the head of the bow-sprit, shivering it, and tore away a portion of the bulwarks, and passed through the edge of the foresail taking the boltrope.

'He is vulnerable. Another gun aimed like that, my men,' cried the captain, 'will bring her to her knees. Charge, and fire rapidly, or she will soon be beyond reach. In two minutes more she will have passed our line of fire. It will be a lasting disgrace to the French marine if she escape. Fire!'

The concussion of the report of the pieces, made the ship vibrate to her keel. The shot went far astern of her, ricocheting from wave to wave, tearing and shivering in pieces a ledge of rocks against which it struck. Steady, and undisturbed by all the excitement her presence caused, the schooner kept on her way, and was soon beyond the bearing of the ship's heavy ordnance. Captain Navarre paced the deck like a mad-man at this discomfiture. He gave an order to man boats and pursue her; but a seven knot breeze before which she was now moving seaward, convinced him that a chase would only serve to deepen the mortification of his failure. He, with his officers, watched her with surprise and interest as she lessened in the distance, each lost in his own conjecture as to the character of a vessel which had so successfully eluded the combined force of the cruiser, the fortress, and a ship-of-the-line. Captain Navaree comforted himself, as he saw her disappearing to the north-east, hull down, with the assurance that for the present at least, his daughter was not to be a passenger in her.

Black Ralph; or, The Helmsman of Hurlgate

Madeline soon learned the cause of the heavy cannonading, but she knew that Henry was not in the schooner, for she had watched with a small spy glass from the cabin window his retiring boat, and seen him land at the quay, just as the firing upon the schooner was commenced by the castle and cruiser. She knew, therefore, that he was for the present safe, and that so far as the schooner had been concerned, her father's suspicions had been wrongly directed.

That night, a little after nine o'clock, a boat, rowed by six men with muffled oars, put off from a point of rocks opposite the ship-of-the-line, and rowed towards her. The moon was within a few nights of its full, and gave a clearer light than men compelled to muffle their oar's could desire. Swiftly that boat came towards the dark mass that lay like a huge castle afloat.

`What boat is that? challenged the sentinel from the ganway.

`Castle.'

`Come along side.

`Aye, aye,' answered a cheerful voice which the expecting, trembling Madeline knew to be Monteith's. Her father had retired, locking her in, and since three bells she had been waiting between hope and fear, her lover. How the challenge of the sentinel made her blood leap! how throbbed her young heart at the sound of his voice in reply.

The boat came up along side, and Monteith ascended to the deck, dressed as a French army officer, and requested to see the captain, for whom he had important despatches. Captain Navarre was informed of his presence and object on board, and throwing on his Indian morning gown, received him.

The assumed officer bowed, and presented a packet. Captain Navarre tore the seal, and read as follows:

Sir You are commanded by the Minister of War, to give passage to America, to M. St Clair Lorraine, a Colonel, and bearer of private despatches to the Marquis de la Fayette.

Signed Proveaux, Minister of Marine.

To M. Navarre, Captain, Line-of-battie-ship Minerve. –

`Sir, you are welcome. Monsieur le minister shall be obeyed,' answered Captain Navarre courteously.

`I will send my boat back, if you please, and then retire to my state-room,' said Monteith in a careless tone.

As he went on deck for this purpose, and inwardly rejoicing in the success of his second *ruse d'amour*, a paper fell from his sword-hilt to the floor.

`It seems to me, said Captain Navarre to himself, as he rose to pick it up, `that this officer's face and voice are familiar. It does not seem a long time since I have seen and conversed with him. M. St. Clair Lorraine! I don't recollect such a name, Ha! `To Mad emoiselle Navarre!' What is this? A note to my daughter! I must read it. Here is treason and conspiracy. Who can have the audacity to write to my daughter?

Dearest Madeline I find the scheme I suggested when I was fastening on you your bracelet this afternoon, wholly impracticable for many reasons. I have determind to take passage in the same ship with you as M. St. Clair Lorraine, bearer of despatches, and meet my ship in America, where it is to join lord Howe. I have written for, and shall obtain leave, and in the mean time anticipate it. Betray no surprise or recognition on meeting me in the morning at table. I look forward to a happy passage across the Atlantic in your sweet society. You will think I am

Black Ralph; or, The Helmsman of Hurlgate

an audacious intriguer; but what will not love undertake for its object?

Devotedly,

Montieth.'

It would be impossible to express in language, the astonishment and utter consternation of Captain Navarre, on reading this fatal missile. The identity of the custom-house officer and the French bearer of despatches, now flashed upon him. It was several seconds before he could speak, for the depth of his emotions of anger and vengeance.

'Ho, a guard! Seize the spy and traitor' he shouted, till his voice rung through the cabin. He flew to the deck, where Henry having just dismissed his oarsmen was returning. 'Ho, you villain,' cried the infuriated captain seizing his collar, 'you Scotch rogue! you pretty custom-house officer, and bearer of despatches! I'll have you hung, sirrah. I have read your note to my daughter! I will have you guillotined. Ho, seize him and put him in irons, and take him to the gun-room prison!'

Montieth knew that all was discovered; and anathematizing his carelessness in letting the note he had intended to convey to Madeline be lost, he quietly yielded to his fate, and suffered himself to be borne from the deck to his prison.

We have now explained the past history of the loves of the two persons now on board the wreck of the *Minerve*, Henry had been imprisoned the seventh day when the conflagration occurred, during which time, the faithful Madeline, by means of bribery, had repeatedly visited him. The mode of his release through her courage and devotion, is already known to the reader.

CHAPTER IV.

We left Louis de Fernay our French lieutenant on his way to Calais, and when a mile from the chateau, arrested by the conflagration of his ship, which, he watched with grief and horror, until the tempest swept her from his view, still on fire as she disappeared in the distance. The reader, however, has followed her terrific course towards the north sea, and then seen her driven back again nearly to the spot from whence she had started, with the storm abated, and the two lovers, looking from her deck upon a moonlight scene of bay and shore, with the chateau in bold relief half a mile distant; the heavy ground swell driving the huge fabric helplessly onwards towards the rocky beach beneath it.

Louis did not leave his post on the headland till the violence of the gale drove him for shelter to the nearest roof, which was that of a deserted fisherman's hut, situated under the lee and against the cliff. Here he and his horse found partial protection from the wild force of the driving blast, while his bosom was torn with doubt and fears for those on board the frigate, the few who might still be on the burning line of-battle-ship, and for the fate of the boats and their crowded numbers. Anxious to know the worst he made several different attempts to leave the hut and return, at least to the chateau, where if any were saved they would probably be found sheltered. But the fury of the wind and the darkness of the coming night forced him back. He therefore, though with a sufficiently important spirit, made up his mind to be detained there until the storm should break up or morning should appear.

With this view he fastened the door, unsaddled his horse and fastening him to a bolt in the stone chimney of the hut, placed the saddle upon the floor and laid down using it for a pillow. The hut was wholly dark save when a flash of lightning showed him the wretchedness of his quarters. The howling of the hurricane mingled with the roar of the breakers as they leaped madly against the side of the cliff which they shook to its foundations, for a time drove sleep from his eyes. At length slumber stole over him, and sleep deep and heavy, sealed his senses,

Black Ralph; or, The Helmsman of Hurlgate

lulled by the monotonous roar of the waves and wind to which his ear had now become familiar. How long he had slept, he knew not, when he was awakened by a loud clap of thunder and noise of a heavy fall within the hut, that startled him to his feet. It took him a moment to recollect where he was and the circumstances which had placed him there. The winds were now still and the roar of the breaking surges only met his ear. There was more light too in the interior of the hut, and looking out from a small wicket window he saw with pleasure that the clouds were breaking up and the heavens becoming lighter, though still wild and tempestuous. He now missed his horse and feeling for him, found he had broken from his fastening by the chimney, leaving a piece of his bridle in the bolt. The door being still fast, he was surprised at this and began to search round the sides of the hut to discover some other opening by which he might have got out.

He found the place was spacious and walled on one side by the cliff, which to his surprise, he found was penetrated by a large opening. He stumbled over a heavy door which lay before it upon the ground and which had evidently fallen from the passage, which it had been intended to secure, and which had been thrown down by the shock of the thunder clap which had awakened him. He found by his hands that it was broad and high enough for the passage of a man, but irregular in its shape as if a natural fissure in the rock. His horse, he was confident, must have wandered through it and he resolved to explore it not only in search of him, but to gratify his curiosity. He drew his sword and carried it in his hand, for he recollected that smuggler's infected the coast and that this was probably one of their haunts.

Listening before he advanced and hearing no sound save an impotent dash now and then of his horse's hoofs, which showed him that his lost companion was not only there but had penetrated some distance from the hut. With cautious steps carefully feeling his way with the point of his sword he advanced in perfect darkness several feet over a stony floor, the sound of the sea growing fainter as he proceeded further in. The passage was of irregular width and was partially blocked up by a gun pointed outwards which he ascertained to be a twelve pounder. At length it opened wider into a sort of a cavern, which by the sound of his sword hilt struck against the sides, he knew was of narrow dimensions; but a prolonged reiteration of the sound to the left, showed him that it extended in that direction. He soon found the passage which by a shallow flight of three or four steps led him into a large vaulted apartment, for he knew its size by a sensation he felt of space above and around him. At the opposite extremity he was surprised to see a faint glow like halfburied embers, and while he was deliberating whether to advance further or not, in such a mysterious place, his blood was curdled by the rubbing of his horse's nose against his shoulder.

Smiling at his sudden alarm he caressed his truant companion and taking his bridle, led him forward towards the glow worm looking spot, which as he came nearer he saw with pleasure were embers. He was within a few feet of them when he fell over a human body that was prostrate in his path. A loud fierce growl of rage caused him to spring farther from him, and by a sharp blow with his sword disengaged his leg which the man had seized. The horse close behind him was then evidently laid hold of by the fetlock as he was stepping along over him, for such a yell of surprise and mortal terror as followed the grasp upon the hoof was never uttered by human lungs before. It made Louis's blood run cold. There were a struggle too! The horse had trodden upon his garments and held him down, while with yells and curses he strove in the darkness to disengage himself.

