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THE BELTED SEAS

BY

ARTHUR COLTON

Cold are the feet and forehead of the earth,
Temperate his bosom and his knees,
But huge and hot the midriff of his girth,
Where heaves the laughter of the belted seas,
Where rolls the heavy thunder of his mirth
Around the still unstirred Hesperides.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER

CAPTAIN BUCKINGHAM'S NARRATIVE ENDS.

XV. THE CONCLUSION OF THE WHOLE.

THE BELTED SEAS

CHAPTER I.

PEMBERTON'S.

The clock struck one. It was the tall standing clock in the front room of Pemberton's Hotel, and Pemberton's stands by the highway that runs by the coast of Long Island Sound. It is near the western edge of the village of Greenough, the gilt cupola of whose eminent steeple is noted by far-passing ships. On the beach are flimsy summer cottages, and hard beside them is the old harbour, guarded by its stone pier. Whalers and merchantmen used to tie up there a hundred years ago, where now only fishing boats come. The village lies back from the shore, and has three divisions, Newport Street, the Green, and the West End; of which the first is a broad street with double roads, and there are the post office and the stores; the second boasts of its gilt-cupolaed church; the third has the two distinctions of the cemetery and Pemberton's.

The hotel is not so far from the beach but you can sit in the front room and hear the surf. It was a small hotel when I used to frequent it, and was kept by Pemberton himself--gone, now, alas! with his venerable dusty hair and red face, imperturbably amiable. He was no seaman. Throughout his long life he had anchored to his own chimneyside, which was a solid and steady chimney, whose red-brick complexion resembled its owner's. His wife was dead, and he ran the hotel much alone, except for the company of Uncle Abimelech, Captain Buckingham, Stevey Todd, and such others as came and went, or townsfolk who liked the anchorage. But the three I have named were seamen, and I always found them by Pemberton's chimney. Abe Dalrimple, or Uncle Abe, was near Pemberton's age, and had lived with him for years; but Stevey Todd and Captain B. were younger, and, as I gathered, they had been with Pemberton only for some months past, the captain boarding, and Stevey Todd maybe boarding as well; I don't know; but I know Stevey Todd did some of the cooking, and had been a ship's cook the main part of his life. It seemed to me they acted like a settled family among them anyway.

Captain Thomas Buckingham was a smallish man of fifty, with a bronzed face, or you might say iron, with respect to its rusty colour, and also it was dark and immobile. But now and then there

would come a glimmer and twist in his eyes, sometimes he would start in talking and flow on like a river, calm, sober, and untiring, and yet again he would be silent for hours. Some might have thought him melancholy, for his manner was of the gravest.

We were speaking of hotels, that stormy afternoon when the distant surf was moaning and the wind heaping the snow against the doors, and when the clock had struck, he said slowly:

"I kept a hotel once. It was in ’72 or a bit before. It’s a good trade."

And none of us disputed it was a good trade, as keeping a man indoors in stormy weather.

"Was it like Pemberton’s?"

"No, not like Pemberton’s."

"Seaside?"

"No, inland a bit."

"Summer hotel?"

"Aye, summer hotel. Always summer there."

"It must have paid!"

"Aye, she paid. It was in South America."

"South America?"

"Aye, Stevey Todd and I ran her. She was put up in New Bedford by Smith and Morgan, and Stevey Todd and I ran her in South America."

"How so? Do they export hotels to South America?"

"There ain’t any steady trade in ’em." And no more would he say just then. For he was that kind of a man, Captain Tom, He would talk or he would not, as suited him.

Uncle Abimelech was tall and old, and had a long white beard, and was thin in the legs, not to say uncertain on them, and he appeared to wander in his mind as well as in his legs. Stevey Todd was stout, with a smooth, fair face, and in temperament fond of arguing, though cautious about it. For that winter afternoon, when I remarked, hearing the whistling wind and the thunder of the surf, "It blows hard, Mr. Todd," Stevey Todd answered cautiously, "If you called it brisk, I wouldn’t maybe argue it, but ’hard’ I’d argue," and Pemberton said agreeably, "Why, when you put it that way, you’re right, not but the meaning was good, ain’t a doubt of it;" and Uncle Abimelech, getting hold of a loose end in his mind, piped up, singing:

"She blows aloft, she blows alow,
Take in your topsails early;"

whereas there was no doubt at all about its blowing hard. But Stevey Todd was the kind of a man that liked to argue in good order.

The meanwhile Captain Buckingham had said nothing so far that afternoon, except on the subject of hotel-keeping in South America. But when Stevey Todd offered to admit that it blew "brisk, but when you say hard, I argue it;" and when Uncle Abimelech piped:

"She blows aloft, she blows alow,
Take in your topsails early;"

Then Captain Buckingham, who sat leaning forward smoking, with his elbows on his knees, staring at the fire, at last, without stirring in his chair, he spoke up, and said, "She blows all right," and we waited, thinking he might say more.

"Pemberton," he went on, "the seaman follows his profit and luck around the world. You sit by your chimney and they come to you. And if I was doing it again, or my old ship, the _Annalee_, was to come banging and bouncing at this door, saying 'Have a cruise, Captain Buckingham; rise up!' I'd say: 'You go dock yourself.'"

"She might, if she came overland, maybe," said Stevey Todd, "seeing it blows brisk, which I admits and I stands by, for she was a tall sailing ship was the _Annalee_."

"She was that," said Captain Tom; "the best ship I ever sailed in, barring the _Hebe Maitland_."

Whereat Stevey Todd said, "_There_ was a ship!" and Uncle Abimelech piped up again, singing these singular words:

"There was a ship
In Bailey's Slip.
One evil day
We sailed away
From Bailey's Slip
We sailed away, with Captain Clyde,
An old, old man with a copper hide,
In the _Hebe Maitland_ sailed, Hooroar!
And fetched the coast of Ecuador."

"Aye," said Captain Tom. "Those were Kid Sadler's verses. There's many of 'em that Abe can say over, and he can glue a tune to 'em well, for he's got that kind of a memory that's loose, but stringy and long, and he always had. There's only Abe and Stevey Todd and me left of the _Hebe Maitland's_ crew, unless Sadler and Little Irish maybe, for I left them in Burmah, and they may be there. But what I was going to say, Pemberton, is, I made a mistake somewhere."

"Why," said Pemberton, "there you may be right."

"For I was that kind of young one," the captain went on, "which if he's blown up with dynamite, he comes down remarking it's breezy up there. I was that careless."

Then we drew nearer and knew that Captain Buckingham was hauling up his anchor, and maybe would take us on a long way, which he surely did. The afternoon slipped on, hour by hour, and the fire snapped and cast its red light in our faces, and the kettle sung and the storm outside kept up its mad business, and the surf its monotone.

"I was so, when I was a lad of eighteen or nineteen," Captain Buckingham said. "I was a wild one, though not large, but limber and clipper-built, and happy any side up, and my notion of human life was that it was something like a cake-walk, and something like a Bartlett pear, as being juicy anywhere you bit in."

CHAPTER II.

THE "HEBE MAITLAND." CAPTAIN BUCKINGHAM'S NARRATIVE.

"I was that way," he said, "full of opinions, like one of those little terrier pups with his tail sawed off, so he wags with the stump, same way a clock does with the pendulum when the weight's gone --pretty chipper. I used to come often from the other end of Newport Street, where I was born, to Pemberton's. But that wasn't on account of Pemberton, though he was agreeable, but on account of Madge Pemberton. Madge and I were agreed, and Pemberton was agreeable, but I was restless and keyed high in those days, resembling pups, as stated.

"No anchoring to Pemberton's chimney for me," I says. "No digging clams and fishing for small fry in Long Island Sound for me. I'm going to sea."

And Madge asks, "Why?" calm and reasonable, and I was near stumped for reasons, having only the same reason as a lobster has for being green. It's the nature of him, which he'll change that colour when he's had experience and learned what's what in the boiling. I fished around for reasons.

"When I'm rich," I says, "I'll fix up Pemberton's for a swell hotel."

Madge says, "It's nice as it is," and acted low in her mind. But if she thought the less of me for wanting to go to sea, I couldn't say. Maybe not.

I left Greenough in the year ’65, and went to New York, and the wharves and ships of East River, and didn’t expect it would take me long to get rich.

There were fine ships and many in those days in the East River slips. South Street was full of folk from all over the world, but I walked there as cocky as if I owned it, looking for a ship that pleased me, and I came to one lying at dock with the name _Hebe Maitland_ in gilt letters on a board that was screwed to her, and I says, "Now, there’s a ship!" Then I heard a man speak up beside me saying, "Just so," and I turned to look at him.

He didn’t seem like a seaman, but was an old man, and grave-looking, and small, and precise in manner, and not like one trained to the sea, and wore a long, rusty black coat; and his upper lip was shaven.

"You like her, do ye?" he said. "Now I’m thinking you know a good one when you see her."

I said I thought I did, speaking rather knowing. But when he asked if I’d been to sea, I had to say I hadn’t; not on the high seas, nor in any such vessel as the _Hebe Maitland_. She was painted dingy black, like most of the others, and I judged from her lines that she was a fleet sailer and built for that purpose, rather than for the amount of cargo she might carry.

"Why, come aboard," he said, and soon we were seated in a cabin with shiny panels, and a hinge table that swung down from the wall between us. He looked at me through half-shut eyes, pursing his dry lips, and he asked me where I came from.

That was my first meeting with Clyde. I know now that my coming from Connecticut was a point in my favour; still I judge he must have taken to me from the start. He surely was good to me always, and that curiously.

"You want a job," he says. "You’ve sailed a bit on fishing smacks in the Sound. But more’n that, the point with you is you’re ambitious, and not above turning a penny or two in an odd way."

"That depends on the way," I says pretty uppish, and thinking I wasn’t to be inveigled into piracy that way.

"Just so?"

"Maybe I’ve got scruples," I says, and not a bit did I know what I was talking about. Captain Clyde rapped the table with his knuckles.

"I’m glad to hear you say it. Scruples! That’s the word, and a right word and a good word. I don’t allow any vicious goings-on aboard this ship. Wherever we go we carry the laws of the United States, and we stand by them laws. We’re decent and we stick to our country’s laws as duty is. Why now, I’m thinking of taking you, for I see you’re a

likely lad, and one that will argue for his principles. Good wages, good food, good treatment; will you go?" The last was shot out and cut off close behind, his lips shutting like a pair of scissors. I says, "That's what I'll do," and didn't know there was anything odd about it. It might have been the average way a shipmaster picked up a man for aught I knew. I shipped on the bark _Hebe Maitland_ as ordinary seaman.

The shipping news of that week contained this item:

"Sailed, Bark, _Hebe Maitland_, Clyde, Merchandise for Porto del Rey."

Now, there is such a place as Porto del Rey, for I was there once, but not till twenty years later.

The _Hebe Maitland_ didn't always go to the place she was billed for, and when she did she was apt to be a month late, and likely couldn't have told what she'd been doing in the meantime. Somebody had been doing something, but it wasn't the _Hebe Maitland_. Ships may have notions for aught I know, and the _Hebe Maitland_ was no fool, but if so, I judge she couldn't have straightened it out without help; and if she argued and got mad about it, that was no more than appropriate, for we all argued on the _Hebe Maitland_.

I've spoken of Captain Clyde. The crew, except one man called "Irish," were all Yankee folk that Clyde had trained, and most of them had been caught young and sailed with him already some years. I never saw so odd an acting crew in the way of arguing. I've seen Clyde and the bos'n with the Bible between them, arguing over it by the hour. It was a singular crew to argue. Stevey Todd here, who was cook, was a Baptist and a Democrat, and the mate he was a Presbyterian and Republican, and the bos'n he was for Women's Rights, and there was a man named Simms, who was strong on Predestination and had a theory of trade winds, but he got to arguing once with a man in Mobile, who didn't understand Predestination and shot him full of holes, supposing it might be dangerous. It was a singular crew, and especially in the matter of arguing.

They were all older than I. Stevey Todd was a few years older. I recognised Abe Dalrimple here, for he came from Adrian, though I'd seen him but seldom before. Three more I'll name, Kid Sadler, J. R. Craney, and Jimmy Hagan, who was called Irish; for they were ones that I had to do with later. I never met another crew like the _Hebe Maitland's_. I guess there never was one.

Aboard and under Clyde's eye they were a quiet crew, even Sadler, who wasn't what you'd call submissive by nature, but in port, Clyde would now and then let them run riotous. He was a little, old, dried up, and odd man with a vein of piousness in him, and he could handle men in a way that was very mysterious.

The fourth day out of New York, as I recollect it, was fair, the sun shining, and everything peaceful except on board the _Hebe Maitland_. But on the _Hebe Maitland_ the men were running around with paint pots and hauling out canvas from below. Nobody seemed to tell me what was the matter. The _Hebe Maitland's_ hull was any kind of a dingy black, but the rails, canvas, tarpaulins, and companion were all white. By the end of the day almost everything had modified. They'd got a kind of fore-shortening out of the bowsprit, and another set of canvas partly up that was dirty and patched. The boats were shifted and recovered, cupola taken off the cabin, and the whole look of the ship altered in mid-sea. Then Clyde came out of his cabin with a board in his hand, and they unscrewed the _Hebe Maitland's_ name from forward under the anchor hole, and the _Hebe Maitland_ in gilt was the _Hawk_ in white.

I went off and sat down on a coil of rope, and the more I thought it over, the more I didn't make it out.

After that I heard lively talking forward a little, and there was Captain Clyde, the bos'n, mate, Stevey Todd, and some others arguing.

The bos'n was saying he hadn't "sworn no allegiance to no country but the United States, an' there ain't no United States laws," he says, "against dodging South American customs that I ever see nohow, and being I never see a South American man that took much stock in 'em either, I ain't so uppish as to differ."

Then Stevey Todd chimed in and made a tidy argument, quoting Scripture to prove that "actions with intent to deceive, and deception pursuant," weren't moral, and, moreover, he says: "Shall we lose our souls because S. A. customs is ridiculous? Tell me that!"

"Shucks!" says the mate; "we're saved by grace!"

Then Captain Clyde took it up and his argument was beautiful. For he said S. A. customs were oppressive to the poor of that country by wrongfully preventing them from buying U. S. goods; so that, having sworn to the U. S., we weren't bound by S. A. laws further than humanity or the Dago was able to enforce; "which," he says, "I argue ain't either of 'em the case."

"That's a tart argiment, Captain Clyde," says the bos'n. "I never heerd you make a tarter."

They went on that way till it made my head ache, and before I knew it I was arguing hard against the bos'n, the captain egging me on.

I sailed with that crew four years. They were smugglers. I'm free to say I loved Clyde, and liked the crew. For, granting he was much of a miser and maybe but a shrewd old man, to be corrupting folks with his theories, though I'm not so sure about that, not knowing what he really thought; yet, he was a bold man, and a kind man, and I never

saw one that was keener in judgment. You might say he had made that crew to suit him, having picked out the material one by one, and they were most of all like children of his bringing up. I judge he had a theory about arguments, that so long as they talked up to him and freed their opinions, there wouldn't be any secret trouble brewing below, or maybe it was only his humour. It was surely a fact that they were steady in business and a rare crew to his purpose, explain it as one may. He taught me navigation, and treated me like a son, and it's not for me to go back on him. I don't know why he took to me that way, and different from the rest. He taught me his business and how he did it. I was the only one who knew. He was absolute owner as well as captain, and his own buyer and seller as well. He carried no cargoes but his own, which he made up for the most part in New York or Philadelphia, and would bill the _Hebe Maitland_ maybe to Rio Janeiro. Then the _Hawk_ would maybe deliver the biggest part off the coast of Venezuela in the night, and the _Hebe Maitland_ would, like as not, sail into Rio by-and-by and pay her duty on the rest, and take a cargo to New York as properly as a lady going to church.

There were a good many countries in South America to choose from. It wasn't wise to visit the same one right along, though there was apt to be a new government when we came again. Clyde knew all about it. I'm not saying but what an odd official of a government here and there was acquainted with the merits of a percentage, being instructed in it by the same. For all that there was excitement. It was a great life. Sometimes I catch myself heaving a sigh for the old man that's dead, and saying to myself, "That was a great life yonder."

My recollection is, it was a sub-agent in Cuba who turned evidence on Clyde at last, for a gunboat missed us by only a few miles coming down by St. Christopher, as I heard afterward. Then a Spanish cruiser ran us down, at last, under a corner of a little island among the Windwards, about thirty miles east of Tobago, where Clyde's cleverness came to nothing.

It was growing twilight, we driving close off the low shores of the island. The woods were dark above the shore, and half a mile out was the black cruiser, with a pennon of smoke against the sky, and the black water between. I went into Clyde's cabin and found him talking to himself.

"We'll be scuttling her, Tom," he says.

With that he gave a jerk at the foot of his bunk, and the footboard came off, and there underneath were four brown canvas bags tied up with rope. Now, I never knew before that day that Clyde didn't keep his money in a bank, same as any other civilised gentleman, and it shows how little I knew about him, after all. He sat there holding up eagles and double pesos to the lamplight, with his eyes shining and his wrinkled old mouth smiling.

"What are you going to do with that?" I says, surprised at the sight

of it, and he kept on smiling.

"I guess you and I will take the shiners ashore," he says; "I'd give you a writing, but it would do you no good, Tommy. I'm what they called tainted."

"I don't know what you mean by that," I says. "Scuttled she is, if you say so. Shall we row for Tobago?"

"Well, I'll tell you how it is, Tommy," he says. "I don't know what the Dagos will do, and they're pretty likely to get us anyhow, but we'll give 'em a hunt. But I've got a fancy you ain't got to the end of your rope yet, lad," and he says no more for a minute or two, and then he heaves a sigh and says: "The shiners are yours if they cut me off. I won't give you no more advice, Tommy, but I wish you luck."

But I don't see why he had such a notion that he was near his own end.

It was a hard thing to do, to blow a hole in the bottom of the good ship. The night was dark now, but the lights of the cruiser in plain sight, and we knew she'd stand off until morning, or as long as the _Hebe Maitland's_ lanterns burned at the masts. The crew put off in three boats to round the island and wait for us, and Clyde and I took the fourth boat, and stowed the canvas bags, and went ashore, running up a little reedy inlet to the end. We buried them in the exact middle of a small triangle of three trees. Then we rowed out, and I threw the spade in the water, and when we rounded the island, taking a last look at the _Hebe Maitland_, she was dipping considerable, as could be seen from the hang of her lanterns. Clyde changed to another boat and put Sadler, Craney, Irish, Abe Dalrimple, and Stevey Todd, into mine.

I noticed it as curious about us, that so long as the old man was at hand, telling us what to do, we all acted chipper and cheerful, but as soon as we'd drifted apart, we grew quieter, and Stevey Todd began to act scared and lost, and was for seeing Spanish cruisers drop out of the air, and for calling the old man continually. Somehow we dropped apart in the dark.

I've sometimes fancied that Clyde put me in that boat with those men because it was the lightest boat, and because Sadler, Craney, and Little Irish were powerful good rowers, and Abe he had this that was odd about him for a steersman, for though he was always a bit wandering in his mind, yet he could tell land by the smell. Put him within twenty miles of land at sea, no matter how small an island, and he'd smell the direction of it, and steer for it like a bullet, and that's a thing he don't understand any more than I. I never made out why Clyde took to me that way, as he surely did, and left me his shiners as sure as he could, and gave me what chance he could for getting away, or so I fancied. Just so surely I never saw him again, when once we'd drifted apart that night among the Windwards.

A New Orleans paper of the week after held an item more or less like

this:

"An incoming steamer from Trinidad, reports the overhauling of a smuggler, _The Hawk_, by the Spanish cruiser, _Reina Isabella_. The smugglers scuttled the ship and endeavoured to escape, but were captured, and are thought to have been all hanged. This summary action would seem entirely unjustifiable, as smuggling is not a capital offence under any civilised law. The disturbed state of affairs under our Spanish-American neighbours may account for it. _The Hawk_ is stated to be an old offender. No American vessel of this name and description being known however, it is not likely that there will be any investigation."

The New York _Shipping News_ of three months later had this:

"The bark, _Hebe Maitland_, Mdse., Clyde, Cap., which left this port the 9th of April, has not yet been heard from."

So the _Reina Isabella_ thought she got all the crew of the _Hebe Maitland_, likely she thinks so yet, for I don't know of anybody that ever dropped around to correct her; but being as we rowed all night to westward and were picked up next morning by an English steamer bound for Colon on the Isthmus of Panama, and were properly landed in course of time, I argue there were some of them she didn't get. Their names, as standing on Clyde's book, were, "Robert Sadler, James Hagan, Stephen Todd, Julius R. Craney, Abimelech Dalrimple, Thomas Buckingham."

Kid Sadler, as he was known there and then and since, was a powerful man, bony and tall, with a scrawny throat, ragged, dangling moustache, big hands, little wrinkles around his eyes, and a hoarse voice. I wouldn't go so far as to say I could give you his character, for I never made it out; yet I'd say he was given to sentiment, and to turning out poetry like a corn-shucker, and singing it to misfit and uneducated tunes, and given to joyfulness and depression by turns, and to misleading his fellow-man when he was joyful, and suffering remorse for it afterward pretty regular, taking turns, like fever and chills; which qualities, when you take them apart, don't seem likely to fit together again, and I'm not saying they did fit in Sadler. They appeared to me to project over the edges. I never made him out.

Hagan I never knew to be called any name but "Irish," or "Little Irish," except by Clyde himself. He was small and chunky in build, and nervous in his mind, and had red fuzzy hair that stuck up around his head like an aureole. Generally silent he was, except when excited, and seemed even then to be settled to his place in this world, which was to be Sadler's heeler. He followed Sadler all his after days, so far as I know, same as Stevey Todd did me. I don't know why, but I'd say as to Irish, that he was a man without much stiffness or stay-by, if left to himself, whereas Sadler was one that would rather be in trouble than not, if he had the choice.

As to Craney, I'll say this. When Clyde and I were coming out of the inlet, he gave me a hundred and forty dollars, and he says,

"Look out for Craney," but I had no notion what he meant by it. Now, soon after we landed in Colon, Craney and Abe Dalrimple got a chance for a passage to New York, and my hundred and forty went off somewhere about the same time. Sadler, Irish, nor Stevey Todd didn't take it, for they didn't have it, not to speak of other reasons. Abe's given to wandering in his mind, but he don't wander that way either. Now, there were thieves enough in Colon, and Craney never owned to it, but I'll say he showed a weakness afterward for putting cash into my pocket, that I shouldn't have said was natural to him without further reasons. But supposing he'd been there before, he surely put more back in the end than he ever took out. On the other hand, if I'd had the money in Colon I might have gone back to the Windwards and to the triangle of three trees, with Sadler, Irish, and Stevey Todd, and so back to Greenough and Madge Pemberton, and been a hotel-keeper maybe, which is a good trade in Greenough. Craney was ambitious and enterprising. He had, as you might say, soaring ideas, and he'd been a valuable man to Clyde for the complicated schemes he was always setting up. He was a medium-sized man, with light hair and eyebrows, and a yellowish face, and a frame lean, though sinewy, and had only one good eye, the other pale like a fish's. His business eye always looked like it was boring a hole in some ingenious idea. As an arguer on the _Hebe Maitland_ his style was airy and gorgeous, contrary to the style of Stevey Todd, who was a cautious arguer, and gingerly.

Craney was about forty years old at the time of the _Hebe Maitland's_ loss, and Sadler about the same.

There were four of us then, left at Colon, after Craney and Abe had gone. Pretty soon we were badly off. We couldn't seem to get berths, and not much to eat. One day I up and says:

"I'm going across the Isthmus. Who else?" and Sadler says, "One of 'em's me," and we all went, footing thirty miles the first day, and slept among the rocks on a hillside.

The fourth day we went down the watershed to the town of Panama. There we found a ship ready in port that was short of hands, and shipped on her to go round the Horn. She was named the _Helen Mar_.

* * * * *

Captain Buckingham paused to fill his pipe again, and Stevey Todd said:

"'Intent to deceive and deception pursuant,' was my words, and I never give in," and Uncle Abimelech piped up to a crazy tune:

"You can arguy here and arguy there,

But them that dangles in the air
They surely was mistook somewhere,
They ain’t got good foundations."

"Aye," said Captain Buckingham thoughtfully. "It was so. I heard Sadler tune that to his banjo the night we got to Colon. Abe’s got that kind of a memory, which is loose but gluey. It was so. Sadler meant old man Clyde."

CHAPTER III.

THE HOTEL HELEN MAR. THE NARRATIVE CONTINUED.

Most ships trading round the Horn to the West Coast in those days would take a charter on the Gulf Stream to clean them well, on account of carrying guano. The _Helen Mar_ carried no guano, and charged freightage accordingly for being clean. Drygoods she’d brought out from New York, linens, cottons, tinware, shoes, and an outfit of furniture for a Chilian millionaire’s house, including a half-dozen baby carriages, and a consignment of silk stockings and patent medicines. Now she was going back, expecting to pick up a cargo of rubber and cocoa and what not, along the West Coast. Captain Goodwin was master, and it happened he was short of hands, including his cook. He hired Stevey Todd for cook, and shipped the rest of us willing enough. It was in October as I recollect it, and sometime in November when we came to lie in the harbour of the city of Portate.

Portate is about seven hundred miles below the equator, and has a harbour at the mouth of a river called the Jiron, and even in those days it was an important place, as being at the end of a pass over the Cordilleras. There’s a railroad up the pass now, and I hear the city has trolleys and electric lights, but at that time it hadn’t much excitement except internal rumblings and explosions, meaning it had politics and volcanoes. Most of the ships that came to anchor there belonged to one company called the "British-American Transport Company," which took most of the rubber and cocoa bark, that came over the pass on mules--trains of mules with bells on their collars. But the _Helen Mar_ had a consignment promised her. The pack mules were due by agreement a week before, so they naturally wouldn’t come for a week after. "Manana" is a word said to mean "tomorrow," but if you took it to mean "next month" you’d have a better sight on the intentions of it. That’s the way of it in South America with all but the politics and the climate. The politics and the climate are like this; when they’re quiet, they’re asleep; and when they’re not, politics are revolutions and guns, and the climate is letting off stray volcanoes and shaking up earthquakes.

But it was pleasant to be in the harbour of Portate. Everything there seemed lazy. You could lie on a bunch of sail cloth, and see

the city, the sand, and the bluffs, and the valley of the Jiron up to the nearer Andes. You could look up the level river to some low hills, but what happened to the Jiron there you couldn't tell from the _Helen Mar_. Beyond were six peaks of the Andes, and four of them were white, and two blue-black in the distance, with little white caps of smoke over them. The biggest of the black ones was named "Sarasara," which was a nasty volcano, so a little old boatman told us.

"Si, senor! Oh, la Sarasara!"

His name was Cuco, and he sold us bananas and mangoes, and was drowned afterwards. The Sarasara was a gay bird. The mule drivers called her "The Wicked Grandmother."

It came on the 23d of November. Captain Goodwin and all the crew were gone ashore, excepting Stevey Todd and me left aboard. Sadler and Irish had been ashore several days without showing up, for I remember telling Captain Goodwin that Sadler wouldn't desert, not being a quitter, at which he didn't seem any more than satisfied. I was feeling injured too, thinking Sadler was likely to be having more happiness than he deserved, maybe setting up a centre of insurrection in Portate, and leaving me out of it. Cuco come out in his boat, putting it under the ship's side, and crying up to us to buy his mangoes.

Stevey Todd came out of the galley to tell him his mangoes were no good, so as to get up an argument, and Cuco laughed.

"Si, senor," he says, "look! Ver' good." Then he nodded towards the shore:

"La Sarasara! Oh, la Sarasara!" laughing and holding up his mangoes.

The smoke-cap over the Sarasara was blacker than usual and uncommon big it looked to me. Just then it seemed to be going up and spreading out. Stevey Todd looked over the side, and gave a grunt, and he says, "Something's a-suckin' the water out of the harbour."

Then I felt the _Helen Mar_ tugging at her anchor, and the water was going by her like a mill race, and Cuco was gone, and on shore people were running away from the wharves and the river toward the upper town.

I saw the trees swaying, though there was no wind, and a building fell down near the water.

Then Stevey Todd whirled around and flung up his hands.

"Oh!" he says; "Oh! Oh!"

I never saw a scareder cook, for he dropped on the deck, and clapped his legs around a capstan and screamed, "Lord! Lord!"

For the whole Pacific Ocean appeared to be heaving out its chest and coming on, eighty feet high. I tied myself around another capstan, and I says, "Good-night, Tommy!"