'Ha! The devil! ha, the devil! Jacques! Pierre! the devil has got me at last! Mercie, Marie! Mercie, Jesu! Sacre! oh, helas, aie!' Here there was a dying away of the tones and the voice subsided into a low moan.

Filled with consternation as Louis was by this unexpected and startling event he could not help laughing, and hastened to the ashes to make a light. He found on stirring the bed of embers that there was a profusion of hot coals which as he opened them, shed a glare upon a huge chimney in which he stood and by which he discovered his horse standing quietly over the prostrate form of a man. By its light he also saw a piece of tarred rope which had been used as a torch and which he immediately lighted a bright blaze which it gave out showed him a large cavernous chamber the lofty sides of which were piled with every sort of merchandize from casks of spirits to cases of silks and bales of laces, all ready to be taken across the channel. He was now satisfied of the character of

Black Ralph; or, The Helmsman of Hurlgate

the place and reputation of his new companion. He approached the man with the torch, whom he found lying on his back beneath his astonished steed who had one hoof upon his jacket. The poor fellow's face was pale as ashes; his eyes were closed and his hands clasped over a crucifix, while his livid lips moved rapidly and inaudibly in prayer. The very hairs of his head were stiffened with his fear and his body shook with the convulsions of mortal terror.

Louis gently led his horse from above him, and then looked at him a moment as he lay there. He saw he was about forty years of age, with a bald place in the crown of his head, and a huge gray beard! He was short and fleshy, and though coarsely, somewhat fantastically dressed with an Indian's love for finery. There was an expression in his round visage of simplicity and cunning, and Louis set him down for some half-witted fellow belonging to the gang, and left in charge of their rendezvous. He touched him with his foot, but he did not stir. He then pricked him in the ribs with his sword, when he threw up his short duck legs into the air, and closing his eyes tighter, cried out for mercy of `good Mr. Diabolus.'

`Up, up with thee,' said Louis, sternly. Open your eyes and get to your feet.'

`The man's fears were somewhat lulled by the sound of his voice, and his habits of obeying made him get so far up as to sit upon the floor of the cave. Then, with one eye he looked with surprise at the intruder, and with the other, surveyed with amusing doubt and fear the patient horse, who stood near by contemplating him.

`Come, sir, get to your feet. Who are you.'

`A good Christian, Mr. Devil, and I hope you will let me live a little longer. I've got a good many sins o' conscience to repent of. Oh, it's pitiful to be waked out of a sound sleep, with a cloven foot in one's fist. You gave me a terrible fright, Mr. Devil, so let me off this time on that.'

`What is the fool talking about. Prick up your senses. There! do you feel better, sirrah?' added Louis, lifting him by the neck to his feet.

`Yes, I think I do. It was only a horse, then?'

`Yes'

`Then I'll let old Lucifer go to the But I was a *leetle* taken by surprise; But what are you and your horse doing here, Mister?' he demanded in a tone of authority.

`I have come in here for shelter from the storm.'

`Does it blow, out? Then the boys 'll not be in to-night. But how did you get in now?' he asked in a tone of puzzled surprise.

`By accident. Are you alone?'

The man shook his head with a cautious glance around him and muttered to himself, `I see he'll murder me if he knows the Captain has left me here! *No*,' he then answered with more firmness of manner than Louis believed he could assume. He, however, knew that he was deceiving him.

`You are smugglers?'

`No, I am only a `prentice.'

Black Ralph; or, The Helmsman of Hurlgate

`What are these goods?'

`The King's.'

`What King's?'

`George. You see the Parlyment makes too hard laws about importin'; and as the King and royal family likes to wear rich goods, and the duties makes `em too high for their purses in these times; so the King employs a few vessels to smuggle in what is wanted at Court, and lends 'em his own colors and guns, and gives 'em passes, to help 'em cheat his own cruisers.'

Louis looked at the parti-colored little man in red jacket, plaid cap and green trowsers, with surprise and natural incredulity at his extraordinary statement; yet the seriousness of his manner, and the connection of his narrative with the known fact of the embarrassment of, and love of foreign finery displayed by the English court, could not but lead him to entertain the belief that he told the truth, and that he was truly in a *royal* smuggling. But a moment's reflection, made him aware of the absurdity of giving credence to so improbable a story.

`Who is your Captain?'

`A lord's son.'

`And you yourself are, no doubt, a knight at the least.'

`Yes. I am knight of the cave here. They leave me in charge between whiles. They have been enough gone within the last fortnight, with good luck, to be back again. But this storm keeps them off. Sacre! I haven't got over my fright yet.

`Your lungs gave a good account of themselves! You cried out in French. You are not French?'

`No.'

`English?'

`No. I am a Yankee sort from the Bay State. I was second cook and waitin' man of all work, aboard Cap'n Jerry Coffin's 'mophridite brig Fishook, bound to Cadiz, and an English cruiser took us in charge, thinking we were not old enough to take care of ourselves. They were all put in Durtmoor hole but me, and I was let go to pick up my own livin', coz they said I was a *witless*, and would harm nobody. Finally, I was smuggled aboard a smugglin' schooner, and arter they'd made me do all the work awhile about the caboose, they put me in here to watch the goods, and cook for 'em when they came ashore. It's no honest trade, and so I was easily skeered when I felt them fetlocks and hoofs about my ears, and strait away believed it was the Old One. You are a likely youngster. Where do you hail from, now, I've told my story.'

`You are not such an idiot as you pretend to be,' said Louis quickly; `I believe you assume a fool's character for your own purposes. You did it I am sure, to deceive your captors, and you have done it to try and deceive me. I am on my guard now.'

The man eyed him sharply for a few seconds, and then said,

`You are a smart one! I am a little cracked by natur,' it is true, but my noncompos is more nor three quarters feigned. I can have my wits about me, when I'm a mind to though your pesky horse here, did 'een-a-most scare 'em clean off forever after more. You're cute! and let me tell you if you love your soul-case, to make the best of

Black Ralph; or, The Helmsman of Hurlgate

your way out of these plantin's rite off for if the cap'n catches you here, it's a gone case with you. Them's my sentiments.'

Louis was puzzled what to make of his companion, but finally set him down as a shrewd fool, whose character was compounded of simplicity and cunning. By dint of artful questioning, he made out to learn from him, that this cavern was the depot of a band of smugglers, both French and English, for the mutual cheating of the revenues on both sides of the channel; that freight intended to be smuggled into France from England, was first landed at night and deposited here, and goods intended for the English market, stored here till required for shipping; that several small vessels were concerned in it, and that the illicit trade was known at Calais by the officer of the port, but connived at through heavy bribery. That these vessels were well armed and manned, and often defied the English cruisers, and almost always escaped them.

Louis himself now recollected having heard of an organized fleet of smugglers and of a secret rendezvous on the coast, but he never suspected its vicinage to the chateau; and he was surprised that its existence should have so long, perhaps for centuries, been kept secret from all but those concerned in the lawless trade it so highly favored. He remembered, too, hearing of a celebrated smuggler who infested the coast, who was singularly daring, always eluded pursuit and had thrice beaten off cruisers sent cut to take him; whose movements were always so sudden and unforeseen that they mocked all espionage and precaution on the part of those who sought to take him.

'Do you know the name of your chief's vessel?' he asked, wishing to learn if he was in the haunt of this bold man.

'Some call him Black Ralph.'

'That's the name,' said Louis, quickly. 'So! I have made a discovery that will give a king's vessel work to do.'

'What's that?' demanded a strange voice in a stern tone that made him start and look round with surprise. Near him stood a stout, thick set man with a seaman's cap and dress, and a brace of pistols at his belt.

'I meant nothing more than my words,' answered Louis in the same tone of defiance.

'You have discovered a rendezvous which is death for any man but a sworn smuggler to enter. Your words show me that you intend to make use of your knowledge to betray the place. This is your horse. You seem to have been driven hither for shelter.'

'I was,' answered Louis, struck by the bold and determined bearing of the other.

'You should then have been a guest. You are now a prisoner.'

'That is to be tried,' said Louis, throwing himself upon the smuggler and seizing one of his pistols. There was a momentary but fierce struggle, pistols were discharged, blood flowed from the smuggler's arm, and Louis lay upon the floor of the cave with his foot upon his breast. His victor surveyed him a moment by the flickering torch which lay upon the ground beside him, and then removing his foot he said in a tone of singular quietness.

'Rise up. You have drawn my blood but I will not take your life. I know you. Your father did me a service in years past, and I repay it by giving you your life. Here is your sword. You are the son of the Marquis de Fernay.'

'Yes,' said Louis, rising to his feet. 'Who are you that can remember favors at such a time and in the unlawful pursuit you follow know how to be generous to the conquered?'

'I am a Frenchman,' answered the other, coldly.

Black Ralph; or, The Helmsman of Hurlgate

`That your speech tells me.'

`That is all you need know. Take your horse and leave the cavern. The storm is passing over.

`Will you let me depart even without drawing an oath of secrecy from me?' asked Louis, taking his horse's bridle in his hand.

`He who owes me his life will never betray me.'

`You have a high scale of honor for such a profession.'

`Though a smuggler I am no less a man.'

`I have a desire to know more of you.'

`Your horse is impatient.'

Louis without further questions followed him as he preceded him with the torch. To the surprise of the young officer he led him by a different passage from that by which he came and which let him forth by a rocky path that terminated in the sea. Wild and precipitous rocks rose above him and hung threateningly over the outlet, far into the entrance of which the spray of the surf was thrown.

`As you came by this way you will easily return to the upland without further guidance,' said the man pausing upon a rock his torch flashing rudely upon the water and ragged rocks.

`I entered by another route,' answered Louis.

`How?'

`Through a hut.'

`Who has opened that entrance which has been closed for years and unknown to but a few living men?' he demanded.

Louis briefly explained what is already known to the reader, and the smuggler bidding him return conducted him back, and so out by the way he entered. The fallen door and piece of bridle in the belt in the chimney showed him that his guest had doubtless spoken truly.