The tidal wave broke into surf an eighth of a mile out, and came on us in a tumble of foam, hissing and roaring like a loose menagerie, and down she comes on the _Helen Mar_, and up goes the _Helen Mar_ climbing through the foam. Me, I hung on to the capstan.

The next thing I knew we were shooting past the upper town, up the valley of the Jiron, and there wasn't any lower town to be seen. We were bound for the Andes. The crest of the wave was a few rods ahead, and the air was full of spray. I saw the Sarasara too, having a nice time spitting things out of her mouth, and it looked to me like she waggled her head with the fun she was having. But the _Helen Mar_ was having no fun, nor me, nor Stevey Todd.

It was four miles the _Helen Mar_ went in a few minutes, going slower toward the end. By-and-by she hit bottom, and keeled over against a bunch of old fruit trees on the bank of the river, and lay still, or only swayed a little, the water swashing in her hold. Right ahead were the foothills of the Cordilleras, and the gorge where the Jiron came down, and where the mule path came down beside the river. The big wave went up to the foot of the hills, and now it came back peaceful. Then it was quiet everywhere, except for the sobbing of the ebb among the tree trunks, and afterward lower down in the bed of the river. The ground rose to the foothills there, and the channel of the river lay deep below, with a sandy bank maybe twenty feet high on either side, and on the bank above the river lay the _Helen Mar_, propped up by the fruit trees.

By dusk there was no water except in the river, and some pools, but there were heaps of wreckage. Stevey Todd and I got down and looked things over. Down the valley we saw pieces of the town of Portate lying along, and beyond we saw the Pacific. And Stevey Todd wiped his face on his sleeves, and he says, "Maybe that's ridiculous, and maybe it ain't" he says, "but I'd argue it."

We swabbed off the decks of the _Helen Mar_, and scuttled the bottom of her to let the water out. Then the next day we went down to Portate. There were a sad lot of people drowned, including Captain Goodwin and most of the crew. Sadler and Irish we didn't find, and some others, and there was a man named Pickett who wasn't drowned. He went south to Lima by-and-by.

Afterwards we did up the ship's papers, and the cash and bills in the Captain's chest, thinking them proper to go to the ship's owners. And Stevey Todd says:

"A wreck's a wreck. That river ain't three foot deep. How'd they float her out of this? You say, for I ain't made up my mind," he says, which I didn't tell him, not knowing how they'd do it.

For a few days Stevey Todd and I lived high on ship's stores, loafing and looking down the valley at the damaged city. All the river front was wrecked. Halfway up the long sloping hill the streets were sloppy, and any man that had a roof to sleep on, slept drier there than inside, but the upper city was well enough.

We woke up from sleeping on the shady side of the _Helen Mar_ one afternoon, to hear the jingle of bells, and soon the mule train pulled up alongside, and the drivers weren't used to seeing ships in that neighbourhood. They were expecting trouble from the _Helen Mar_ for their being two weeks late; but still, finding the _Helen Mar_ up by the foothills looking for them, it appeared to strike them as impatient and not real ladylike. But what seemed strange to me was to see Sadler and Irish, that were taken for drowned beyond further trouble, standing in front of the mule-drivers, looking down at us, and then up at the _Helen Mar_, and Sadler seeming like he had a satirical poem on his mind which he was going to propagate.

I says, "No ghosteses allowed here. You go away."

"Tommy," says Sadler, and he came and anchored alongside us in the shadow of the _Helen Mar_, "I take it these here's the facts. Your natural respectfulness to elders was shocked out of you, and you ain't got over it."

"Over what?"

"Why, she must've got tanked up bad," he says. "She must have been full up and corked before she'd ever have come prancin' up here. My! my! It's turrible when a decent ship gets an appetite for alcohol. Here she lies! Shame and propriety forgotten! Immodestly exposed to grinnin' heathens!"

"You let the _Helen Mar_ alone," I says pretty mad. "She ain't so bad as drowned corpses riding mules."

Then Stevey put in cautiously, and said he'd never really made up his mind, and had doubts of it which he was ready to argue, supposing Sadler had any facts to put up as bearing on his and Irish's condition in nature.

Sadler said they had gone up the mule path expecting to climb Sarasara, but getting near the top of her, she began to act as if she disliked them, Sarasara did, and she threw rocks vicious and more than playful; so that they left her, and went on up the pass to look for the mule train. They didn't know anything had happened in Portate.

We put the mule-drivers up that night and charged them South American rates. That was the way Stevey Todd and I started keeping the _Helen Mar_ as a hotel. Sadler and Irish didn't care for the business. They went down to Portate and got jobs with the Transport

Company, but Stevey Todd and I stayed by the _Helen Mar_, and ran the hotel.

All the year through or nearly, the mule trains might come jingling at any day or hour, coming from inland over the pass to the sea, with the packs and thirsty drivers, who paid their bills sometimes in gum rubber and Peruvian bark. Tobacco planters stopped there too, going down to Portate. Men from the ships in the harbour came out, and carried off advertisements of the hotel, and plastered the coast with them. I saw an advertisement of the "Hotel Helen Mar" ten years after in a shipping office in San Francisco, and it read:

"Hotel Helen Mar, Portate, Peru. Mountain and Sea Breezes. Board and Lodging Good and Reasonable. Sailor's Snug Harbour. Welcome Jolly Tar. Thomas Buckingham and Stephen Todd."

That was for foreign patronage. The home advertisements were in Spanish and went up country with the mule trains. Up in the Andes they knew more about the Hotel Helen Mar than they did of the Peruvian Government. We ran the hotel to surprise South America.

It was nearly a year before we heard from the ship's owners, though we sent them the proper papers; and then a man came out, and looked at the _Helen Mar_, and says:

"I guess she belongs where she is. Running a hotel, are you?" and he carried off the sails and other rigging.

She was propped up at first only by the bunch of fruit trees, but by-and-by we bedded her in stones. We painted a sign across her forty feet long, but cut no doors, because a seaman won't treat a ship that way. You had to climb ladders to the deck.

Inside she was comfortable. No hotel piazza could equal the _Helen Mar_'s deck on a warm night, with the old southern stars overhead, when a bunch of mule-drivers maybe would be forward talking, and I and Stevey Todd aft with a couple of Spanish planters, or an agent, or the officers of a warship maybe from England or the States. Over on the hillside lay Captain Goodwin and most of the crew of the _Helen Mar_, wishing us well, and close to starboard you heard all night the tinkle of the Jiron River down in its channel. It was twenty feet from the deck of the _Helen Mar_ to the ground, and twenty feet from there to the river.

Portate was a pleasant little city in those days. It had pink-uniformed soldiery for the city guard, and a fat, warm-tempered Mayor, who used often to come up to the hotel and cool off when something had stuck a pin into his dignity that made him feverish. Stevey Todd was cook and I was manager. Business was good and the company good at the Hotel Helen Mar.

CHAPTER IV.

SADLER IN PORTATE. THE NARRATIVE CONTINUED.

I don’t know how Sadler got to be Harbour Master for the Transport Company, but so he did, and he was a capable harbour master. The Transport Company thought much of him, only they said he was reckless, and he surely acted youthful to belie his looks. He used to go around in a grimy little tugboat called the _Harvest Moon_, with Irish running the engine below, and himself busy thrashing and blackguarding roustabouts, joyful like a dewy morn; but at night he’d be found on the deck of either the _Helen Mar_ or the _Harvest Moon_, playing a banjo very melancholy, and singing his verses to tunes that he got from secret sources of sorrow maybe, which the verses were interesting, but the tunes weren’t fortunate. He was particular about his poetry being accurate to facts, but he’d no gift as to tunes.

The trouble he got into all came from throwing Pedro Hillary off the stern of the _Harvest Moon_, so that Pete went out with the tide, because no one thought him worth fishing out, till it was found that he was a member of some sort of Masonic Society among the negroes in Ferdinand Street, and a British subject too, who came from Jamaica to Portate. But before that time Pete was picked up by a rowboat, and came back to Portate and Ferdinand Street. He and Ferdinand Street were very mad. It was a street occupied by negroes, and Sadler wasn’t popular there.

He came up to the _Helen Mar_ the afternoon of the day that Pete went out of the harbour, and lay in a hammock on deck, where one could look down past the fruit trees toward the town and the mouth of the Jiron. He was making a requiem for Pete Hillary, such as he thought he ought to do under those circumstances, though the requiem was no good and the tune vicious. "Pete Hillary," it began,

"Pete Hillary, I make for you
This lonesome, sad complaint.
Alive you wa’nt no use, ’tis true,
And dead you prob’ly ain’t.

"Pete Hillary, Pete Hillary,
I don’t know where you are.
Here’s luck to you, Pete Hillary,
Beyond the harbour bar."

Just then Irish came running up the path, and climbed the ladder on deck, and he cried:

"It’s a warrant for ye, Kid I Run! Oh, wirra! What did ye do it for?" He was distracted.

Sadler paid no attention. He only twanged his banjo, and sang casual poetry, and Little Irish ran on:

"'Tis Pete Hillary himself was pulled out forninst the sand-bar," he says, "an' he's back in Ferdinand Street, swearin' for the bucket o' wather he swallyed. An' 'tis the English consul up to the City Hall says he come from Jamaica, an' a crowd of naygers from Ferdinand Street be the docks. Ah, coom, Kid! Coom quick, for the love of God!"

And Sadler says: "Gi'n me a kiss," he says,

"Gi'n me a kiss, sweetheart, says he;
Don't shed no tears for me, says he,
And if I meet a lass as sweet
In Paraguay, in Paraguay,
I'll tell her this: 'Gi'n me a kiss;
You ain't half bad for Paraguay.'"

And Irish says: "An' there's two twin sojers with their guns," he says, "an' belts full of cartridges on the _Harvest Moon_, an' the gentlemen at the Transport says, Hide, dom ye! he says, till they can ship ye wid a cargo to Californy."

Says Sadler:

"The little islands fall asleep,
The little wavelets wink.
Aye, God's on high; the sea is deep;
Go, Chepa, get some drink.
Ah, Magdalena----

"_Calm_, Irish! Get _calm!_" he says.

"You mean to say there's twins like that occupying the _Harvest Moon_?--

"Magdalena,
First I seen her
Underneath an orange-tree--

"They are," says Irish.

"Well--ain't they got nerve!"

"She was swashin'
Suds and washin'
Shirts beneath her orange-tree,"

he says. "Why, I got to go down and spank 'em!" he says, and he rolled out of the hammock and went off down the road toward Portate with Irish pattering after him.

We saw no more of them that day, and we didn't hear any news until

the noon following. There was a gale from the northwest in the morning. I went down to the city in the afternoon, and found the Plaza boiling with news.

It seemed that Sadler had gone aboard the _Harvest Moon_ and surprised the two soldiers, and dipped them in the water with their artillery, and sent them uptown with the wet warrant stuck in the muzzle of a gun. Then he paraded the _Harvest Moon_ the length of Portate's water-front, tooting his steam whistle. Then the Jefe Municipal--that's the Mayor--fell into his warmest temper, and sent a company of pink soldiery of the City Guard in the morning, packed close in a tugboat. Then Sadler led them seaward, where the gale was blowing from the northwest and the seas piled past the harbour; so most of the pink soldiers were seasick, not being good mariners, and the gale standing the tugs on their beam-ends, which was no sort of place for a City Guard. They came back unhappy. The _Harvest Moon_ was in again, and now anchored in the harbour. I passed the Jefe myself on the City Hall steps, and heard him b-r-r-ring like a dynamo. Then I went down to the harbour.

The _Harvest Moon_ lay rolling a half mile out. I took a rowboat and rowed out. When I drew near, I saw Sadler standing by the rail with the black nozzle of a hose pipe pushed forward, and shading his eyes against the glint of the water. When he saw it was me he took me aboard. But he was thoughtful and depressed. He sat himself on the rail and dangled his boots over the water and described his state of mind.

"What makes a man act so?" he says. "There's my fellow-man. Look at him! I'm sorry for him. Most of him had hard luck to be born, and yet when he gets in my way I just walk all over him. I can't help it. He's leathery and he's passive, my fellow-man. He goes to sleep in the middle of the road. When I ketch one of him, I kicks a hole in his trousers first, and then it occurs to me, 'My sufferin' brother! This is too bad!' Why, Pete Hillary was one of the dumbdest and leatheriest, and here's the Mayor's pink sojers been fillin' me with joy and sorrow, till I laughed from eleven till twelve, and been sheddin' tears ever since. Irish's been three times around his rosary before he got the scare kinks out of him, and between Irish bein' pathetic, and the Mayor and his sojers comin' out pink and going back jammed to the colour of canned salmon, my feelin's is worked up to bust. What makes a man act so? It must be he has cats in him."

He pulled his moustache and looked gloomy, and I judged his remorse was sincere. I says:

"That's what I don't put together. Why, Kid, look here! If you feel as bad as that three-for-a-cent requiem to Pete Hillary sounded, it's cats all right. It's the same kind that light on back fences and feel sick, and express themselves by clawing faces," I says, "and blaspheming the moon with sounds that never ought to be. That what you mean by 'cats in him'?"

"Precise, Tommy, precise."

"Well, I don't put it together," I says. "I wouldn't feel like that for the satisfaction of drowning all Ferdinand Street. Why, poetical habits and habits of banging folks don't seem to me to fit. Why," I says, "a poet he's one thing, and a scrapper he's another, ain't they? They don't agree. One of 'em feels bad about it, and takes to laments and requiems nights, same as malaria."

"It's this way," he says. "Those are just two different ways of statin' that things are interestin'. And yet, you're not far from the facts. It was a shoemaker in Portland, Maine," he says, "that taught me to chuck metres when I was a young one, and the shoemaker's son taught me to fight in the back yard, more because he was bigger than because he was interested in educatin' me. By-and-by I beat the shoemaker on metres and the son in the back yard, and then I left 'em, for they was no more use to me. But I never found anything else so much satisfaction as them two pursuits. But I'll go away, Tommy," he says, "I'll leave Portate. I will, honest. I'll be good. I wish they'd quit puttin' temptations on me. But they won't. They're comin' out again! Look at 'em! They've borrowed the _Juanita_, and she's comin' with only the steersman in sight, and a cabin full of sojers that can't keep their bayonets inside of the windows. My! ain't they sly!"

He went to the companion way and called Irish, telling him to "start her up."