As Louis mounted his horse, the smuggler said in a low tone, `I know your father's blood and it should be honorable. But I cannot trust all men. I warn you. If this depot be discovered through your visit here to-night yonder chateau shall be levelled with the ground; and there my vengeance shall not stop. Beware!'

`But the opening is plain enough seaward methinks.'

`No. In the day time it appears a wild chaos of hanging and piled up rocks giving foot-hold only to the gull and against which the surges below roll with ceaseless roar. No vessels but ours can approach within half a mile and boats seldom come near for the breakers. The whole cliff-ribbed coast for leagues has been searched for this secret spot and yet it has been undiscovered except by those whose lives' here his voice fell to a low and menacing tone `have been the forfeit of their dangerous knowledge.'

Pray let me know your name. Methinks it should have reached my ears and I would like to learn I am right.'

Black Ralph; or, The Helmsman of Hurlgate

`Lan-frane.'

`Ha! The '

`Enough,' said the other quickly and sternly.

`You are a wonderful man. I am not mortified at my discomfiture now that I know who has been my victor.'

The other smiled with grim pleasure at the compliment his words conveyed and then waved him an adieu and re-entered the hut.

It was now about two in the morning. The clouds had broken away and as Louis turned from the hut the moon suddenly shone out and gave a brilliancy to the scene that singularly and beautifully contrasted with the late storm. Reflecting upon the singular place upon which he had found shelter and upon the events that followed he put spurs to his horse and rode up from the beach to regain the top of the cliff. He soon reached the summit and drew rein to look abroad upon the channel with the fate of the frigate and the unhappy line-of-battle-ship in his thoughts. Calais with its towers and battlements was on the left, and the towers of the chateau were visible to the right a third of a league distant, while before him stretching from the west to the east was the dark channel, its distant waves leaping to the moonlight in silvery jets, and those nearer rolling in shoreward with that majestic roll which ever follows a storm. Not a sail was visible in all the wide expanse to cheer his eye, but portions of the channel lay in shadow from clouds suspended above them. Suddenly a moonbeam fell upon a distant sail. Could it be the frigate? He looked with intense earnestness, when what seemed so far off, as the moon fell upon it proved to be near, within a mile; and distinctly showed herself to be a raking schooner under a fore-topsail, jib and mainsail.

He again looked searchingly over the channel for any signs of the frigate, when he heard a heavy gun fired from the direction of the chateau, the sound of which at that hour fell with startling distinctness upon his ears. He looked in the direction of the chateau, when he saw a flash upon the water opposite to it and heard another report that awoke the echoes of the cliff with prolonged reverberations. By the glare of the flash he could see about a third of a mile off against the chateau a huge hulk rolling landward upon the waves which threatened it with destruction upon the reefs towards which they were bearing it. He gazed an instant endeavoring to make it out more distinctly and then exclaiming `La Minerve!' put spurs to his horse and galloped at full speed towards that point of the shore.

Heavily thundered gun after gun from the wreck of the majestic battle-ship as each wave heaved her shoreward Louis rode like the wind. He beheld the corpses of men strewed upon the beach in great numbers; here a boat stranded bottom upwards, and there a burnt fragment of the burnt spars of the wreck. The whole shore as he went along presented to his eyes painful evidences of the terrible destruction produced by the hurricane which had so lately swept land and sea like a besom. Ship wrecked men wandered along the beach or sat upon the rocks till aid should come to them. This he did not delay to offer, for he saw it was at hand. The cessation of the gale had led the alert authorities of the city to despatch parties from town to search for and bury the bodies of the drowned, and give protection to those who had escaped. Soldiers were also dispatched and were moving to the scene of disaster, for the purpose of protecting the dead from being stripped by the rabble, and protecting property that might have drifted ashore. Of all the boats which had left the burning ship, but one the life-boat reached the shore. The rest were submerged with all their crews, most of whom perished ere they could gain the land. Out of five hundred men caught by the storm in the boats, but seventy-one escaped in safety. The life-boat which, it will be remembered contained the officers with Capt. Navarre, was several times overturned, each time righting with diminished numbers. When at length she reached the shore, which she was three hours in doing, but eleven persons, five officers and six men, remained in her. One of them was Capt. Navarre. Fatigued and incapable of farther exertion, they threw themselves on the ground, sheltered by rocks, and there remained until the storm abated a little, when they sought shelter in the chateau, the hospitable doors of which were thrown wide open all

Black Ralph; or, The Helmsman of Hurlgate

night, and lights burned in every window, to guide the shipwrecked mariner to shelter. The Marquis received them with gratitude to God for their escape, which was not lessened when he found that Captain Navarre was among them, and who was an old school-boy friend. The officers and men were shown to comfortable quarters, while the Marquis led Captain Navarre to his own room, which overlooked the water. Here the Captain informed him with insoluble grief, of the loss of his daughter. The Marquis after hearing his narrative, endeavored to console him with the hope of her yet surviving, and being restored to his arms.

‘No, no! She has perished! The ship is lost! My poor Madeline is lost to me forever,’ was the only reply of the inconsolable father. The Marquis, at length, left him to send succor to any others that might have reached the shore, while his thoughts were full of anxiety for his son, whom he had not seen since his departure for Calais. Josephine, also, was in her chamber in tears, lest, so great had been the violence of the storm on land, he had perished in it.

When at length the moon broke through the clouds, Josephine went out upon the balcony and after casting a hasty glance leeward, fixed her gaze intently on the road to Calais, upon which the light lay brightly for half a mile. She turned her weary gaze away to rest her eyes upon the channel, when they fell upon a dark object that she knew was a dismasted ship. A cry which she unconsciously uttered at the unexpected sight, brought the Marquis and Captain Navarre to the balcony, when the practised eyes of the latter instantly discovered the floating wreck. He saw at once from its size and condition that it must be *Le Minerve*, which he had anticipated, if she could float so long, that the change in the direction of the gale would drive back again to that neighborhood. If he had any doubts the report of a thirty-two pounder, the flash of which lighted up her sides and showed her serried tiers of ports, fully removed them.

‘It is the line-of-battle-ship,’ he cried. ‘I pray you hand me a spy-glass.’

Josephine placed one in his hand with which he surveyed the wreck a few moments, speaking at intervals,

‘Yes she is there, the poor *Minerve*! The storm must have extinguished the conflagration! Oh, that it were day that I might know if my daughter lives! But no! She must have perished for the fire has swept away every thing clean above decks. Ha! another gun! Some one is on board! Could we have left any of the men! There she fires again! Whoever it is knows his danger! The ship is driving towards the ledge that makes out below the chateau! With this heavy ground swell will break up like an egg shell! Let us to the beach and render assistance! There is a sail in the offing! A schooner standing in! She can help any one on board if she can come along side of her before she reaches the breakers! She surges in rapidly! let us not delay, but hasten with all means of relief to the shore.

Painful indeed was the surprise with which they watched from the rocky ledge towards which the ship was surging her advance to destruction. Even divested of her lofty masts she was a stately and majestic spectacle to their eyes. Josephine watched also from the balcony on her knees in prayers for the lives of whoever was on board.

‘Alas,’ said Captain Navarre, as he saw with all a seaman’s affection and grief his noble ship borne still noble in her ruins, swiftly towards the spot where he stood impotent to save or succor. She was now within two cable’s length rising and falling with a slow and sublime progress that filled the spectators with emotions of awe and fear. The discharge of cannon had ceased, for Henry Monteith had seen the party hurrying from the chateau to the beach with ropes and boards.

‘Come, Madeline, do not fear but we shall now be saved,’ he said, lifting her upon the helms-man’s house. ‘If they see you they will make greater exertions for our safety.’

Madeline, supported by him stood upon the elevation, so as to overlook the bulwarks and see the group on the rocks.

Black Ralph; or, The Helmsman of Hurlgate

'Oh, that my father were there, then should I be perfectly happy,' she said.'

'My child! my child!' she heard from the land in a loud voice, as Captain Navarre at the same moment saw the fluttering of a white robe upon the stern, and knew that his daughter must be there. A wild shriek of joy replied from the deck and the poor maiden whom too much happiness had well nigh killed, fell insensible. Monteith had hardly raised her up when the huge fabric was lifted unusually high by a vast billow which sinking beneath it let the wreck fall upon a half-sunken ledge with terrible effect. A tremendous shock convulsed her whole frame and parting amidships the forward part rolled over with a terrific noise, and plunging beneath the waves with all the weight of its armament and enormous bulk, displaced a wide space in the sea, which rolling back over the stern parting in a towering column, poured upon it a flood of great depth and irresistible power. Monteith, ere he could plan escape, was submerged with Madeline fast held in his embrace and was carried over the bulwarks far beyond the wreck. His senses did not forsake him, and he struggled to reach the surface. But he had been carried down in a circle of the vortex made by the sinking bows, and he was nearly exhausted when at length he reached the top of a wave *but his burden had been torn from him* he knew not how! He plunged beneath the surface again and with a heart sinking and with life no longer valuable *rere-rose alone!* Some object was borne against him by a wave wet tresses were driven in his face it was Madeline! But he still felt they must perish together as he clasped her to his heart. A few yards before him on the rocks, he saw her distracted father held by the Marquis and others, least he should plunge in to attempt to save them. Every voice was encouragement, but every arm was weak to save; Suddenly a horseman dashed down the precipice galloped along the ledge a plunge! and horse and rider were battling the wave.

'She is saved?' cried the Marquis, as Louis took her lifeless form across his saddle! 'God save my brave son!'

'She is saved!' echoed Josephine as she beheld this gallant act from the balcony, and saw both Henry and the maiden landed in safety upon the rock. But her heart beat not so thankfully as it ought, for she had heard that Madeline Navarre, whom she had now seen rescued from a watery grave *by Louis* was 'young and fair.'

CHAPTER V.

Nearly opposite the Chateau de Fernay, on the English shore, there stood, at the time of our story, a stately country house, which commanded a wide prospect of the channel with a glimpse of the coast of France, and far to the east of the towers and battlements of Dover Castle. The morning of the day of the terrific tempest whose power and effect we have attempted to describe, and a few hours before we introduced Louise de Vernay to the reader in the balcony of his father's chateau, anxiously watching for the appearance of the Minerve, whose loss we have recorded, a gentleman stood in the south window of this villa, looking abroad upon the channel. He was about forty-five years of age, tall and dignified in his person and carriage, and with the air of a high-bred English gentleman.

A fine schooner hove in sight, when she fired a gun from a stern chaser, at some object out of sight behind the headland, which was instantly returned by a heavy canonading from an invisible source. The shot struck the water around the schooner whitening the surface with paths of foam, and her fore-top-gallant-mast went over the side, carrying top-gallant sail and royal with it. The schooner broached to, and for a moment lost her steering way, while around the point appeared the flying jib and then the head sails of a large English brig of war in full chase, and keeping up a constant firing at the schooner from her bow guns. The gentleman saw at once that it was a smuggler escaping from a King's cruiser. He became intensely interested in the exciting scene and looked with admiration at the smuggler as recovering from the momentary effect of losing his fore-top-gallant sail, he continued on his course, gallantly returning the fire of his pursuer.

'There was a good shot,' suddenly cried the English gentleman, as a ball from the schooner's stern gun struck the heel of the brig's bow-sprit and carried it away, leaving both her jibs flying loose to the winds. The brig instantly

Black Ralph; or, The Helmsman of Hurlgate

yawned, the helmsman lost all command of her, and before the braces could be manned to bring the other sails to aid her steering way, she fell off broadside to the schooner.

`It is unfortunate! The fellow will now escape,' said the gentleman. `Ah, the brig is unmanageable, and there is the Backbone reef within half a cable's length of her, and she is driving right upon it! They've brought her up! No; there goes another gun from the smuggler, and oh God! the shot has penetrated her magazine!' suddenly cried the gentleman clasping his hands together, and nearly falling to the floor.

With an explosion that was felt many miles inland, the cruiser blew up, filling the air with a dark volcano-like discharge of fragments of the brig, fire, smoke and human bodies. High and wide they ascended, and then falling on every side into the water, all was still. The surface of the water was covered with innumerable objects and the atmosphere sulphurous and murky with smoke. These were all that met his eyes when he looked a second time. Where a moment before he had seen a stately brig of war, now none was visible.

The schooner immediately run up at her mast-head a green flag, and firing a gun, instead of putting out to sea to secure her escape so singularly favored, altered her course suddenly, and stood in towards the shore. The gentleman from the villa watched her at first with surprise, and then with a look of painful suspicion and alarm. As she came nearer, his brow grew troubled, and, when at length he could see the device on the flag, he beat his forehead with a look of anguish and a cry of execration, in the mutterings of which the words, `brother' and `outlaw,' could be heard. He watched the schooner, and saw her come to, opposite the window, and a boat, containing one person besides four oarsmen, put off from her, and rapidly approached the shore. The individual in the stern he seemed to recognize, and was overcome at once by the intensest alarm; not such as would arise from fears of pillage, but the expression of his face showed it to be one in which the affections were the movers. He fled from the window and clasping his son to his heart, took him in his arms and fled with him from the room. He pursued his way through a hall that terminated in a flight of steps, which he reached and ascended with his still sleeping burden. At the top of the stairs was a door, which led into a small oratory, which he entered. The interior was a chapel, such as formerly, and frequently still, were in use in the mansions of the Catholic gentlemen of England. It was filled with a rosy light from a stained window above the altar, yet it was dim and shadowy, from the heavy cornices and drapery hanging around the sides. It was silent as the tomb! The father threw himself upon his knees before the altar, and offered up a short prayer for the safety of his son the heir of his name and house his only born and beloved child! The boy still slept on his father's bosom. Not the earthquake like explosion of the cruiser, the cry of anguish of his father on seeing the device upon the smuggler's flag, nor the hurried motion of his strange and sudden flight with him in his arms, had wakened him from the deep sleep into which invalids so often fall; as if the senses in extreme debility were less alive to external infirmities.

The father then rose from his knees and laid the sleeping boy upon a velvet cassock beside it, kissed his cheek, and stood up to listen. The door of the oratory by which he had entered, he had closed and barred. He was in a corner tower of the building, and was in the securest part of the massive pile. Therefore, he had fled hither for refuge. But wherefore? Had he not numerous retainers of his household within call? Why then, should he fly thus timidly from the occupants of a small boat?

The history of a few years prior to this period will explain. Sir Walter Horsley was the father of the gentleman now introduced to the reader, the grandfather of the boy Walter, for whom he has exhibited such extraordinary solicitude. Old Sir Walter was descended from a Roman Catholic general, who distinguished himself in the service of the `Bloody Mary,' and from whom he received knighthood, and the gift of a fine domain. His descendant, Sir Walter, married the daughter of an Irish baronet, who presented him with twin boys, and in giving them life, gave up her own. The boys grew up together, and were greatly attached the one to the other, and a delightful affection marked all their intercourse. Sir Walter was proud of them, and resolved to set aside the law of primogeniture for Ralph was a few minutes older than Edward and divided his estate between them. In disposition, these twins were very dissimilar. Edward was docile, gentle, and had a kindly feeling towards every thing that had life. Ralph was bold, combative, and at times, vindictive. At the age of twelve they were sent to

Black Ralph; or, The Helmsman of Hurlgate

Eton, where one won all hearts by his amiable and noble points of character, and the other made himself unpopular by his overbearing pride and impatience of spirit. The same effects followed them through Oxford, Edward leaving the halls with friendship of all who had known him, Ralph only remembered for his haughtiness and viciousness of character, love for pleasure, and a reckless career of expensive dissipation. Yet in their intercourse with each other, these two young men were all affection and love, and neither knew a fault in the other. Edward, had been a hundred times Ralph's champion, both with blows and words of eloquence, though Ralph had few occasions to show his own ready spirit to act in defence of his brother's name or fame.

At length at the age of twenty-three, they returned to Horseley Hall to enter upon life. Sir Walter was not long in discovering and appreciating the differences of character in his two sons. He loved them both, but Edward shared the profoundest place in his affection. He admired the bold character and lofty independent spirit which Ralph exhibited, but he *loved* the gentler qualities of his brother. The two young men had been at home nearly a year, Edward passing his time principally in the library among the treasures of science and philosophy, occasionally visiting London to select rare and new books, and for the purpose of enjoying the society of the learned and eminent men of the kingdom. Ralph on the other hand, devoted himself to the sports of the field and the society of men of pleasure. He was also attached from boy-hood to the water, and had always been remarkable for his venturesome spirit as a boatman; having at the age of seventeen crossed the channel alone, in a small sail boat which his father had given him. He now divided his time between his horses and hounds, and a beautiful yacht, of a hundred and twenty tons, which rode at anchor beneath the cliff, when he was not coasting in her. He called her 'The Steel Arrow;' an arrow of steel being the crest of the Horsley coat of arms. This device he also displayed upon a flag, with a green ground, at her peak.

Thus Ralph Horsley gave himself up to pleasure and dissipation, spending far more than his allowed income. At length his expenses became so great from heavy losses on the turf and at the faro table, that he was forced to mortgage his yacht and horses to raise money to meet them. When extracted from these embarrassments he speedily fell into others, when fearing to draw on his farther and brother's liberality, both of whom had from time to time advanced him money, he forged his father's acceptance and also afterwards that of Edward's to large amounts. For some time his crime was undiscovered, and he hoped to keep it so by winning enough at betting to take up the bills before they should be presented to his father the delusive hope of all who are tempted to commit this crime. But fortune did not favor him and the acceptances were presented to Sir Walter and Edward and pronounced *forgeries*. They however did not expose the crime of the brother and son to the Bank but paid them in silence, assuming the signature, thus hoping to shield from ignominy their proud family name, and by this indulgence win Ralph to virtue and honor.

He expressed his gratitude for this clemency when his surprise on hearing of it had subsided and promised them both they should never hear again of his departure from integrity. Ralph Horsley, however, was too fondly wedded to his pleasures and vices to be broken from them by a mere passing promise based on no reformation of the heart of principle. Rejoiced at his escape from exposure (though he had from the first secretly believed his father and Edward would not expose him) he now plunged more deeply into his dissipations. Soon the same difficulties he had resorted to forging, to escape from, became his lot again, and as he found writing his father's and brother's name a very easy and brief affair, a mere scratch of the pen he did not hesitate to forge them a second time, as might have been foreseen. They were at short date and he was unable to meet them and was forced to let them be presented to those whose name he had forged. The sums were very large and Sir Walter after his surprise, grief and indignation would let him speak, unable to pay them, openly pronounced them 'forgeries.' Edward did all in his power offered to his father to make every sacrifice to save the exposure of his brother, but all in vain. He was forced to confess the draft on himself a forgery or screen his brother by a falsehood. The bank officer after his astonishment was over, said he disliked to prosecute and would take Sir Walter and Edward's first acceptance at a long date instead of the money and keep the affair a secret. To this, at Edward's earnest entreaty, Sir Walter consented; the bills were jointly given and the banker returned to them the forged name which bore testimony to the crime that had been committed. Edward consigned the papers instantly to the flames, and, with a heavy heart mourned over his brother's direliction from the paths of honor, he sought his library in his books to

Black Ralph; or, The Helmsman of Hurlgate

forget his sorrow and disgrace. Sir Walter, however, in whose breast anger, shame, and grief were mingled for his guilty son, returned to his chamber and sending for his legal adviser made his will, devising all his estate, real and person, to 'his well beloved son Edward,' and cutting off Ralph with a shilling.

Ralph kept himself secreted until he knew that his father had settled with the banker and that he had nothing to fear, and then made his appearance at home with great show of penitence and contrition—well-acted remorse. This produced no effect upon Sir Walter, who treated him with cold civility only; but it touched Edward's more sensitive nature and he forgave him all his errors so far as they affected himself, restored him to his confidence and affection and loaned him one thousand pounds 'to prevent the necessity of resorting to dishonest means of replenishing his purse.'