The _Juanita_ was one of the Transport Company's tugs. She appeared to be engaged in a stratagem. She passed the _Harvest Moon_, then swung around and came up, on the other side. The _Harvest Moon_ made no effort to escape her anchorage, though the engine below began thumping busily.

Sadler went aft, dragging the long black hose, and sat on the rail till the _Juanita_ drew in to forty feet away, and through the deckhouse windows you could see the tufted caps of the suppressed soldiery. Then he let a steaming arch out of the hose pipe, that vaulted the distance and soaked the steersman, who howled and lay down. Then the _Juanita_ ploughed on, and Sadler played his hose, as she passed, through the windows of the deck house, where there were crashes and other noises, and Irish's engine kept on chug-chugging in the chest of the _Harvest Moon_. The _Juanita_ went out of reach, and the soldiery poured out on deck disorderly and furious, and Sadler pulled me flat beside him, supposing they might open a volley of musketry on us, but they didn't. Then he got up. "They give me the colic," he says, and Irish put his head up the companion way, and says: "The wather was too hot," he says and blew his fingers, and Sadler gave a groan.

"There's my luck!" he says. "I meant to tell Irish to take the boil off and forgot it. Now their skins'll peel. You go away, Tommy. You go ashore. You can't do me no good."

He looked sheepish and troubled. When I pulled away, he sat staring down, with his back turned, his boots dangling over the water, and his shoulders bent. He certainly felt bad.

The Superintendent of the Transport Company was named Dorcas, a bustling, heavy-bearded man that you couldn't hold still and that talked fast and jerky like a piston rod.

I met him in the Plaza next morning going into the City Hall.

"Come on," he says. "We'll fix it. What? Jefe was stuck. Come to me. Now then. Got an idea. Suit him first-rate. You see. Struck me this morning," says Dorcas. "Suit everybody."

We came to the Mayor's office, and found Sadler, sitting alone by the window and looking moodily down on the Plaza, where the chain gang from the City Jail was pretending to mend the pavement, but mostly loafing and quarrelling.

"Got him!" said Dorcas joyfully. "Thumped up the Jefe. First he cussed, then he calmed. That's his way. Be up pretty soon. Hold on! Wait for the Jefe."

Sadler nodded, and we sat and watched the chain gang, till the Mayor came in out of breath. He was a small, stout man with a military goatee, and his temper was such as kept the resident consuls happy with their diplomacy. He snorted at Sadler, and sat down.

"Now, Excellency," Dorcas says, "this way. Understand your position. All right. Reasonable. First, if Pete Hillary is Jamaican, he's no citizen of Portate. See? No good, anyway. No. British consul, he don't care, except for the principle. Not really. No. You want to pacify him, meaning his principle. That's so. Then that Hottentot Society. Got to fix them. Course you have. Don't want to disoblige honest voters of Ferdinand Street. No. Third; you got to celebrate the majesty of laws and municipal guards. Good. Last; the Transport Company. We don't want the Kid to chew his thumbs in jail for wetting folks. Good land! No! You want to satisfy us. Complicated, ain't it? But you're equal to it. You're a good one, Jefe. Sure. Now what's needed? Something bold. Something skilful. We have it! Get him banished, Excellency. Get him banished. Executive Edict from the President. Big gun. Hottentots pleased and scared. Majesty of Great Britain pacified. Majesty of municipal guards celebrated. Transport Company don't object. Everybody happy. There, now!"

He put his thumbs in the armholes of his vest, leaned back and beamed.

"Hum! You assist?" says the Mayor.

"We do."

The Mayor gazed at him fierce for a minute, then he smiled and

patted his knee.

"It is, perhaps, Senor Dorcas, not impossible."

"There now, Kid! Fixed you."

Sadler said nothing, but looked down at the chain gang below. The Plaza was full of people, women talking under the stiff palms, and men sitting on wicker chairs on the hotel piazza opposite. The butcher on the corner was chasing away a dog.

"It won't do," says Sadler mournfully, at last. "It's more interestin' than I'd suppose you was up to, but comparatively it's dull. Besides, it ain't safe. I'd have to come back and see how bad I was banished. That's certain. Not that I'd throw you down this way, Excellency," he says with sad eyes on the Mayor and a deep voice, "I wouldn't do it," he says, "without puttin' up another scheme, for it wouldn't be treating you upright. But makin' a supposition, now, suppose I was arrested some, and set to bossin' that gang out there for the benefit of Portate, and quartered, for safe keepin' till the trial, at the Hotel Republic, as a partial return for being exhibited in disgrace. And suppose it took me three days to finish that little job they're potterin' with, by that time I'd be ready to, let's say, to escape, say, on the steamer that sails for Lima on Thursday. I'm a broken and tremblin' reed, Jefe. That's me. I shrinks, I fades away. The majestic law's too much for me. And suppose you was to fix up a Proclamation subsequent and immejiate, offerin' a reward for me. Now, as to fugitive, or as to exile, lookin' at it from my standpoint, I makes my choice. I says, fugitive. It suits me better. It's elegant and inexpensive. I ain't worthy of an Executive Edict. As a fugitive I wouldn't have to fidgit to get even with you. But take your standpoint, Excellency. There's iniquitous limits to you. For instance, you can't put up an Executive Edict by yourself. Consequence is, there's no glory in it for you. But you can put up a Proclamation, runnin' like this: 'Five hundred dollars reward for capture and return of one Sadler, that committed humiliatin' assault on one Hillary, and sp'iled the stomachs and b'iled the skins of patriotic municipal guardsmen, which shameful person is more'n six feet of iniquity, and his features homely beyond belief, complexion dilapidated, and conscience dyspeptic.' Of course, Excellency, there couldn't anybody give you points on a Proclamation. I ain't doin' that, but I was supposin' it was printed in the national colours, with a spectacular reward precedin' a festival of language. Printed, posted, and scattered over Ferdinand Street and the British Consulate, what happens? British majesty pacified, Ferdinand Street solid for a Mayor that puts that value on Pete Hillary, Transport Company don't object. Everybody happy, except me. Don't mind me. I go my lonesome way."

Sadler turned away, depressed, and looked at the chain gang in the Plaza. The Mayor's eyes glistened. Dorcas pulled his beard, and he says:

"There'd be more in it for you, Excellency, that's a fact."

The Mayor came over and patted Sadler on the shoulder, and his voice showed emotion.

"My friend, be not sad. To be sacrificed to public policy is noble."

"Recollect that Proclamation, Excellency," says Sadler. "You can't describe me too villainous."

"I will remember," says the Mayor in a broken voice. "I will remember."

"And you won't go under five hundred," says Sadler. "It'll be a tribute to your private respect, just between you and me, as friends that might never meet again."

"I will remember. My friend! Yet be firm," says the Mayor.

Sadler left the hall with a file of pink soldiers, who acted sly and kept aside from him, as not knowing in what direction he might be dangerous. He was put in charge of the chain gang, and introduced them to sorrow and haste, and he spent his three days at the Hotel Republic, taking things joyful at the bar at municipal expense. There were soirees on the hotel piazza and terror in the chain gang.
By the rate the work went on in the Plaza, he was worth the expense. The only point where he didn't appear scrupulous was going around to bid people good-bye, which seemed simple-hearted and affecting in a way, but it harrowed the Mayor's feelings. He said they were harrowed. He got nervous. For if a man agrees to be a fugitive, and to escape in a way described by himself as a shrinking and fading away, it stands to reason he oughtn't to make too much fuss about it; nor tell the British consul that the Mayor was going to assassinate him, which was the reason for "these here adieus," to which the British consul said, "Gammon!" Yet this seemed to be the idea current in Ferdinand Street, and was why the Hottentot Society were peaceful for the time being. But it made the Mayor nervous the way Portate was keyed up for tragedy, and the way Sadler acted as if he wasn't going to escape real mysterious. For the Mayor had to please the British consul and Ferdinand Street and the Transport Company; but the Hottentots were skittish, and the Mayor was nervous.

On Thursday morning the dock was crowded with Sadler's friends, come to watch him escape, and some who heard he was to try it, and thought to see him grabbed by the City Guard. They expected a surprise. It puzzled them when the strip of water widened between the steamer and the pier.

Irish wasn't there, though I had supposed he would go with Sadler; but the British and American consuls were there, and Dorcas, with others of the Transport Company, people from the Hotel Republic, and Hillary, and a lot of negroes from Ferdinand Street. I heard the British consul say to the American consul: "You know, of course,

that’s what you call a ’put up job’--one of your Americanisms," he says.

"Shucks! You don’t care," says the American consul.

"But really, you know, it’s not decent," says the British consul.

Sadler stood on the after deck of the steamer with his hat off, same as if he was asking a benediction on Portate.

An hour later the steamer was out of sight and the proclamations were posted in Ferdinand Street, and the Plaza, and at the consulates: "Three hundred dollars reward for the capture and return, dead or alive, of one known as ’Kid Sadler,’ a fugitive from public justice, who committed felonious and insulting assault on Pedro Hillary, the well-known and respected resident of Ferdinand Street. It is suspected," says the Proclamation, "that, if still in the city, he will endeavour to escape by steamer in disguise. Description."----

Which description of him was remarkable for length and scorn.

I heard the American consul say to the British consul; "I’ll tell you what that is, old man. That’s a porous plaster. It has some holes, but it’s meant to cover your indecency."

That Thursday night I sat alone on the deck of the Hotel Helen Mar. It was near ten o’clock. I saw a flamingo rise from the river, and it flew over the _Helen Mar_, like a ghost, trailing its legs.

And the ladder creaked, and Sadler came over the side. He stepped soft and long like a ghost.

"How do?" he says, and sat down, and twankled his banjo.

Then I asked, "Why? What for?" I says, "I don’t see it," I says. "It ain’t reasonable." It was well enough for a flamingo, but a man has responsibilities. It’s not right for him to be a floating object that’s no such thing. He’s got no business to be impossible, unless he explains himself. I stated that opinion pretty sharp, but Sadler was calm.

"Irish hooked the _Harvest Moon_" he says, "and lay outside for the steamer. I jumped overboard."

"Changed your mind?"

"Well, I’d thought some of enlisting for the Chilian War, but Irish don’t like war. Gives him the fidgits. I made a ’Farewell’ going out. I thought I’d come round and tell it to you." He sang hoarsely as follows:

"Tommy and Dorcas, now adieu;
I drops a briny tear on,

Mayor, my memories of you;
Stevey that brought the beer on;
Farewell across the waters blue,
Oh, Jiron.

"Farewell the nights of ba'my smell,
Farewell the alligator,
Special them little ones that dwell
In the muck hole with their mater.
Farewell, Portate, oh, farewell,
Equator."

"You see," he says, "the point of going to war is this way, because

"The damage you do
Ain't totted to you
But explained by the habits of nations.

"Government pays the bills, commissary, sanitary, and them that's sent to God Almighty. I guess so. But it'd give Irish the fidgits. Then the Transport's got a three-master billed for San Francisco, and she sails to-morrow morning, and we're going on her." He seemed subdued, and hummed and strummed on his banjo, as if he couldn't get hold of what he wanted to let out. At last he struck up a monotonous thing that had no tune, and sang again: "One day," he says,

"One day I struck creation,
And I says in admiration,
'What's this here combination?'
Then I done a heap of sin.
I hain't no education,
Nor kin.

"There's something I would say, boys,
Of the life I throwed away, boys,
It cackles, but don't lay, boys,
There's a word that won't come out.
The hell I raised I'll pay, boys,
Just about.

"Tommy," he says then, "I'm leaving you. You ain't going to have my sheltering wing no more. Write down these here maxims in your memory, supposing I never see you no more. Any game is good that'll hold up a bet. Any sort of life is good so long as it has a good risk in it. The worth of anything depends on how much you've staked on it. Him that draws most of the potluck in this world is the same that drops most in. The man that puts up his last coin as keen as when he put up his first, he'll sure win in the end. Lastly, Tommy, if you want a backer inquire for Sadler. So long."

He got up to leave, and stood a moment looking away into the moonlight. I says:

"The Mayor’s Proclamation’s out, Kid."

"Yep. I got it somewhere about. I just been to see him."

He had the Proclamation in his hand.

"Durned little runt," he says. "He cut me down two hundred dollars on that reward, plump! And he’d gi’n me his word! Why, you heard him! He ought to be ashamed. I told him so. I says, ’You’re no lady.’ Nor he ain’t. Nor sporty, either. Squeals and wriggles."

"Paid you the reward, did he?"

"Why, of course, he couldn’t miss his politics. It took him sudden, though. He had a series of fits that was painful, painful." Then he moved away, muttering, "Painful, painful!" climbed over the side, and down the ladder, and went to California.

CHAPTER V.

END OF THE HOTEL HELEN MAR. CONTINUATION OF CAPTAIN BUCKINGHAM’S NARRATIVE.

Sadler and Irish were gone, but Stevey Todd and I stayed on at Portate, running the Hotel Helen Mar. Three years we ran her altogether, and made money. I had a thought that by-and-by I’d go to the Isthmus, and charter some kind of sloop, and dig out Clyde’s canvas bags, and so go back to Greenough sticky with glory. Whether it was laziness or ambition kept me so long at Portate I couldn’t say. It was a pleasant life. It’s a country where you don’t notice time. Yet its politics are lively, and the very land has malaria, as you might say; it has periodic shakes, earthquakes, "tremblors," they call them, or "trembloritos," according to size.

It was early one morning, in the spring of the year ’73, that Stevey Todd woke me up, and he says:

"I’m feeling unsteady like. Seems like the _Helen Mar_ wobbled."

"She’s took sick," I says, sarcastic, "she’s got the toothache."

The only thing I had against Stevey Todd was, he was timid and had bad dreams. He rode a tidal wave every two or three nights, according to account. But it wasn’t right to be messing another man’s sleep with tidal waves that didn’t belong to the other man. I never set any tidal waves on him. I spoke up to Stevey Todd that time, and went on deck, and saw the Sarasara with an umbrella over her head, and I thought, maybe, there had been a little shake, and maybe she was out looking for trouble.

It came on the middle of the morning. The drivers that put up with us that night were gone down the valley with their mules. I heard Stevey Todd whoop down below, and he came on deck and he says, "She's wobbling again!" meaning the _Helen Mar_. She was swaying to and fro. We got down the ladder and stood off to look at her.