At length Sir Walter Horsley grew sick unto death, for the conduct of his son daily preyed upon his heart and dried up the springs of life. He died and was placed in the tombs of his fathers beneath the chancel in the little chapel of the tower. Ralph was present at the ceremony of interment and retired with Edward and the witnesses and others allied to the family to hear the will read; all present (including the twins themselves) except those who drew it up and witnessed it, believed that it was only the decision, in writing, of Sir Walter's well known and repeatedly expressed intention to divide Horsley manor equally between his two sons, though Ralph was the elder twin.

Ralph's indignant surprise his fierce wrath may easily be conceived when the brief will was read by the solicitor and the full intention of the deceased testator known. For a few moments he was silent with rage, shame and disappointment. He then strode up to the lawyer, and snatching the will from his hands keenly examined his father's signature which he had given such proof of being familiar with. It was Sir Walter's writing. He then cast the will in the face of the solicitor and strode fiercely towards Edward.

'Sir, this is your doings!' he said in a loud menacing tone, 'you set him up to this. Sir Walter never would have disinherited *me* for such a womanly spirited, book worm as you are. I despise you! I hate you! I have only pretended to love you that I might use you. So, *Sir*, Edward Horsley; you shall rue this day, nor long enjoy honors so basely won.'

'Brother,' said Edward calmly, after desiring the rest to quit the room, 'I am as greatly surprised as you are, at this reading of the will. I have done you no wrong, I wish you no wrong. You may have the estate if you give me but my books. The title I would give you also if I could divest myself of it, but as it descends by a peculiar law with the estate, I must wear it.'

'You add insult to wrong, sir! you would make me the offer of being your tenant at will; a sort of overscer of your estates, while you enjoy all the dignities and honors! No, sir! you have by art and duplicity won from me my heritage. Keep it.'

'This quarrel is deeply painful to me brother. Can nothing move you to make peace?'

Ralph remained standing a few moments in deep thought and then said

'There is no help for it. It is done. I must have money in some way! know you that I am secretly married to an Earl's daughter! I have a daughter three years old. We must live and cannot do it without money. Mortgage your estates and raise for me fifty thousand pounds, and I will let you enjoy your ill-got patrimony.'

'It shall be done tomorrow, brother, if the money can be raised,' answered Edward promptly, and offering his hand, which Ralph took coldly and then walked moodily away from him, to gaze upon his mortgaged yacht, which lay anchored beneath the window.

Black Ralph; or, The Helmsman of Hurlgate

In a few days the mortgage was effected, and the fifty thousand pounds paid by Edward over to his brother; who then took leave of him saying that he was going to reside on the continent until the death of his wife's father, when fortune would again smile on him.'

'Never, brother, while honor and virtue frown upon you,' answered Edward kindly, but with dignity. 'Farewell, and may heaven bless you, and restore you to honor and usefulness.'

Ralph took no notice of his brother's words, save by suffering a proud expression of scorn to settle upon his lip, as he parted from him to meet him no more for years. Sir Edward's grief at his departure for with all his errors, he was deeply attached to him was considerably modified, by receiving soon after a line from a banker, notifying him that his acceptance for five thousand pounds, in favor of his brother Ralph Horsely, was shortly due; accompanying which note, was another, addressed to him as the representative of Sir Walter Horsely, notifying him of the near maturity of a bill, endorsed by Sir Walter, in favor of his son Ralph, for the sum of nine thousand pounds.

Sir Edward paid these bills by making great sacrifices, knowing they would be the last from this source. About two years afterwards, he married the daughter of a neighboring baronet, who the following year, presented him with a fine son, whom he named Walter, after his father. By the time Walter had reached his eighth year, his father had cleared the estate he looked forward for him to inherit, from the heavy incombrance of Ralph's forged bills, and of the mortgage of fifty thousand pounds in his behalf. During all this time, he had no certain word of his brother, though rumors reached him of a nature, which led him to fear he had added to the crime of forgery, wickedness of a deeper and grosser character.

Young Walter at length reached his thirteenth year, when his father was satisfied that deeply laid plans were in operation from some unseen source, to deprive him of his son. Once he had been carried off by a Gipsy man and woman, and rescued in time. Once he had been decoyed from his attendant and would have been taken off in a boat, but for his loud cries, and the appearance of the latter with aid, his shouts fortunately brought to the spot. A third time his sleeping apartment had been invaded and his bed, from which he had that night chanced to sleep, turned down and examined by a man, whom his attendant distinctly saw from his own couch, but was too greatly terrified to move or to speak until he moved away muttering words of disappointment. Other incidents occurred which led the parent to see that if he would not be childless, he must watch over his child's safety every moment. His mother, Lady Horseley, at length become so anxious and nervous, that her health suffered, and after lingering a long time in consumption, she died. Sir Edward's whole soul was now absorbed in his child, and he gave himself up to his protection. Young Walter, himself, from being a bold, fearless and spirited lad, caught the infection of fear, and grew nervous and timid, and his father saw with anguish, that his health was suffering.

He reached his fourteenth year, and for several months there having been no further occurrence of an alarming nature, the vigilance with which he was watched over, had somewhat abated, and he was permitted to walk upon the beach in front of the dwelling, with two attendants well armed. One morning a fishing boat, which they had been watching, dancing over the waves came near to the land where they were standing. In the boat was an old woman and a boy. The woman got out and approached them with a basket on her arm. One of the attendants asked her if she had fresh fish, when she came up to them and opened her basket. It contained a large bouquet of flowers.

'I am not a fish woman, but a flower woman from the opposite coast,' she answered with a foreign accent. 'I bring my French flowers to Dover. You have none like them in England. Will my lord purchase?' she asked, glancing towards the Hall, and then fixing a keen and peculiar gaze upon the boy's face.

'I will buy, woman,' said Walter, admirthe flowers. 'My father doesn't care for flowers, and I love them.'

Black Ralph; or, The Helmsman of Hurlgate

‘Are you my lord's son?’ she asked in a careless tone, evidently assumed, to conceal the sudden joy that sparkled in her dark eyes.

‘Yes, if you call Sir Edward Horsely ‘my lord,’ said Walter, smiling. ‘What do you ask for this fine, large bouquet?’

‘It is twelve francs.’

‘I think it dear; but I will purchase it,’ said Walter. ‘But what is that beautiful plant in the little vase with the scarlet flower?’

‘That I have brought to make a present of to whoever bought my bouquet. It is your's. If you smell the flower every morning with the dew upon it, it will restore health to the invalid and impart its own hues to the cheek.’

‘Then it is more valuable than all. You shall be paid for it.’

‘No. I sell you the bouquet and give you this. It is a simple flower and of little value. I see your cheek is pale and I hope it will restore you to health.’

Thus speaking the woman took her leave, saying to herself, ‘I have done mine errand quickly, for fortune has most kindly favored me. This flower will insure success.’ She got into her boat, the boy set the sail, and steered along the land towards Dover; but when the boat had got out of sight behind the headland, she took her way across the rippled waters of the channel in the direction of the French coast.

Walter placed the flower in his window, and each morning inhaled its pleasant fragrance. Instead of returning health, he grew each day more and more ill, while his face became scarlet with a hot fever. Sir Edward at length was informed about the flower, which Walter had kept from him, hoping soon to surprise him with full and vigorous health. He instantly sent for it and knew at once that his child had been poisoned. It was the utoe lily a plant of the most subtle poison, found, though rarely, in Auvergne. To inhale its odor is noxious to human life, and if repeated, often destroy it.

The poison had taken possession of the youthful victim's system. Delirium followed the earlier symptoms, and for several weeks Walter's life hung upon a thread. Medical skill and the careful nursing of his father, subdued the disease, and he became slowly convalescent. But it was found that the poison had affected his joints and limbs, and that he was unable to walk when he got up. His legs were distorted from their symmetry and drew up, and his shoulders grew deformed. He had become a cripple, purchasing life at the expense of deformity. Slowly, however, did his health improve, and it was plain that he would never again be well though he might live for years. With what tenderness what intense affection and benevolent sympathy did Sir Edward watch by his son day and night. He never left him. His place was forever by his side, and in his was his own life wrapped up.

Such was the state of affairs up to the morning that we have introduced Sir Edward Horsley to the reader, gazing from his library window upon the waters of the channel, and subsequently flying on the approach of a boat, with a strange alarm for shelter to the oratory, bearing his son in his arms.

He now looked around the chapel with an anxious and bitter glance. In his hand he held his side sword which he never went without. His whole attitude was that of fear, expectation and desperate resolution.

‘No, if it be he he can never enter here. I have made this holy place a sanctuary, and if the fear of sacrilege will not keep him out, bolts and bars will. Could it have been my brother. I thought I recognized his form even after seventeen years absence. He alone would carry the device of the Steel Arrow.’ I have learned too surely that he has taken to the seas against the revenue, and is now a lawless chief of desperate smugglers, himself the wickedest

Black Ralph; or, The Helmsman of Hurlgate

of them all. I have feared this visit, I have been expecting him daily since he left me, and now he is come. I could not mistake that tall form which I used once to admire and take pride in as he was my twin brother. Alas, for the days when we loved each other when he was dear to me as my own soul. But now he has only my pity, and inspires me with horror. Crime has made a wide gulf between us, as it will do in the next world between the evil and the good. My suspicions have long told me that he is the author of my child's attempted abduction and assassination. Horror that a brother should seek the life of a brother's child. Does he hope by his death to become inheritor of these estates? then my death must also follow. Oh, God, can a brother lift his hand against a twin brother!

`Wert thou seven times my brother, Edward Horsley, I would lift my hand against thee if you stood between me and my desires,' said a deep, vindictive voice near him.

Sir Edward startled at the sound of the well known and terrible voice, and with a cry of wild alarm caught up his son in his arms and stood with his drawn sword upon his defence. There was a desperate determination in his eyes and attitude. Ralph Horsley, who was now a tall, stout, dark complexioned man, in seaman's dress, armed with pistols and a short sword, gazed upon his brother a few moments as if observing the change in his appearance, and then said in a careless, half-laughing, though coarse tone,

`Well, brother, you have something changed in sixteen years; *and so have I!* You have always stood in my way, and this moment hold my titles and estates. I have come for both of them.'

`Monster! you take them both with my life,' cried Sir Edward, shuddering, yet wanting nothing in the courage and firmness the moment called for.

`Thy life I want not now. If that brat be removed, whom I take to be thy son, I am content. I have a daughter I would marry and have a fancy to give her Horsley Hall as her portion.'

`This boy is the true heir before Heaven, and no earthly power shall make me resign his sacred right.'

`Thy boy stands in my way.'

`He is my son, and the true heir of Horsley. Harm him not, brother! You have sought his life thrice! Oh, think not of pursuing that life farther, which has been miraculously spared.'

`He shall die. If Heaven will save him let her make another miracle in his behalf.'

`Demon! brother! stand off!' cried Sir Edward, as his brother approached him menacingly, to seize the poor boy who had awaked to all the terrors of his situation.

The muscular strength of the smuggler was too great for that of Sir Edward, who with natural repugnance at taking his brother's life, let him draw near till within his sword guard, which he beat to the ground and then wrested the boy from his grasp.

`Spare, oh! spare his life, and I will surrender to you all titles, estates and all! Nay, I will enter a monastery for life. You shall never hear of me more. Spare, oh spare, brother!' he cried in agony and anguish, as Ralph, after suspending the boy over the low altar a moment, laid him upon it, and held his short sword to his breast. Walter had fainted and lay insensible like a lamb waiting the sacrifice.

`He shall die!' answered the smuggler, fiercely. `I will have my rights back again. I have tried secretly to get his life without success long enough; I will now ensure it. He dies!'

Black Ralph; or, The Helmsman of Hurlgate

`Then God forgive me! die *thyself*' cried Sir Edward, striking his glittering sword at his heart. The blade encountered a mailed shirt, and bending, broke to the hilt in his grasp. With a loud laugh the outlaw brought the point of the sword close to the boy's heart. `Save his life and take *mine!* oh spare him, brother; Let him live and I will die!' cried the agonized father. `Remember the place! It is holy!'

`So much the better.'

`It is an altar of God upon which you have lain him.'

`So much the better for a sacrifice. *He dies!*'

The sword of the assassin was raised above his head high in the air Sir Edward sprung at the same instant upon the altar, and covering his son's heart with his own, the sword of the fratricide penetrated the living bodies both of father and son at one blow!

CHAPTER VI.

We have seen the beautiful and heroic Madeline Navarre rescued from the waves, after the loss of the line-of-battle ship, by Louis de Fernay. We have also seen the effect of transient jealousy it produced upon his fair cousin, the Countess Josephine, who witnessed his gallant conduct from a window of the chateau; for she had heard that the rescued maiden was `young and fair.'

With joy that expressed itself in tears, the grateful Captain Navarre clasped his recovered child to his heart, and overwhelmed Louis with thanks for preserving her life. Henry Monteith also grasped Louis' hand, and gratefully thanked him for his assistance, instead of showing that reserve, which lovers often do, towards another young man who aids them in rescuing their lady love in a time of peril. Madeline was borne insensible to the chateau, her almost lifeless form attended by her father, who forgot not to take Monteith's hand, and ask his forgiveness for his severity towards him.

`Young man,' he said to him as they climbed the rocks to the mansion, `you have been instrumental in preserving to me my only daughter; if she recovers, and does not say `nay, she shall be yours, as none can be more worthy of her.' Henry returned the grasp of his hand with feelings of pride and happiness, and fervently prayed that the lovely girl they were bearing to the chateau might live to bless him. Louis, in the meanwhile, remained to watch the motions of the schooner, which he had discovered in the offing, and which was now lying too, nearly abreast the smuggler's cave. He thought he saw a boat putting off from her and pulling in towards the land, and after watching a few seconds, the gleam of moonshine upon a range of lifting and falling oars, convinced him that he was not mistaken. Springing into his saddle, he spurred his trusty horse, still reeking with sea-water, towards the cavern. He felt a deep interest in the man he saw there, Lan-franc, whom he knew to be a leader of a daring horde that had for years infested the French coast. He also desired to know who sailed in the rakish schooner that lay rocking upon the undulating sea like a snowy gull riding upon the waves. Leaving him on his way to the vicinity of the cavern, where he expected the boat to land, we will return to the chateau.

Madeline has been borne to the chamber of the Countess Josephine medical aid had arrived from Calais and every means that affection and skill could command, was employed to affect her restoration. But the pulse of life, which had grown fainter each hour, at length ceased its scarcely perceptible vibrations, and the lovely Madeline Navarre lay, in the presence of weeping friends and silent spectators, a corpse, lovely even in the marble of death!

Her father gazed upon her awhile in speechless grief, kissed her cold forehead and senseless lips, and left the chamber to indulge his sorrow alone. Henry Monteith was left alone with her! He knelt beside her inanimate form, and, with her hand clasped in his, he bent his forehead upon them thus grasped, and wept like a child. At

Black Ralph; or, The Helmsman of Hurlgate

length he became calm and realized the vastness of his misfortune! He paced the chamber long in agony and grief, at times approaching her, body and addressing her in the language of eloquent despair; at others, kneeling beside her, seemingly as inanimate with his grief as she for whom he mourned. The morning sun darted its earliest beams into the chamber of death, and rested like a blessing upon the face of the corpse. It came through rosy stained glass, and gave to the marble hue of the countenance the flush and semblance of life.

'My child! she lives,' cried Capt. Navarre, entering at this moment and seeing this effect of the sunlight.

He rushed towards her to clasp death in his arms, and feel the chill of death strike to his soul from the icy lips he warmly pressed. Monteith was deeply affected by this scene. His heart bled for the father, and approaching him he spoke.

'Even in death she lives,' he said gazing upon her.

'My son my son forgive me!' he said turning and opening his arms.

Monteith rushed into them, and the late foes remained long and wept in each others embrace beside that unconscious corpse of reconciliation.

Louis de Fernay followed the course of the shore until he came near the tavern where he had met the adventure of the night before, when, dismounting from his horse, he fastened him to a projection of the crag, and cautiously descended to the beach. He saw through the trees, glimpses of a boat approaching with four oars, and containing two persons. He watched it till he saw it enter and disappear in the wild mouth of the cavern. He then made his way to the hut and entered with secrecy. It was, as before, silent and without an occupant. The door, which had been thrown down in the storm, had been replaced by Lan-franc, but on trial he found that it was not secured. He removed it with out noise and entered the passage. He proceeded to its extremity, when he heard voices of persons approaching from the sea outlet, and the steps of another coming from the interior of the cave. He hastily drew back within one of the recesses, when Lan franc pushed rapidly along, with a lantern in one hand and a pistol in the other, in the direction of the approaching voices. He heard his greeting, and then all came towards the spot in which he stood, on the way to the inner chamber of the vault.

By the side of Lan-franc, who carried the lantern, the light of which he turned upon his face as he conversed with him, walked a tall, dark man, with a face expressive of the fiercest passions. It was Ralph Horseley. His brow was gloomy and stern, and his tones were impatient and angry, as if something had displeased him. Behind him followed a lad in seaman's jacket, and blue cap; a graceful, handsome boy, with a fearless, a beautiful firm lip, almost girlish for its delicacy. He resembled the taller stranger sufficiently to have been his child. Lan-franc led them to the inner apartment of the cavern, and Louis, prompted by curiosity, followed unseen.

'This will not excuse you, `sir,' said Horseley, sternly; 'I bade you have all the merchandise disposed of the money ready for my hand on my return! Yet I find it all here in store, and of no more value to me now than so much of the bare rock. I want the money!'

'I could not prevent the storm, Captain. If the vessels which were to take it have been driven back, I am not to blame. The goods should have been sent to Calais yesterday but for what I told you. There is time enough tomorrow night.'

'Tomorrow night! By the red cross of Lucifer it you prate to me longer I will throttle you, villain,' said Horseley, fiercely. 'I have no time to wait! I must be on board and at sea by day-break. I can run no risk by staying here to wait for money. I have blown up a King's cruiser, and done other deeds in the last twenty-four hours that will make these waters too hot for `The Steel Arrow's keel a day longer. What money have you, Lan-franc?'

Black Ralph; or, The Helmsman of Hurlgate

`None.'

`It is false.'

`I like not your mood,' said Lan-franc, haughtily. `If you are Captain one side of the channel I am chief on this side. I am as well born as thyself. I am not to be dictated to! Choose better words in your speech if you would hold further discourse with me.'

`I am in no humor to select my words, so you must take as I give them;' said Horseley, between surprise and vindictiveness. `Come, I must have money. I am going to sail for America, and give my services to the rebels. I must have gold, and *you have it!*'

`I have none.'

`You are a liar.'

`Ha! take that!' exclaimed Lan-franc, striking him violently in the face.

`And take *that*, villain,' cried Horsely, instantaneously drawing a pistol and discharging at his head. The Frenchman fell dead without a struggle. Horsely, with a smile of triumphant vindictiveness, returned his smoking pistol to his belt and beckoned to the lad, who had sprung forward, when Lan-franc gave the blow with a drawn stiletto, as if to avenge it.

`Frank.'

`Sir.'

`This is an ugly affair. Lan-franc was useful to me. But I forget I should no longer need his services, as I must fly for blowing up the cruiser.'

`It is a pity he struck you, father,' said the lad; he has not paid too high for the blow even with his life. Here is that American prisoner asleep or dead, or the pistol should have waked him.'

`Wake him with a smart blow upon the cheek.'

The Yankee `man of all work,' and late one of the crew of `Capting Jemmy Coffin's' 'morphrodite brig, the `Fishhook,' started to his feet on receiving the rough salutation of the handsome lad. He immediately recognised them, but was horror struck at beholding the dead body of Lan-franc. He instantly fell upon his knees and begged for mercy.

`Cease, and tell me where Lan-franc keeps his gold,' said Horsely. `I am going to sail forthwith for America, and if you find it, I will take you on board to your own country.'

This was a temptation to Zebedee Beebee, and as he had already discovered Lan-franc's secret treasure deposit, he promptly conducted Horsely to the place. There were about twelve hundred francs in gold and silver which he took possession of, and then, after bidding Zebedee search the body, he departed from the cavern.