Then the land began twisting like snakes under our feet, and cut figure eights, till I felt like soapsuds, and lay down on my face. Then I sat up, and looked at the _Helen Mar,_ which shook and groaned like a live thing. We heard the trees crack and snap behind her. She seemed to hang a moment as if she hated to go; and over she went with a shriek and crash. The water splashed and the dust went up. Stevey Todd and I ran to the bank, and there lay the Hotel Helen Mar, ridiculous, bottom side up in the Jiron River.

Stevey Todd sat down and cried.

I was disgusted with seeing the hotel standing on her roof-garden and thinking of the mess there was inside her, all come of a tremblorito no bigger than enough to cave in the bank and tip the _Helen Mar_ over, and enough tidal wave to wash the streets of Portate, which needed it. I saw the Sarasara shaking her old umbrella at us, and I was mad. I says to Stevey Todd, "Go on! Run your blamed old hotel standing on your head!" I says, "I'm going to Greenough," and I lit out for Portate, leaving him standing on the bank, with the tears running down his face, like his heart was broken.

When I came to the harbour I found there were two ships in port bound for California, and one by way of Panama. She was named the _Jane Allen_.

The captain's name was Rickhart, a rough man, and the _Jane Allen_ was an unclean boat, a brigantine, come from bad weather around the Horn. I went aboard to look her over, and didn't like her. I was making up my mind to go and see if the other mightn't be going by Panama too. And then, coming through the forecastle, some one spoke to me from a bunk and he says:

"When'd you drop in, Tommy?" and I stopped, and stared, and pretty soon I made him out. It was Julius R. Craney.

He certainly was sick. He said he had shipped with Rickhart from New York, to go to California and make his fortune, but thought now he wouldn't live so far. He had the scurvy and was low in his mind, and disappointed with fortune. I thought:

"If he took my money at Colon, he hasn't got it now." He was poor enough then. I guessed we'd have to call that off, and I says:

"The _Jane Allen_ it is. I'll go see the Windwards and Greenough."

Craney was a yellow-looking man at that time, and glad enough when I told him I was going to bring him some fruit, and take passage to Panama, and look after him. Then I bargained with Rickhart for a passage for two.

The next day I went back up to the _Helen Mar_, and found Stevey Todd had a board fence in front of her, and was charging admission, and he had a new advertisement tacked on the fence.

"Unparalleled Spectacle!" says Stevey Todd's bill-poster. "The Hotel Helen Mar. On her chimneys, with her cellar in the Air! Built in the United States! Exported to South America! Freighted Inland by a Tidal Wave! Stood on her Head by an Earthquake! Only 10 cents!" And he was up on a box himself encouraging the populace, and he seemed to think he had a good business opening. But I says:

"Stevey," I says, "come off it. We're going to Panama."

He wanted to argue it was an unparallelled show, but I took him by the suspenders and ran him down to Portate, arguing, and the populace went in free, and we went aboard the _Jane Allen_. He thought the _Helen Mar_ was a better boat upside down than the _Jane Allen_ any side, and he was right there, for the _Jane Allen_ was full of smells and unhealthiness. But Craney was glad to see us.

We hadn't been a week at sea before her cook came down with ship's fever and died in five days, but Craney picked up a bit for the time. Rickhart came straight for Stevey Todd, and handed him his passage money.

"You're no passenger" he says. "You're a cook. You hear me!" Which appeared like a rash statement, that Stevey Todd wasn't one to take off-hand like that without argument, but Rickhart shoved him into the galley before he got his ideas arranged right.

"You're the _Jane Allen's_ cook," says Rickhart, and appeared to be right, though his style of argument wasn't what Clyde had trained us to. Stevey Todd had no proper outfit to meet it. The victuals he had to serve up on the _Jane Allen_ was a worriment to his conscience too, being tainted and bad, and by-and-by I came down too with ship's fever, and Craney got sicker again with scurvy.

There's a long promontory, that the coasters see on the West Coast of South America near the Line, with a square white tower on a bit of high rock at the head of it. The promontory is called Mituas, and the point, Punta Ananias. That may be because some one ran aground sometime on the sand-bar off the end, and thought it deceitful. Some people say the tower was built as an outlook against pirates long ago, but I judge the facts are everybody has forgotten who built it or what he did it for. It's a lighthouse now. If a man doesn't mind a curve in his view and a few pin-head islands, there's nothing particular to interrupt his view half round the world. The Andes make a jagged line on the east, and ten of them are volcanoes. Those snow

mountains and two or three ocean currents got together, and arranged it with the equator that one part of the year should be a good deal like another there, and all the months behave respectful, and the Tower of Ananias have a breeze. It's a handsome position with a picked climate.

The scurvy is a disease not so common now, but it used to act as if all the bad salt pork you'd eaten were coming out through the skin, till you looked like a Stilton cheese, and what you wanted was to be fed on vegetables, and put ashore so as to get the bilge-water dried out. Probably that wouldn't be possible, and you'd be sewed up in canvas, and resemble an exclamation point, and be dropped overboard to punctuate the end of the story. Chunk! you goes, and that's the end of you.

Ship's fever is a nautical brand of typhoid, due to bad conditions aboard. The best thing for it is to get out of those conditions. Craney had the scurvy, and I had ship's fever. Sometimes I was out of my head. But when we sighted Punta Ananias, I was clear enough to tell Captain Rickhart he'd have a burial shortly, or put me on shore.

"I've got no fancy for that," he says, and took a look at me. I didn't suppose he'd haul up, but he did. He'd buried two men already down the coast, and the thing must have got on his nerves, for he anchored overnight, and sent Craney and me to the lighthouse in a boat.

"You forfeit your passage money," he says, and told the mate to buy what truck he could, and tell the Dago in the lighthouse he could keep our remains.

Rickhart was a rough man, and his ship was a rotten ship. I never knew a meaner ship, though I've known meaner men than Rickhart on the whole.

Stevey Todd said he was going with us, and there Rickhart disagreed with him again, and his argument was the same as before.

"You ain't," he says, and seemed to prove it, though Stevey Todd claimed he wasn't convinced.

CHAPTER VI.

TORRE ANANIAS. WHY CAPTAIN BUCKINGHAM DID NOT GO BACK TO GREENOUGH.

When we got under the lee of the lighthouse, the keeper came stalking down the rocks to meet us. He was a tall man with a long moustache, and a narrow grey beard, and a black coat and sombrero.

I heard the mate say:

"Here’s the King of Castile come to Craney’s funeral. Blamed if he ain’t a whole hearse!"

"Without doubt" says the keeper, grave and deep, being asked about the fruit. Regarding sick boarders, he broke out sharp, "Since when has my house----But I ask your pardon! You are strange to me. No more. The gentlemen will do me the honour to be my guests."

Nobody appeared to have anything to say to that, but he looked too lean to recommend his board. His Spanish wasn’t the kind I was used to. It was neither West Coast nor Mexican. I judged it was just Spanish.

They left us in canvas hammocks on the ground floor of the Tower of Ananias. It was three stories high, the top story opened to seaward, with its lanterns and tin reflectors.

The darkness came on, as its habits are in the tropics, like a lamp blown out. I could see the stars through the square seaward window of the tower, and heard the keeper go softly up the stairs, and I went to sleep, very weak and faint.

When morning came, and I pulled myself up to look through the square window, and saw the ship making sail, it seemed to me I was some sick and far away from everybody. I rubbed my eyes and looked around.

The door and stairway filled one side of the room. There were two wooden benches and a pile of earthen and tin ware on one of them. The hammocks hung between the windows, and in one of them lay Craney, looking like mouldy cheese, for his hair, eyebrows, and complexion were yellowish by nature, and he was some spotted at that time.

Beyond the door was a banana tree, with ten-foot leaves, and a little black monkey loping around under it, sort of indifferent. Beyond the banana tree came thick woods. A woman came out of them with a basket on her head, up the path to the tower. The monkey yelped and went up the banana tree. "Dios!" says the woman, when she came to the door, and she put down the basket and ran. The keeper came down the stone stairs and ran silently after her. The little black monkey dropped from his tree and loped after the keeper, and the woods swallowed them all. A sea-breeze was blowing into the tower, and below I could hear the pound of the surf. Craney slept as innocent as if he’d been fresh cheese, and I felt better.

Then the keeper came back with the woman, who appeared to be a scared Indian and screeched some. He said her name was Titiaca, and she would look after us, but otherwise had no culture. Craney woke up and took a look at things.

"I have already," the keeper says very solemn, "the advantage of your honourable names. My own is Gaspero Raphael de Avila y Mituas." He stated it so, and went up the stairs. I dropped one leg out of the

hammock, and I says thoughtful:

"I always had hard luck. They just named me Tom and chucked me."

Titiaca knocked her head on the floor and screeched, but at that time I didn’t see what for. She appeared to think the keeper was displeased.

It was monotonous lying all day in the tower, seeing only Titiaca, and now and then the black-cloaked keeper, stiff, silent, and solemn, and polite. But the days went by, and by-and-by we began to crawl out and lie in the seaward shadow, and sometimes under the banana tree, where the little black monkey loped around melancholy. We grew better. Titiaca gossiped, and told us the keeper was a magician, and master of the winds, and probably the bestower of rain and sunshine, and certain his light in the tower was connected underground with one of the volcanoes, so that he could tap different grades of earthquakes, graded as "motors, trembloritos, and tremblors," according to size.

"For, see!" she says; "at night it is the red smoke of the mountain --all night! it is the light in the tower--all night! it is himself in the tower--all night--all day! He speaks not. Is it not so? The ground shivers. He says nothing. It is the magic. Ah-h-h! The magic!"

Craney grew so well and restless after a week or two that he began strolling, and finally one day he went down the path that Titiaca came by. For she said there was a village, and, beyond other villages and cocoa plantations, fishermen along the shore, many people, though only footpaths ran through the woods. Her gossip lacked variety, and the little black monkey took no interest in me at all. It appeared to me things were unnatural dull, and I went to the tower and called. The keeper answered, and I went up, and hoped I wasn’t in his way. The middle story was like the one below, except for a table, chair, bed, and a few plain articles.

"On the contrary," he says, "if you will do me the honour to precede," and motioned to the stair leading to the lantern story, which was roofed, but open on all sides, and along the seaward wall was a stone bench.

It’s good, now and then, as a man lives on, if something or some one comes along that gives him a new notion of things. At first it surprises him; then he thinks there might be something in it; and then maybe he gets so waterlogged and cosmopolitan as to admit an oyster’s notions might be as reasonable as his.

As near as I could come to it the keeper was a Spaniard of a run-down family,--at least one branch of it was run down to him. It was old and uncommon proud, and had different kinds of decorated names. It began with being a legend; then it seemed to have a deal of trouble with Moors, and got rich with the results of trouble; then it owned some of that section of the New World, including twenty to

thirty thousand natives in the property. That was the story of the family. But what they had they spent, or lost, or had confiscated, till there was nothing much but the story. Now here's what surprised me. For the thought of his race was in his bones, same as the sea is in mine. For instance, it seems to me I'm more to the point than my ancestors, on account of being alive. I don't much know who they were. I'm a separate island, with maybe a few other islands, close by. My continental connections appear to be sort of submerged. That's the average American way of looking at it, and he wants to be a credit to himself, if he does to anybody. But the keeper's notion was to be a credit to all the grandfathers he could find between the fall of the Roman Empire and the Conquest of Peru. Those of the last hundred years or so he wasn't particular about, but if they'd been dead long enough he'd do anything to satisfy them. I didn't seem to surround the idea so as to find it reasonable, but I got so far as to see it was a large one, and there was some kind of a handsomeness in it.

Speaking of points of view, it seemed to me, so long as a man thought a heap of something besides himself, there was a good deal of leeway as to what the thing was; maybe his children and the folks that were coming after him; maybe the folks that went before him; maybe his country, or a machine he had invented, or a ship and those aboard he was responsible for, or the copper image of one of his gods. So long as he stood to stake his life on it, I wasn't prepared to sniff at him.

For a while he listened to my talk and said nothing. Then he began and went off like a bottle of beer that's been corked over-long. From what he said I gathered the facts just stated.

"The stream goes dry," he says slowly at last. "Therefore I came from Spain. What do I know of the new laws of the colonists, their republic? These lands are to my race in me, from the point to the bay, and north twenty leagues; so runs the charter: so witnesses my name, Mituas, given and decreed by Charles, the king and emperor, to Juan de Avila y Mituas, the friend of Francisco Pizarro, who was an upstart indeed, but a valiant man. They say to me: 'There is a lighthouse on Punta Ananias. For the keeping of the light is paid this much. Sir, be pleased in this manner to occupy your estate.' Do I care for their mocking? Is it the buzz of insects that is heard in Spain? Good, then! I wait for my end. But to hear an Avila mocked at in Spain I could not endure. You do not understand? It is natural. You were so kind as to tell me of your life--believe me, most interesting--a courtesy which has tempted me to fatigue you in this way."

I thought his yarn a sight more interesting than mine, and said so, and he looked sort of blank, as if he didn't see how you could get the stories of an Avila and a Yankee seaman near enough together to compare them, more than a dozen eggs with a parallel of latitude. But his manners stayed by him. He said I was so polite as to say so, and then was silent, sitting on his end of the stone bench and looking

grim at the sea.

"Well," I says, "I've got nothing to speak of,--a little money, no relations,--but I'd hate to give up the idea of seeing Long Island Sound again, and the town of Greenough."

"Your hope is a possession excellent," he says very quiet. "I shall not see again my Madrid, nor those vineyards of Aragon."

By-and-by the keeper seemed too melancholy to be sociable, I went back to the banana tree.

Titiaca came. She said Craney had gone inland.

He didn't come back that night, and not till late afternoon of the next day. Then he came out of the woods, strolling along, and sat down under the banana tree, and acted as if he had something on his mind. I told him about the keeper, and laid out my theory about his having a handsome point of view, but one that needed property to keep cheerful with. Craney was thoughtful.