Louis witnessed all this with varied emotions of horror, surprise and resentment. He took a dislike to Horsely on first beholding his visage, and now that he had done a deed of murder, he shuddered in his presence. The youth, on the other hand, had deeply interested him, inasmuch as his great beauty, and peculiar grace of manner, and richness of voice, led him to suspect his sex. He, therefore, let them pass him, and unseen followed them as far as

Black Ralph; or, The Helmsman of Hurlgate

the place of embarkation, at the sea-outlet of the cavern. Here the boat lay in a little inlet above which projected the ragged roof of the cave. Four oarsmen were waiting in it for the appearance of their chief. On seeing him approach two of them got out and stood to receive them. Louis saw by the light of the lantern, borne by Zebedee, that they were armed with pistols and cutlasses. The money was placed in the boat by the men, and Horsely was about to step in, when Louis' foot unluckily loosened a stone, the noise of which attracted the quick ear of the smuggler. Turning round and seizing the lantern from the hand of the American, he rushed back into the shadow of the cavern, and before Louis could escape his observation he was discovered.

'A spy! seize him!' cried Horsely to his men.

In an instant, ere he could prepare to defend himself, Louis was arrested and made prisoner. His sword was taken from him and he was hurried into the boat.

'Pull to the schooner,' said the smuggler sternly. 'We will then see what business this gentleman has with us.'

It was just at the dawning of day that the boat reached the schooner. Louis was taken on board and conducted by Horsely's command into the cabin under guard. The schooner then filled away and stood westward, as the rising sun gilded her sails and flashed from the steel arrow at her truck.

Her course, as she passed a mile distant off against the chateau, was witnessed by all its inmates; for she had been recognized by her 'arrowy vane,' with the glass, to be the 'Steel Arrow,' so well known on the coast yet so seldom seen.

The third day after these events, the remains of the ill-fated Madcline Navarre were consigned to a tomb beneath the Chapel de Fernay; and a few days afterwards, the bereaved father and happy lover departed the former to Calais, to join his late consort, the frigate, which had run before the gale, and afterwards with loss of her topmasts, put into this port, previous to fitting out to join the fleet of D'Estaing at New York.

Henry Monteith rejoined his ship at Portsmouth, and also joined the squadron of Lord Howe on the American coast. It was, perhaps, a singular coincidence, that Captain Navarre sailed in the frigate (of which he took command) from Calais on the same day that Henry Monteith sailed from Portsmouth, in the British frigate 'The Thunderer,' of which he was second lieutenant. The remaining scenes of our story will be laid in New York Bay and Long Island Sound, whither we beg our readers will have the courtesy to transfer their imaginations.

CHAPTER VII.

When the French fleet under Admiral D'Estaing arrived off New York to the assistance of the Americans, the British fleet under Lord Howe was at anchor in New York Bay. The appearance of D'Estaing was sudden, and produced no little consternation in the English squadron. The wind, however, for several days was too unfavorable for D'Estaing to enter the harbor and attack them, and spending the time in taking soundings, he waited for an opportunity to sail in with his heavy force, which must have gained a complete victory over the British and made him master of New York. At length the eleventh day after his arrival off the Hook, D'Estaing weighed anchor and put his fleet in motion. The wind and tide 'says Marshall in his Life of Washington, 'were peculiarly favorable to the passage of the bar, which it was supposed he intended to attempt. It was to the British Admiral and General a moment of awful expectation. The attempt, if successful, must have been attended with the loss of both their fleet and army; if unfortunate, a brilliant victory, and the destruction of the assailants, might be contemplated as its most certain consequences.'

The fleet stood in towards the channel, a fine frigate taking the lead, when all at once the frigate was seen to strike and remain fast heeling over to leeward. The remainder of the advancing vessels immediately put about and going

Black Ralph; or, The Helmsman of Hurlgate

into the offing lay too and sent boats to the assistance of the frigate. But two British sloops of war seeing her situation had already stood down towards her to which she surrendered, and the boats returned to the fleet, which stood eastward. At the next flood the frigate was got off and piloted up the harbor and anchored off the castle or battery point a noble prize, and one of which they were not a little proud.

We will now return to 'The Steel Arrow' and her prisoner, Louis de Fernay. He had remained an hour under guard in one of the state rooms of the schooner, reflecting upon his folly in suffering his curiosity and an undefinable interest in the handsome smuggler's lad, to lead him to sacrifice his personal liberty, if not peril his life. He knew from the motions of the schooner, that she was rapidly moving through the water, and that a few hours would bear him far from the French Coast, and the shores of Europe. He felt that he was destined to be conveyed a prisoner to the Americans unless the schooner should fall into the hands of cruisers.

'You seem moody, sir,' said Horsely suddenly speaking, having sometime since silently entered the cabin.

'I am a prisoner, which methinks affords slight room for looking pleased,' answered Louis.

'You were a spy. Who are you?'

'Louis de Farnay.'

'The son of the Marquis?'

'The same.'

'Then this accounts for your being in the neighborhood of the cave. But how did you discover it?'

Louis informed him of the particulars of his first entrance into the hut, already known to the reader, and to which Horsely listened with surprise and interest. 'And so your reappearance there this morning was only from curiosity?'

'Yes.'

'It is doubtless so. You are in the French marine. I am short of hands and want an officer. I believe your words and will give you your liberty till we reach New York if you will act as second officer on the passage.'

'I prefer returning to France. Land me at the nearest port and I will pay you five hundred francs.'

'It is a great temptation but it is worth my head to venture back. You must go on with me. It is your own choice to go in irons or as my second officer.'

'I go in irons then,' answered Louis haughtily.

'You shall have your choice,' said Horsely, savagely; 'Ho, there! bring irons and place this prisoner in the ward room.'

The passage across the Atlantic had been half made when one night in a terrific storm, the first officer was washed overboard with two of the watch. Horsely came below and removing the irons from Louis' limbs, told him that his aid as a seaman and as a man were required on the deck.

'So that I do not do service as your officer I will willingly help,' he replied, and followed him to the deck. Here all was confusion and dismay; and the winds and waves, the roar of the thunder and the darting of the forked

Black Ralph; or, The Helmsman of Hurlgate

lightning were terrific. The schooner had sprung the heel of her mainmast and was laboring heavily, He applied all his skill and energies to the duties he saw the imminent danger called for, and his coolness and knowledge at once restored the confidence of the men. The storm terminated at sunrise and Horseley coming to Louis offered his hand and told him he believed he was indebted to him for the safety of his vessel. 'From this moment you are free. If you see fit to do duty as first officer in any emergency, the post is vacant.'

'I shall cheerfully do all in my power for the safety of the schooner while I am on board. as well as for the preservation of the lives of those who sail in her,' answered Louis, quietly. And from that day he was regularly on deck, taking command of the starboard watch.

During the time he had been a prisoner the young lad, who seemed to be a clerk and private attendant of Horseley, frequently showed his sympathy for him by sending him books, delicacies from the table and getting for him the occasional privilege of walking on deck to breathe the air. In him Louis became deeply interested, and felt grateful for his attentions. But he was never visited by him in the ward-room nor addressed by him when on deck in his chains; but the youth observed a singular diffidence in his presence and showed a desire to be unnoticed. Louis could not discover that he did any duty on board except what was voluntary; that he never went forward; and that his favorite place was at the helm.

The third day after the storm Horseley was in his birth, it being his watch below. Louis was pacing the quarter-deck of the schooner which was running under easy sail N N. W. The youth was at the helm when Louis came on deck and still retained it, sending the relief forward. Our hero stopped by the young steersman and addressed him for the first time in his life. The face of the youth was instantly overspread with a blush his eyes drooped before his gaze and his chest heaved, while such was his confusion, that he forgot his duty and let the vessel come up to the wind till her sails shivered. Louis caught the helm, smiled at his embarrassment and putting the vessel on her course again, was about to resign it to him when he abruptly left the deck and descended into the cabin, leaving Louis fully confirmed in his suspicions that she was a woman and a very beautiful one too. He now resolved to learn her history, by delicately drawing her out into conversation. She had made a deep impression upon his imagination and promised to make a deeper one upon his heart. That evening upon the moonlit deck he stood beside her and told his discovery of her sex and the interest he took in her. After her embarrassment was over she yielded to his solicitations and narrated her history. We can only give its brief outline.

Ralph Horseley had clandestinely married the only daughter of the Earl of , as we have already intimated in a previous chapter. By her had a daughter whose birth the mother (broken hearted by the discovery of her husband's dissolute and abandoned character) did not long survive. Jealous lest her child who was the only heir to the Earl, should be taken from him Horseley, determined to keep it always in his sight until the death of the Earl should call for the true heir, when he intended to present her with her claims and profit by her accession to titles and wealth. He, soon found in his lawless life that her sex would be an obstacle to his keeping her in his sight, and he resolved on the expedient when she was in her fifth year, of putting her in boy's costume. This he did so; and up to the period we now see her a fine dark haired, brown cheeked girl of seventeen she had been constantly his companion as his son. He did not, however, neglect the feminine education her future position in society might render necessary; but being an educated man himself, he directed her studies in the leisure moments of his wild life, found her books, and cultivated her tastes. She, was, therefore, but little less a woman for her male costume. This is the outline of her story, not as Louis heard it but as it becomes us to give to the reader. She knew nothing of her father's motives; but believed that to preserve her life from an uncle who sought it, he kept her in this disguise.

Louis found her intelligent, full of warm impulses, merry hearted and delightfully ignorant of the world. He was surprised at her modesty and softness of manners and suffered himself to be led captive by her gazelle-like eyes.

A few days passed and they had, secretly from the father, met on deck, and let love do its own work of mischief in their young hearts. Before the 'Steel Arrow' reached soundings on the American shore off Block Island, the

Black Ralph; or, The Helmsman of Hurlgate

bewitching, spirited, modest, romantic little Frank or Frances Horseley, had exchanged her heart with that of the gallant Louis de Fernay. How secretly did the maiden keep her love from her father!