"Property, Tommy!" he says at last. "This is the remarkablest community I ever got to. The old man told you right, so far as he knew. I guess he applied for four hundred square miles of ancestral estate and they told him he could have the lighthouse job. That's so! But see here. He don't really know what his job is. Lighthouse keeper! My galluses and garters! He's the tin god of ten or fifteen thousand Injuns and half-breeds. I've been holding camp-meetings with them. Why, he's sitting on a liquid gold mine that's aching to run. I'll tell you. I went from here to Titiaca's village. It's on the shore and some of the people are fishermen, and I talked with them. Then I got a donkey and rode over by plantations where they raise cocoa, which appears to be a red cucumber full of beans, and growing on an apple tree. They dry it, and take it in boat-loads up a bay about forty miles, and get from five cents a pound upwards. I talked with them. Then I met an old priest, who was fat and slow and peaceable. I went in a sailboat with him up the coast to his house, and spent the night. He said the Injuns of this neighbourhood were more'n half heathen in their minds, but he was too old, and settled down now, and couldn't help it. It didn't appear to trouble him much. He wondered if Senor de Avila knew he was that gruesome and popular; and then he mooned along, talking sort of wandering, till near midnight. The Injuns don't think his credit with the gods and the elements amounts to much, anyway. This morning I crossed to the north shore and saw more villages and plantations, and came back to Titiaca's village in a catamaran rigged with a sprit-sail. Now, this is a business opening, Tommy. And look here! The old man's notions, as he put 'em to you, they're a good thing. I didn't know how he'd take it, but I guess we can fix it. You see, this section--why, Padre Filippo says it used to belong to that family more or less, but the titles were called off when the country set up for itself, and whether they'd collected rent up to that time he didn't know. He thought they hadn't regular or much. But the section's grown well-to-do

lately on account of the cocoa trade, and I gather what the Injuns pay on it now is about ordinary taxes. Now, if the Injuns pay the old man a sort of blackmail to get him to moderate his earthquakes, and he calls it his proper rents, why, I say, a rose by any name'll smell as sweet, supposing the commission for collecting is the same. That's the idea. Why not? All he's got to do is to stay in his tower, or look like a cross between the devil and a prophet when he does show himself, same as usual, and leave us to work his tribute. It's what his tenth grandfather did. I guess it'll be mostly dried cocoa beans. The shed where the old man keeps his oil will do for a warehouse."

I says, "What's all this, anyway?"

"Oh," he says, "you'll see it's reasonable by-and-by. Why not? Why, the campaign's begun. Some of the stuff is coming in to-morrow. You've no notion how they cottoned to the idea. I says to 'em this way. 'Course,' I says, 'I'm a stranger, but it stands to reason the Don won't shake anybody out of bed nights that does his best to please him. Sure, he'd be reasonable. But here he's lived on the little end of this country now going on ten years, and what have you done? Nothing! Here he's been switching fire back and forth from the Andes,' I says, 'corking up one volcano and letting out another, and yet he ain't split a single plantation into ribbons so far. Has he, now? No. Well, ain't it astonishing? Why, he must have this whole territory riddled with pipe connections. Boys, I don't see how you can be so reckless,' I says, 'and ungrateful. How long do you expect him to look out for folks that don't appear to care whether they blow up or not? First you know, he'll get disgusted and turn the whole section into cinders. He must have been mighty cautious as it is. Shook you up a little now and then. Nothing to what he's liable to do. Suffering saints!' I says; 'can't you take a hint? What do you suppose he means when the ground wrinkles under your feet? Do you want him to pitch you all into the sea before you get his idea?' They said they hadn't thought of that before. Fact is, they surprised me. They must have some ancestral ideas of their own, so it comes natural to 'em to pay for their weather. Tell 'em they've got to bribe an earthquake, and they say, 'All right.' Queer, ain't it? 'Well, I says, 'tell you what I'll do. I'll arrange it with the Don.' You've no notion how they liked the idea, they're that scared of him. I guess they'll put up various amounts. They didn't understand a percentage. Maybe the details will be complicated. Let's go see the Don."

The keeper was in his lantern story, looking out over the sea very lonesome. Craney attacked the subject like a drummer selling a bill of goods, but the keeper didn't seem to understand. "Why," says Craney, "you see, these people have a sort of mysterious reverence for you. Maybe you have an idea of the reason." The keeper said it was probable that the peasantry were not unaware of his rank.

"Now, your ancestors employed agents, didn't they? Yes. Maybe they got about half the proceeds and the agents stole the rest." The keeper looked surprised, but thought that was probable too.

"Exactly. Now, we're offering, as a business proposition, to collect on the same antique terms, only we give you an itemized account this time. What do you say?"

"Senor Craney," said the keeper slowly, "are you asking me if I accept the acknowledgment of my rights? I do not understand a business proposition. I do not understand how the peasants have arrived suddenly, as you state, at this conviction of their obligations."

"Just so," says Craney. "That comes of having a capable agent. I talked to them and they saw reason. Fact is, though, the idea seems to have been growing on them for some years."

The keeper looked at me, and I was studying different sides of Craney's scheme. I began: "It might mean the vineyards of Aragon. All the same, it's a queer business."

He started and muttered, "The vineyards of Aragon! My Madrid!" and dropped his head.

Craney winked and we went down.

I've heard it said that Francisco Pizarro was surprised when he found he'd conquered Peru with only a few objections.

Well, if we had any trouble in this business, it was only Craney that had it from the start, and he appeared to enjoy himself. He was off most of the time, pattering around on his shaggy grey donkey, and left me to take in and stow away those bags of cocoa beans. I used to sit in front of the shed, which was close to the shore, and smoke and admire the world. Once a week Craney would come down the coast in a clumsy catboat, and we'd take a load up to the town, which was called "Corazon,"--a considerable town forty miles off, where were French and Spanish agencies in the cocoa trade.

Every day a cautious, stringy-haired Injun, with a loaded donkey, would come trotting out of the woods to the shed, or maybe several of them at odd times. They all acted shy, and kept as far from the Torre Ananias as the space allowed. Sometimes they wouldn't say anything, except to state that this bag came from such and such plantations, and to hope Himself would take, note of it. Then they'd look pleased and peaceful to have it all written down neatly, and maybe they'd want the item read out, and then they'd nod and smile and trot away contented. Sometimes they'd hope Himself was feeling good on the whole. It didn't seem to strike any of them that the keeper's position, as they understood it, wasn't right and reasonable.

I used to sit in front of the shed and admire the world. I thought about the primitive mind, and how the civilised was given to playing it low on the primitive. I seemed to get around part of their point of view after a while and see it was reasonable. For the Mituans had

got it fixed before we came that the keeper was somehow mixed up in the earthquakes. And when they'd once taken that idea, it made no difference if they'd felt little motors every few days all their lives, and trembloritos and tremblors pretty frequent. As a specimen of authority, even a little motor earthquake is too much. They happen along in that neighbourhood every now and then, maybe once a month, and you grow used to them, but still, they're vivid. If you got it once in your mind that Himself in the lighthouse was fingering the bowels of the earth, and Himself was doing it when the jerks came under you, and your house walls creaked and swayed, you'd give something to keep Himself amiable. There was no doubt about that.

But then, what made it appear to them that the keeper was inside his rights to be bothering them that way? They seemed to think no less of him for it; but rather more. They thought he was a fine thing. It puzzled me, and I studied it. Then I seemed to get an understanding of the primitive mind that was surprising.

But then, how did the case stand with Craney and me? As often as that troubled me, I had only to go up to the lantern story, and hear the keeper talk about Madrid and the vineyards of Aragon, and about his longing and his pride. Then I felt better. If the keeper's income kept up that way it was clear he could go back to Spain by-and-by with stateliness pretty respectable, and I says to myself:

"Why, the Injuns are happy, and the keeper's going to be, and I'm a sinner, and Craney can look after his own conscience. Shucks! He hasn't got any."

It made me feel virtuous to think how Craney had no conscience. Maybe he hadn't. He was the busiest man in South America for a while. I never knew of another to make a business asset out of earthquakes nor his equal for seeing an opening for enterprise. He was a singular man, Craney, a shrewd one, and yet romantic and given to ingenious visions. And yet again, when he talked his wildest, you'd find he had his feet on some rocky facts, and his one good eye would be hard and bright as a new tack. We used to sit in front of the shed sometimes, looking down on the sea that was blue and shining like rumpled silk, Craney smoking cigars and I with my pipe.

"Tommy," he'd say, "the world lies open before us. Everywhere is chances for a soaring ambition, everywhere is harvests for the man that's got talents. There's diamonds in rocks, and there's pearls in oysters. Richness grows out of the ground, and glory drops out of the clouds. Me, I'm a man of ideals. Give me room to spread. Let me strike my gait and I'll make the continents sizzle, and governments have fits. Expand, Tommy! Expand your mind! Small men has small ambitions. Large men has wings. That's me."

There were a number of heavy shocks, about the time when the eastern Mituas districts were picking the trees, and some of the Mituans were mad about it, but they had a big harvest. They brought cocoa-beans in caravans and boatloads for a while, and they said it was many years

since they'd had such a harvest, or such a tremblor, and Himself was a great magician.

The time went by. I heard in Corazon one day that Captain Rickhart had put into port there on his back voyage, and inquired some for us, but that was a month before. Later Craney had a contract offered by the French agencies, and had to buy up most of the North Mituas cocoa crop to fill it.

One day we sat together in front of the shed. He was laying out different schemes. He said this tribute business was too small, and there wasn't much enterprise in it. The Injuns were terrible set in their ideas. He had a number of schemes. One of them for putting up a supply store in Corazon, running accounts there on the crops, but I didn't take to it; I was no storekeeper, but a sailor, and getting nervous to go to Panama.

It was hot by the shed, and we were going up by the banana tree, when we saw a large catboat coasting down to the point, and by the hang of her sail it was Padre Filippo's.

The Padre was aboard, and the two Mituans that sailed for him, and two men besides, one in a cocked hat and uniform. So they came ashore. Padre Filippo chuckled, and shook his fat finger at Craney.

"Ah, senorito, little rogue!" he says. "Alas! what behaviour!" and he chuckled and patted Craney on the arm.

The official was sociable too. He took out a cigarette, and explained there had been a complaint lodged with the authorities against the keeper, that he'd been drawing illicit gains from the peasantry. In fact, Padre Filippo had complained. The Padre laughed again.

"Why," says Craney, "I know something about that."

"Truly, I think so!" chuckles the Padre. "And if they've a mind to present him with a bag of beans now and then, whose business is it?" says Craney.

"The alcalde's," says the official, very calm. "It's not mine. I have but to take him before the alcalde, and here is the keeper of the lighthouse who takes his place. In candour I think Senor de Avila does not return. It is no affair of mine."

"Why," I says, "he'll never condescend to go before your alcalde! Why, an alcalde's too small for him to see."

"Chut!" says the Padre. "Speak in reverence of authorities, my son. You are both little rogues."

"He'll resign!"

"It is possible," says the official.

Craney lay on his back and thought a bit. Then he says to the official, "I'm thinking the keeper wouldn't mind resigning, supposing my friend Buckingham here went up and talked him over. He might go back to Spain, maybe. Maybe you don't know his popularity in this section, but I tell you this, he could make you plenty of trouble. You've got an idea he's going to be arrested and jailed and blackguarded by an alcalde. Well, he isn't, or these Mituas people of his will know why. Padre Filippo here, he'd always rather things were done peacefully."

"Surely," says the Padre, "surely."

"You'd better let us arrange it. Besides, in that case it might interest you--say, ten dollars' worth of interest."

"Fifteen," says the other, very calm. "It is no affair of mine."

Then I went up to the Torre Ananias, up to the lantern story where the keeper was looking over the sea and brooding.

"Senor," I says, "why don't you go to Aragon and buy vineyards?"

"True," he said quietly, "why not? But you have some reason for speaking, for suggesting."

"Why--yes. It's not the fault of the people on the estate, but there's a government somewhere around here, and they're getting offish, and it can't be helped. You don't want to squabble over the lighthouse. Why not buy some vineyards in Aragon? You can afford it now. The officials want to interfere with you. Why not get up and walk away?"

He stood up and wrapped his coat around him, and said, "I will go," and started downstairs for Spain.

We sailed for Corazon in the Padre's cat-boat and left the new keeper in the tower, and I never but once again have landed on the point. That was when I came some days after to gather a few things left behind.

It was in the evening, and there were great bonfires burning in the open space by the banana tree, and a crowd of figures around it, but all that was hidden when the sailboat drew under the bluffs. I stepped ashore and went into the shed, and some one rose in the dark and grabbed me, and I dragged him out into the starlight. It was the new keeper.

"Senor," he gasped. "Do not go up! They drove me with sticks and stones that I fled to the water. They are mad! Hear them! They mourn for Senor de Avila. They build a great fire and they

sing thus in no Christian language. Come away in your boat. They are mad."

It seemed to me too they'd better be left to themselves. We drew out again from under the bluffs, and caught the breeze, and stood away. The shouting and the chant kept on, and the fire shone after us like a red path on the water.

I don't know any more about the Tower of Ananias. But I know the Mituas people were sore about losing the keeper, who went to Lima, meaning to go to Spain, and never knew he'd been supernatural. Craney told me afterwards he'd heard the keeper died on the voyage and was dropped overboard to punctuate the end of his story,--only, no name was given, and maybe it wasn't him but some other aristocracy.

Craney himself stayed on at Corazon in the cocoa trade, meaning to take up contracts with the French and English agencies. He asked me to stay with him, and when I wouldn't, he asked for reasons, and I gave him a reason. Not that I mentioned the hundred and forty lost at Colon. For if he took it (and I guessed pretty near he did) he'd paid it back with a long leeway by sharing the Mituas business with me, when the whole thing was his. I thought the less said the better. If he was nervous to know what was my mind about that point, why, I thought it was good for him to be nervous. I gave for a reason that I was thinking to go back to Greenough on Long Island Sound.

"Greenough!" he says. "It's next to where Abe Dalrimple lives? Adrian's the name of his town."

I says:

"What do you know of it, Craney?"

"I went there with Abe Dalrimple," he says, "and left him there planting lobster pots. That wouldn't do for me. None of it in mine. Abe's got no more ambition than to dodge the next kettle Mrs. Dalrimple throws at him, but me, I'm ambitious, I got to spread out. I'm a romantic man, Tommy. That's my secret. That's the key of me. Give me largeness. Give me space for my talents. What do you want with Greenough? You stay with me and I'll show you who's the natural lord of all lands that's fertile and foolish. Ain't I showed you what I could do in a small way? Why, I only just began. That's nothing, I'm a soarer, Tommy, I've got visions."

I took a look at his one hard bright eye, and thought him over, and I thought:

"You've got 'em all right, but they're slippery," and I says:

"Did you hear news of any one in Greenough?"

"Give 'em a name."

"Happen it might be the name of Pemberton," I says. "Madge Pemberton."

"There was a man in Adrian named Andrew McCulloch," he says, "that married a girl named Pemberton from Greenough. Aye, I recollect, Pemberton's was a hotel."

"Madge Pemberton?"

"It was that name."

I recollect it was a little cafe in Corazon, where Craney and I sat that evening. It was thick with smoke and crowded with round tables, at which mixed breeds of people, mostly square-shouldered little men, were discussing the time of day and the merits of wine --which hadn't any--in a way of excitement that you'd think they were crying out against oppression. Each table had a tallow candle on it, burning dim in the smoke.

I says, "Oh!"

Then Craney went on talking, but I don't know what it was about. Then I says, "It don't suit me in Corazon," and I got up. I went out in the steep cobbled street that runs down to the shore of Corazon Bay.

I lay all night on the shore and watched 'the waves come up and crumble on the shingle. I remembered the verse Sadler used to chant to me in the _Hebe Maitland_ days, when I was acting more gay than he thought becoming to the uselessness of me. "Oh, sailor boy," he says.

"Oh, sailor, my sailor boy, bonny and blue,
You're rompin', you're roamin',
The long slantin' sorrows are waiting for you
In the gloamin', the gloamin'."

I remember, when it came morning, on the beach at Corazon, I got up, and I says:

"Clyde's mucky old bags can stay there till I'm ready," I says. "What's the use!"

I took a dislike to Clyde's money. I bought a passage to San Francisco, and came there in the year '75.

There I put the profits of six years on the West Coast into shares in a ship called the _Anaconda_, and shipped on her myself as second mate.

I found Stevey Todd cooking in a restaurant in San Francisco. He'd gone into gold mines, after getting loose from the _Jane Allen_. He'd left his profits from the Hotel Helen Mar in the gold mines. Every mine he'd invested in got discouraged, so he said, but I judge the truth was more likely Stevey Todd was taken in by mining sharks.

He'd made up his mind property wasn't his stronghold and gone back to cooking, and never took any more interest in property after that, nor had any to take interest in. But he told me Sadler was in business and getting rich, and in partnership with a Chinaman, and living in a town called "Saleratus," sixty miles down the coast, which none of these statements seemed likely at the time. Stevey Todd didn't know why the town was named Saleratus. He thought maybe Sadler had named it, or maybe gone there on account of the name, foreseeing interesting rhymes with "potatoes" and "tomatoes." But I didn't look Sadler up at that time.

* * * * *

The Captain turned to Uncle Abimelech, and said:

"Happen you might remember Sadler's tune to that verse, 'Sailor, my sailor boy, bonny and blue'?"

"He never said no such impudent thing to me," said Uncle Abimelech wrathfully. "I'd 'a' whaled him good."

"Why, that's true, Abe," said Captain Buckingham. "You wasn't much on looks."

Stevey Todd said:

"They changed that name, Saleratus."

"That's true too," said Captain Buckingham. "An outlandish name is bad for a town, or a ship, or a man; same as the _Anaconda,_ for the _Anaconda_ had bad luck, same as Abimelech Dalrimple. He'd never've got his brains frazzled if he'd been named Bill."

He paused several minutes before going on, to think over this theory of names.

CHAPTER VII.

LIEBCHEN. THE EWIGWEIBLICHE. THE NARRATIVE RESUMED, WITH THE LOSS OF THE "ANACONDA".

I invested the profits of the Hotel Helen Mar and the Ananias plantation in shares in the _Anaconda_, and shipped myself as second mate. She was carrying a cargo of steel rails for a railroad in Japan.

There was a man named Kreps who came aboard at Honolulu. He was a round-faced, chubby man, with spectacles and a trunk full of preserved specimens, and out of breath with his enthusiasm; and he

was a German, too, and a Professor of Allerleiwissenschaft, which I take to mean Things in General. He was around gathering in culture and twelve-sided fish in the Pacific, and had a pailful of island dialects and sentiments that were milky and innocent. But I liked him.

I had no objection to the _Anaconda_ either, except that she went to the bottom of the Pacific without any argument about that, and left me stranded on a little island there along with Kreps, and a hen named Veronica, and a Kanaka named Kamelillo. There was a fourth that got stranded there too. We called her "Liebchen" and she surely acted singular, did Liebchen, but I liked her too. Kreps said she was "symbol," but his ideas and mine didn't agree. He said she was a type of the "Ewigweibliche," which is another good word though a Dutch one. Maybe she was. Maybe Veronica was another type. I guess it's a word that's got some varieties to it.

Veronica belonged to the ship, but had never been cooked, being thin and stringy; and Kamelillo was a silent, sulky Kanaka that had lived up and down the Pacific, and harpooned whales, and been shipwrecked now and then, and was sometimes drunk and sometimes starved, and had no opinion on these things, except that he'd rather be drunk than starved. I never knew one that took less interest in life, provided he was let alone. I liked them all well enough, too. I took things as they came in those days. I'd as soon have bunked in with an alligator as a Patagonian.

It was south of Midway Island that we ran into the typhoon come over from Asia. A typhoon is to an ordinary storm what a surf is to a deep-sea wave, for it's short but ugly. When it was done with us the _Anaconda_ began to leak fearful in the waist, and I dare say the typhoon was excuse enough if she'd broken in two. She went down easy and slow, with all I had and owned sticking in her. It's bad luck to give a ship an outlandish name.

There were two large boats and a small one, and trouble came from Kreps' tin cans of specimens, for the captain wouldn't take them in his boat, nor the first mate in his, so Kreps wanted to put them in the small boat. He shed tears and got low in his mind.

"Dey are von der sciences ignorant, obtuse," he says.

I says, "So's the Pacific Ocean."

"But you, so young, so intelligent! Not as de Pacific Ocean, hein?"

I allowed there was difference between me and the Pacific. Kreps got his tin cans in, and I put the boat off. Kamelillo was spreading the cat-sail and had no opinion. Veronica came flapping over the rail with a squawk, and lit on Kamelillo, and fell into the bottom of the boat. We got away after the other boats, the night coming on clear, and Kamelillo talked island dialects at Veronica for scratching him when he wanted to be let alone. Kreps sat over his specimens, innocent and happy and singing German lullabies.

The next morning the other boats were not in sight. We steered north, for there were odd islands in that direction by the chart, without names enough to go around them; and on the second morning we saw a high shore to port, with surf like a white rag sewed along the bottom, and rags of mist sticking to the black bluffs.

"Ach," says Kreps, and the tears trickled down under his spectacles. "Gott sei dank! I am mude of the sea. It iss too large."

"How she get up them high?" Kamelillo says. "No! Maybe dam hen fly up. Not me. No!"

We coasted by the east side a little way and came to a place where the water was quiet and black in a slip of maybe a hundred feet in width, where the bluff had broken in two. The channel appeared to curve, so that you could only see a little way up. We dropped sail and pulled through. It might have been twenty feet deep in the channel, being high tide, and running in slow. Wine-palms and cocoanut trees grew on the bluffs on each side. Some leaned over, with roots out where the earth had caved away. We came about the curve and saw a closed bay, shut in by the bluffs from the outer sea and even the winds. It was wooded on the north and very rocky on the south, and might have been a quarter of a mile across. We landed on the north side and camped, and set a signal on the bluffs, and then we laid off to wait for accidents. I knew there were whalers cruising in the neighbourhood, and thought likely it would be seen.

Now Liebchen came in one day at high tide, chasing those little goggle-eyed squids that lived so many in the harbour. The first we saw was tons of her gambolling around in the water. She was a medium-sized whale, and might have been forty feet in length, but I never was in the whaling business, and Liebchen was the only one I ever got real acquainted with. I’ve heard it’s common for them to be stranded on shallow shores, and get off again if let alone. The harbour may have been Liebchen’s boudoir for aught I know. Maybe she’d come there before. She surely knew how to get out if let alone. After an hour or so she was over by the entrance trying to leave. She seemed to be in trouble, and then we saw the tide had gone out, and left the channel too shallow to heave over.

When Kreps understood that she was penned in, he acted outrageous, and pranced like a red rubber balloon.

"Gieb mir das axe! Ich will de habits of de cetacean studieren!" he says.

He ran away through the woods around the north shore, and I ran after, to see him study the habits of the cetacean. Liebchen had sidled off and was rolling about in the middle of the harbour when we came to the bluffs, where the wine-palms and cocoanut trees leaned over and the channel was narrow. Kreps fell to chopping the landward roots, and I saw he wanted to block the channel.

We slid a tree down under the water, and then another, and so on, till it was a messy-looking channel, a sort of log jam, with roots and palm-tree tops mixed in, which I thought the tide would float out, and it did afterward, some of it.

Then we went back to where Kamelillo was cooking, squatted on the shore with his bare back turned to the water. He took no interest in Liebchen. He was making a kind of paste of ground roots, called "poi," which wasn't bad, if you rolled a fish in it, and baked it on the coals, and thought about something else. But at that time Liebchen came round the north shore in a roar of foam, bringing her flukes down now and then with a slap to make the harbour ache, and she slapped near a barrel of water over Kamelillo and his fire and his poi. Kamelillo says:

"Why for? She not my whale. You keep her out a my suppa. Why for?"

Kreps was disgusted because Kamelillo didn't like Liebchen. He went and stood on the bank, in the interest of science, and studied the habits of the cetacean, but he got no results. She had no habits, to speak uprightly, only notions. They weren't any use to science. Sometimes she'd flutter with her fins, and twitter her flukes, and sidle off like she was bashful, and then she'd come swooping around enough to make the harbour sizzle, and stick her nose in the bottom and her tail in the air, trembling with her emotions, and then she'd come up and smile at you a rod each way. I judged she meant all right, but she didn't understand her limitations. Her strong hold was the majestic. She appeared to have it fixed she wanted to be kittenish. That was the way it seemed to me. But Kreps studied her mornings and afternoons and into the night, and day after day it went on, and she bothered him. Then he saw he was on the wrong tack, and put his helm about, and he says:

"She is de Ewigweibliche. She is not science. She is boetry. She is de sharm of everlasting feminine," and he heaved a sigh. I says:

"Ewigweibliche!" I says. "Everlasting feminine! What's the use of that?"

I took to studying Liebchen too, and it appeared to me Kreps' idea wasn't useful He was a man to have sentiments naturally. He'd sit out on the end of a log moonlight nights, with his fat face and spectacles shining, and Liebchen would muzzle around with a ten-foot snout like an engine boiler, and a piggy eye; and he'd sing German lullabies; "Du bist wie eine Blume." I didn't think she was like a flower. She was more like an oil tank.

So Kreps would sing to her in the moonlight, but Kamelillo didn't like her. Veronica didn't like her either, and would stand off and cackle at her pointedly. She seemed to think Liebchen carried on improper and had no refinement. Why, I guess from her point of view sea bathing wasn't becoming, and when Liebchen stood on her head in

the water, Veronica used to take to the woods with her feelings pretty rumpled. Kamelillo disliked Veronica on account of her fussiness, and because she had lit on him and scratched him when he wanted to be let alone. He wanted to make Veronica into poi, but I didn't think there was any real nourishment in her; and he wanted to break the log jam and let the whale out, but I told him it was Kreps' jam.

"Ain' harbour belong him," said Kamelillo. "Ain' him slap harbour on me. Thas whale bad un. I show him." He went to Kreps. "I tell you, dam Dutchman," he says, meaning to be soothing and persuasive. "I tell you, we cutta bamboo, harpoon whale. Donnerblissen! Easy!"

"Du animal!" says Kreps. "Mitout perception, mitout soul, mitout delicate!"

"Oh!" says Kamelillo; "girl whale. All right, dam Dutchman, me fren. You break jam. Letta go."

"It iss not of use," said Kreps, and he sighed. "You understand not de yearning, de ideal. Listen! Liebchen, she iss de abstraction, de principle. Aber no. You cannot. De soul iss alone, iss not comprehend."

"All right," says Kamelillo. "You look here. Go see thas girl whale on a bamboo raft. No good sit on log all night, sing hoohoo song."

Kreps was taken with that notion. "So, my friend?" he says.

"You teach her like missionary teach Kanaka girl," says Kamelillo, getting interested. "You teach her to she wear petticoat, no stan' on her head. You teach her go Sunday school."

I says, "Look out, Kreps. That whale'll drown you. She's got no culture."

But Kreps was calm. "I vill approach Liebchen more near," he says. "It iss time to advance. I vill go mit Kamelillo, my friend."

Kamelillo spent the morning making a bamboo raft, and in the afternoon they put out. Liebchen was over by the harbour entrance, lying low in the water and maybe asleep. Kamelillo had a bamboo pole in his hand to pole the raft with, but he had shod it with his harpoon head. They drew alongside, and Kreps was facing front, with his back to Kamelillo. He lifted his oar to slap the water, and Kamelillo drew off, and cast the harpoon. Liebchen, she came out of her maiden fancies. She acted plain whale. That's a way of acting which calls for respect, but it's not romantic. She slapped the bamboo raft, and there was no such thing. She swallowed the harbour and spit it out. She whooped and danced and teetered. She let out all her primeval feelings. She put on no airs, and she made no pretences. She turned everything she could find into scrambled eggs, and played the "Marseillaise" on her blow-hole. She did herself up into knots to break whalebone, and untied them like a pop of a cork. She was no

more female than she was science. She was wrath and earthquakes and the day of judgment. She scooped out the bottom of the harbour and laid it on top, and turned somersets through the middle of chaos. Veronica took to the woods. I ran along the north shore, thinking they were both scrambled, but I found Kamelillo pulling Kreps through the shallows by his collar, and shaking the water out of his eyes, and not seeming to be disturbed. But Kreps took off his spectacles and wiped them, and he says:

"Ach, Liebchen!" he says. "She iss too much."

"Thas whale!" says Kamelillo. "Thas all right!"

"Liebchen iss too much of her," says Kreps very dignified, and stalked to the camp.

"Thas whale!" says Kamelillo. "Thas all right!"

He chopped the jam that afternoon, and it floated out in the night or early morning with the ebb. We went to the bank when the tide was in again to watch Liebchen go out. Kreps was pretty tearful.

"Aber," he says, "she iss too much of her."

She came feeling her way through the channel with her snout under water. Kamelillo's bamboo stuck out of her fat side six feet or more. Veronica cackled at her, and her feathers stood up, so that you could see she thought Liebchen was no lady. Liebchen passed close beneath us. Seemed like she felt mortified. Kreps broke down, but Kamelillo was gay.