The morning after making the land, Louis discovered ahead an extended fleet of ships of war bearing down. Horseley with the glass discovered that they carried the French flag, when he immediately ran up that of the rebel States. Louis's heart beat on seeing ships of his own land, and he almost wished the refugee smuggler might be captured. But he thought of leaving his fair daughter and he put the helm two points to windward to give them a wide berth!

It was D'Estaing's fleet the day after it left the frigate *Endymion* grounded, a prize to the two sloops of war. It was steering to blockade Newport and Long Island Sound; the issue of which expedition is a matter of history. 'The *Steel Arrow*' gave the fleet a wide windward berth and the next day under English colors passed the Hook and took a pilot up the harbor of New York. Horseley represented to the pilot himself as a letter of marque, who in his turn gave him all the current intelligence of the day. The French frigate he pointed out to them anchored above the sloops of war, and Louis felt his cheek burn with shame as the flag of England floating above that of France met his eye.

'Oh, that I had the power to recapture her,' he said with animation to Horseley who stood beside him. 'I have sailed in her and know all her officers. She was the consort of *Le Minerve* which was lost in the gale in the channel. She is the best appointed vessel in the French Navy, and the fastest sailer.'

CHAPTER VIII.

Horseley seemed to reflect deeply a few moments and then said to him; 'I have a plan that will do this thing. I am an Englishman, but my country and I for the present are at issue. You have expressed your surprise to see me run into this harbor so openly under the English flag; but I have always done bold acts without looking to the issue trusting for this to circumstances! These circumstances are now at hand to guide me. Ho, Sir Pilot! what British officer is in command of the prize?'

'Captain Howell Peyton.'

'That is he. Lay me alongside of the frigate for I have despatches for him. Nay, your knowledge of the channel is not so good as mine,' he cried, seizing the helm and putting the schooner away from a dangerous shoal.

'You seem to know the harbor, sir,' said Louis to Horseley.

'Yes. I have in the last seventeen years been thrice to this port; and the last time escaped from an English brig by adventuring the passage of Hurl-gate. I safely passed through it, while my pursuer ran upon the rocks and was lost. I could take it again at a venture.'

'What is your plan in boarding the frigate?'

'I have none except that circumstances may furnish. Pledge me your word of honor that my character and that of my vessel shall not be made known through you, and I will pledge myself to restore your frigate to the French marine.'

Louis gave the desired pledge. The schooner was now a league from the Battery and fleet, slowly sailing in towards the French frigate. Horseley went below and Louis took his stand by Frances. She told him she remembered well her father's escape through the Hurl-gate; that she stood beside him at the time, and herself pointed out the dangerous spots he should avoid; and in one instance by suddenly seizing the helm, she saved the

Black Ralph; or, The Helmsman of Hurlgate

schooner from being dashed upon a sharp rock. 'I believe,' she added, 'I could steer a vessel through myself without assistance, my memory of it is so vivid.'

Horsely, in half an hour afterwards, re-appeared on deck with several packages neatly done up in Admiralty package paper, with tape and seals affixed. He handed them with a peculiar smile to Louis, who read with surprise the addresses to

'Captain Howel Peyton, Royal Navy, &c. &c.'

'By the hands of Capt. Walter Ousely.'

'To be safely and speedily delivered.'

'What means this?'

'That these will get me an introduction on board the prize.'

'And then?'

'I shall, as ever, be guided by circumstances.'

'You will assuredly be detected as an impostor.'

'No.'

'You have extraordinary confidence.'

'Confidence is success.'

The Steel Arrow, under her English flag was laid alongside the prize, and Horsely, in full captain's uniform, got into his boat and went on board, accompanied by his daughter. He was received at the gang-way with the usual honors and introduced to Captain Peyton, and by him conducted into his cabin. Here he presented his forged despatches, which were artfully directed within to Lord Howe, a line merely being written to Capt. Peyton, desiring him to place them in Lord Howe's own hands. Captain Peyton immediately ordered his gig to proceed to Howe's flag-ship, which lay four miles distant, leaving the *soi distant* Captain Walter Ousely to the courtesy of his first lieutenant.

'Your schooner is a beautiful model,' said Captain Peyton, as he went over the side into his gig. 'Hadh't you best anchor. She seems to be uneasy under her topsail, and the wind is pushing from the southwest.'

'Thank you; I shall drop anchor higher up. I will remain here on board the prize till you return, if you get back by sun-down, as I should like to look through her.'

'If I should not return you will find my state-room at your service, Captain. I hope these despatches are of the importance you suppose they are. It will be great news to Howe.'

Thus speaking the English captain left his vessel and pulled for the flag ship, obeying, as he believed, written orders from the Admiralty.

Horseley, triumphant in the success thus far of his stratagem, how turned to the first lieutenant and said he should like to see the ship and visit the prisoners.

Black Ralph; or, The Helmsman of Hurlgate

From Captain Peyton he had learned that there were now on board three hundred and twenty French sailors; and also two or three lieutenants and five midshipmen in deckhorde; the remainder having been transferred to other ships. That the English force consisted of three lieutenants and six midshipmen, and a marine guard of thirty-five men.

Conducted by the officer, whom he ascertained understood no French, the wily Horseley passed from one part of the frigate to another; now and then addressing, in a low tone, a few words unheard to the officers and men, the purport of which was:

'Precisely at four bells you will find the fore and main hatches unfastened, and the bulk-head doors open into the state rooms. Rise and recover your frigate. Every man of you fly to his usual post and get her under sail. The cables shall be cut beforehand. You will find me at the helm. Do your duty, and I, who am a Frenchman, disguised to save you, will pilot you safely to sea. Tell your fellows!'

This was spoken to as many as twenty persons, by the deep scheming and talented Horsely, who spoke the French tongue like a native. The lieutenant did not understand, nor did he suspect treachery from a 'British naval captain,' as he believed Horseley to be a special agent of the Admiralty sent to Howe. He was above suspicion, and so was allowed to converse as he chose. In the meanwhile all he promised to do he managed with equal tuck to perform.

It was half an hour after sunset! The evening was clear and starlit. A fine eight knot breeze blew freshly up the bay. The British fleet lay around at anchor, their lights gleaming over the water. Boats were pulling from one to another or to the shore. Music was heard floating from the deck of one; laughter running across the water from another. Captain Peyton had not yet returned. All on board the Endymion was still and orderly. The Lieutenant and 'Captain Ouseley' paced the deck together in conversation. The Steel Arrow still rode under her back topsail a couple of fathom to windward!

Suddenly a bell tolled from a distant ship; then another from a frigate on the Endymion's beam; then rung out her own deep bell four successive times. Hark! what deep sound is that like the uprising of a multitude! The ship quivers with a convulsive movement of heaving life within her womb. Hark! the hatches lift themselves to the astonished eyes of the British marines, and like a flood of human beings pour upon the decks. A volley is discharged shrieks and cries of battle fill the air! A firm but brief struggle takes place, and the French are masters of their frigate. The voice of Horseley, who is at the head, is heard commanding. A hundred men leap into the rigging, and in a few minutes the ship is clothed in canvas. Her head, no longer confined to the anchor, swings to her course, and in fifteen minutes from the time of the rising of the crew, the noble vessel was steering up East River, past the town. The Steel Arrow, following in her wake, steered by the astonished Louis, who followed where love led.

On hearing the volley fired by the marines, and the noise of conflict, boats were despatched to the rescue, which were recalled when it was discovered that she was in the hands of the French. Two frigates got underweigh in pursuit, and a battery opened her fire upon them.

The frigate, with the schooner in her wake, kept gallantly on until she came in the boiling entrance of the Hurl-gate, when a shot, from a sloop of war in chase, struck Horsely, as he stood at the helm, and instantly severed his head from his body! It was a critical moment.

'Who knows the channel?' cried the French officer, Captain Navarre.

No one answered.

Black Ralph; or, The Helmsman of Hurlgate

The smuggler's daughter quit her father's corse, and, without a word took his place. There was a deep silence in the ship, broken only by the roar of the waves around her. Safely, coolly, and successfully did the young helmsman pilot the proud frigate through this perilous pass of the seas, leaving behind all pursuers. The frigate sailed once more in smooth water, and the sailor maiden, leaving the helm, knelt beside her father, whom she had loved, and wept over him.

At day-light the two vessels were abreast New Haven light, and Louis, laying the Steel Arrow along side the escaped frigate, went on board, where he was welcomed by all with joy. He told his story and that of Horseley and his daughter. Captain Navarre said she should be a daughter to him, and inviting her to take the cabin, he gave up to her poor Madeline's wardrobe, which both he and Louis insisted she should wear. She reappeared in her female costume, in which, unused as she was to it, she appeared a little awkward, but by no means ungraceful. If Louis had thought her a handsome boy, he now thought her, notwithstanding her grief and tears for her father, a lovely girl. She remained on board the Endymion three months, a passenger, and then was married to Louis by the ships chap lain. Henry Monteith, who had been made a prisoner of war a few days before, and released on parole by his friends, being his chief groomsman.

Subsequently, on proving her title on her return to England, Madame Frances de Fernay, the smuggler's daughter, became heiress of the title and Earldom of , and also to the estate of Sir Edward Horseley, to obtain which her father had been guilty of so great a series of sanguinary crimes. Henry Monteith never married the memory of Madeline Navarre being too sacred in his memory to be replaced by another. Josephine de Fernay, finding that she had lost Louis forever, and resolved to love no other, secluded herself in a convent. Zebedee Beebe, being landed at Newport, from the Steel Arrow, arrived safely among his kindred, the Coffins, in Nantucket, and for many years entertained the villagers with his tales of the smugglers.

The Steel Arrow was taken back to England, by request of Frances, whose attachment to it was naturally very great, and it afterwards was remodelled into a yacht, in which she and her husband, with parties of their friends, often took excursions upon the channel, and even crossed to the Chateau de Fernay; but these expeditions were more pacific than when Ralph Horseley, or `Black Ralph,' the smuggler, commanded her. And, as she no longer carried at her peak the `Steel Arrow,' she ceased longer, as formerly, to carry terror and excite hostility wherever her green flag was seen floating to the breeze.

THE END.