"Dam hen!" he says, and grabbed Veronica with both hands. "Go too!" and he flung her at Liebchen, and she went through the air squawking and fluttering. She lit on Liebchen's slippery back, and she slid till she struck the bamboo, and roosted. If she had had time to think she might have flopped ashore, but she was flustered, and Liebchen got out of the channel and steered into the Pacific. Veronica squawked a few times, and no more. The sea was quiet. The two moved off, going eastward very slow. Kamelillo went back to his camp fire and made poi, but Kreps and I watched, expecting that Liebchen would go under and Veronica be lost. But they kept on till there was only a black spot near the edge of the sky.

It came on afternoon. The tide was out, and we lay about. There was not enough wind to flutter the signal on the bluffs, which was Kreps' red shirt, and hung there to entertain any one that might come by. Kamelillo suddenly sat up. "Hear im?" he says.

There was a great noise over in the channel out of sight, a kind of splashing, thumping, and blowing, and the waves rolled into the harbour. We ran along the shore and came to the bluffs. There was Liebchen! She appeared to have grounded in the channel, trying to get in quick at low tide. But there were two harpoons, more than the

bamboo, sticking in her very deep, and the lines were hitched to a longboat, the longboat coming inshore now full of men. Veronica squatting on the thwart of the same, comfortable and dignified.

Kamelillo says, "Whale ain't got sense, thas whale!" And Kreps says, "Ach, Liebchen!"

She struck her last flurry, and filled the air with spray. The longboat held off, seeing she was likely to stay there and needed all the room. After a while she grew quiet. A few motions of her flukes, and that was all. The longboat came in, and we slid down the bluffs. The man in the stern says, "That your hen?"

I said I was acquainted with her.

"Oh! Maybe that's your whale?"

"Ach, Liebchen!" says Kreps.

Kamelillo waded in, and looked at the harpoons, and shook his head, for he knew the laws and rights of the trade.

"No," he says. "Thas your whale."

"Been cast up, have ye?" says the steersman, looking around. "We struck that whale ten miles out. We comes up quiet, and I see that bamboo sticking in her, with that hen squatting on it. 'Queer!' says I. And just as Billy here was letting her have it, the hen gives a squawk and comes flopping aboard; and Billy lets her have it, and Dick here lets her have it, and she goes plumb down sudden. Then up she comes and starts, like she was going to see her Ma and knew her own mind, and up this channel she comes, and runs aground foolish. I never see a whale act so foolish. Thought she might be a friend of yours," says he, "meaning no reflections."

I said I was acquainted with her, and Kreps took off his glasses and wiped his eyes.

"She vass of de tenderness, das Zartlichkeit." It made him sad to see Liebchen dead, that was full of sensibility, and Veronica come back with dignity, she being a conventional hen and scornful and cold by nature.

"Ach, Liebchen!" he says; and we went back to gather up his tin cans; and I says:

"Ewigweibliche's a good word, though a Dutch one;" then we came away on the whaler.

But all I owned went down on the _Anaconda_. I got back to San Francisco in course of time, but no richer than when I left Greenough, and ten years or more older.

Kreps was a man very given to sentiments, in particular about "Ewigweibliche," and I never knew a man that kept himself more entertained. He settled down for the time, with Veronica and Kamelillo for his family, in a fine house in the upper town of San Francisco. Kamelillo used to cook unlikely things which Kreps and Veronica ate peaceable between them. Kreps was well-to-do, and he seemed cut out for a happy life. Any kind of cooking suited him. The whole world grew knowledge for him to collect. He could suck sentiment out of a hard-boiled egg. But I went to live with Stevey Todd where the cooking was better, and loafed about the streets and docks, wondering what I'd do next. I never knew what became of Kreps after we left San Francisco.

CHAPTER VIII.

SADLER IN SALERATUS. THE GREEN DRAGON PAGODA. THE NARRATIVE GOES ON.

One day I was by the docks, where some people were busy and some were like me, loafing or looking for a berth; and I came on a neat-looking, three-masted ship, named the _Good Sister_, which appeared to me a kindly name. She was being overhauled by the carpenters. I asked one of them, "Where's the captain?"

"She ain't got any," he says. "It's the owners are doing it."

"Maybe you'll remark," I says, "who they happen to be."

"Shan and Sadler of Saleratus," he says.

"I believe you're a liar," I says, surprised at the name.

"Which there's a little tallow-faced runt in perspective," he says, climbing down the stays, "that I can lick," he says, being misled by my size. And when that was over, I started for Saleratus.

It was a town to the south, down near the coast. That's not its name now, because it's reformed and doesn't like to remember the days before it was regenerated. At that time some of it was Mexican, and more of it was Chinese, and some of it wasn't connected with anything but perdition.

Shan and Sadler did a mixed mercantile business, and they seemed to be prosperous people, but I take it Fu Shan mainly carried on the business, and Sadler was the reason why the firm's property was respected and let alone by the Caucasians. There is a big Chinese company in Singapore, called "Shan Brothers," whose name is well known on bills of lading, and Fu Shan was connected with them. But a man wouldn't have thought to find Sadler a partner in banking, mercantile, and shipping business, with a Chinaman. He'd been the

wildest of us all in the _Hebe Maitland_ days, and always acted youthful for his years. There were two things in him that never could get to keep the peace with each other, his conscience and his sporting instinct. Yet he was a capable man, and forceful, and I judge he could do 'most anything he set his hand to.

He and Fu Shan lived just outside the town of Saleratus in two ornamented and expensive houses, side by side, on a hill that was bare and mostly sand banks, and that hung over the creek which ran past the town into the bay. Sadler lived alone with Irish, but Fu Shan was domestic. He was a pleasant Oriental with a mild, squeaking voice, and had more porcelain jars than you would think a body would need, and fat yellow cheeks, and a queue down to his knees. He wore cream-coloured silk, and was a picture of calmness and culture. Irish hadn't changed, but Sadler was looking older and more melancholy, though I judged that some of the lines on his face, that simulated care, came from the kind of life folks led in Saleratus to avoid monotony. We spoke of Craney among others, but Sadler knew no more of Craney than I did. Likely he was still in Corazon.

We were sitting one evening on Sadler's porch, that looked over the creek, waiting for supper. Fu Shan was there, and Sadler said Saleratus was monotonous. Yet there were going on in Saleratus to my knowledge at that moment the following entertainments: three-card monte at the Blue Light Saloon; a cockfight at Pasquarillo's; two alien sheriffs in town looking for horse thieves, and had one corralled on the roof of the courthouse; finally some other fellows were trying to drown a Chinaman in the creek and getting into all kinds of awkwardness on account of there being no water in the creek to speak of, and other Chinamen throwing stones. But Sadler said it was monotonous.

"I don't get no satisfaction out of it,"

Over the top of the town you could catch the sunset on the sea, and the smoke of the chimneys rose up between. There were red roses all over the pillars and eaves of the porch. Seemed to me it was a good enough place. Fu Shan smoked scented and sugared tobacco in a porcelain pipe with an ivory stem. The fellows down by the creek ran away, feeling pretty good and cracking their revolvers in the air, and the Chinamen got bunched about their injured countryman.

"Have no water in cleek," says Fu Shan, aristocratic and peaceful. "Dlied up."

"Dried up. Played out," says Sadler, not understanding him. "Fu Shan's a dry-rotted Asiatic. Doesn't anything make any difference to him. Got any nerves? Not one. Got any seethin' emotions? Not a seeth. He's a wornout race in the numbness of decrepitude."

Fu Shan chuckled.

"But me, I'm different," says Sadler, "The uselessness of things

bothers me. Look at 'em. I been in Saleratus five years, partner with Fu Shan. Sometimes I had a good time. Where is it now? You laugh, or you sigh. Same amount of wind, nothing left either way.

What's the use?
You chew tobacco and spit out the juice.
What's the use?

If there's anybody with a destiny that's got any assets at all, and he wants to swap even, bring him along. Look at this town! Is it any sort of a town? No honesty, for there ain't a man in it that can shuffle a pack without stackin' it. No ability, for there ain't more'n one or two can stack it real well. No seriousness, for they start in to drown a Chinaman in a dry creek, and they cut away as happy as if they'd succeeded. I sits up here on my porch, and I says, 'What is it but a dream? Fu Shan,' I says, 'this here life's a shadow!' Then that forsaken, conceited, blank heathen, he says one of his ancestors discovered the same three thousand years ago. But, he says, another ancestor, pretty near as distinguished, he discovered that, if you put enough curry on your rice, it gives things an appearance of reality. Which, says he, they discovered the uselessness of things in Asia so long ago they've forgot when, and then they discovered the uselessness of the discovery. They discovered gunpowder, he says, long before we did, but they use it for fireworks in the interests of irony. They've forgotten more'n we ever knew, says he, the stuck-up little cast-eyed pig. Go on! I'm disgusted. Haven't I put on curry till it give me a furred mouth and dyspepsia of the soul? What's the use?"

Fu Shan chuckled again.

"What's the use?" says Sadler. "Things happen, but they don't mean anything by it. You hustle around the circle. You might as well have sat down on the circumference. Maybe the trouble is with me, maybe it's Saleratus. One of us is played out!"

Fu Shan took the ivory pipestem from his mouth, and spoke placid and squeaking. "My got blother have joss house by Langoon. Velly good joss house, velly good ploperty. Tlee hundred Buddha joss and gleen dlagons. My ancestors make him. Gleen dlagon joss house. Velly good."

"My! You'd think he's an idjit to hear him," says Sadler, and looked at Fu Shan, admiring. "But he ain't, not really."

Fu Shan chuckled a third time.

He took no more stock in the happiness of his countrymen than Sadler did in the morals of his. They seemed to be a profitable combination, but I didn't make out to understand Sadler, though I went as far as to see that he had a variegated way of putting it.

Then I told him I wanted a first mate's berth on the _Good Sister_, supposing he was willing, either on account of old times

or because he might happen to be convinced I was good enough for it. I told him the experiences I'd had. What had happened to the _Helen Mar_ I told him, and about the Mituas business, and the loss of the _Anaconda_, and even about Kreps and Liebchen.

"My! My! Tommy," he says, after the last. "That's a lyric poem," he says, referring to Kreps and Liebchen.

But he said nothing then about the _Good Sister_, and I decided to hang around till he did, and one day he brought me a bundle of papers.

"Here's your papers, Tommy," he says.

"Which?" I says.

"Captain's articles for Tommy Buckingham. Sign 'em," he says, "and don't be monotonous," and I was that scared I signed my name so it looked like a rail fence. I contracted to be master of the ship _Good Sister_, the same to go to Hong-Kong Manila, Singapore, and return.

"You go up to 'Frisco and 'list the crew," he says. "I'm coming myself by-and-by to look 'em over."

It was my first ship, and long ago, but the pride of it sticks out of me yet.

I went back to 'Frisco and hired Stevey Todd for cook, and I recollect taking for ship's carpenter the man that called me a "tallow little runt," which he got misled, there, and he went by the name of "Mitchigan." I took Kamelillo too, who wanted to go to sea again, but Kreps stayed where he was.

On the day the _Good Sister_ sailed, Sadler came aboard with a valise in his hand, and after him, carrying a valise, was Irish, and after Irish was an old Burmese servant of Fu Shan's that I used to see sweeping the porch, whose name was Maya Dala.

"I'm going along," says Sadler, and Irish says, "Soime here." But neither of them said what for, and I thought maybe Sadler was thinking he'd see me safe through the first trip, or maybe it occurred to him to go and take a look at Asia. How should I know?

We went through the Golden Gate that afternoon, and we sat that night in the cabin, while Maya Dala and Irish cleared the table. The oil lamp swung overhead with the lift and fall of the ship, and Sadler spread himself six feet and more on the cabin lounge, and unloaded his mind.

"You remember what Fu Shan said of his brother's joss house?" he says. "It's this way. Why, Fu Shan had a father once, named Lo Tsin Shan, and he was a sort of mandarin family in China. He went to

Singapore and started in the tea business. He had a large hard head. He went into a lot of different enterprises, and cut a considerable swath. He died and left ten or twelve sons, who scattered to look after his enterprises. That's how Fu Shan came to Saleratus six years ago. Fu Shan was always some stuck on his own intellect, and at that time he thought he could play cards, but he couldn't. I cleared him out of two hundred and fifty one night, and we went into partnership, but that's neither here nor there. Now, Lo Tsin Shan appears to have been a little fishy as to his feelings, but he had brains. Fu Shan's opinion is reverential, and he don't admit the fish. Lo Tsin had an agency at Calcutta, and Burmah lies on the way, but it wasn't commercial in those days. Now, in Burmah there's a navigable river that runs the length of the country, and all along it are cities full of temples, some of 'em deserted, and some of 'em lively. One of the best is at Rangoon on a hill, and it's called the Shway Dagohn Pagoda. There's a lot of relics in it, and smaller temples around, and strings of pilgrims coming from as far as Ceylon and China. Remarkable holy place. Old Lo Tsin, he drops down there one day and looks around. His fishy feelin's got interested, and he says to himself, 'Guess I'll come into this.' He went sailin' up the river till he found a king somewhere, who appeared to own the whole country. This one's pastime was miscellaneous murder, but his taste for tea was cultured and accurate. Then Lo Tsin got down on the floor and kowtowed to this king for an hour and a half, the way it comes natural if you have the right kind of clothes. Then he bought a temple of him. It stands at the foot of the south stairway of the Shway Dagohn. Fu Shan ain't sure what the old man's idea was, whether it was pure business or not. Anyway he worked up the reputation of the temple, till there was none in the place to equal it, except the Shway Dagohn, which he didn't pretend to compete with. He advertised it on his tea. 'Shan Brothers' have a brand still called 'Green Dragon Pagoda Tea.' There wasn't no real doubt but the income of the temple was large, and yet it didn't appear at Lo Tsin's death that he'd ever drawn anything out of it. The whole thing was gold-leafed from top to bottom, and full of bronze and lacquer statues, and two green dragons at the gate, and ministerin' angels know what besides. Maybe Fu Shan's information ain't complete on that point, but this was a fact, that Lo Tsin, by the will he made, instead of going back to his ancestral cemetery in China, he had himself carried up from Singapore and buried in that same temple; and there he is under the stone floor in the temple of the Green Dragon, but that's not to the point. Now, when they came to split up his enterprises among his sons, one of 'em took the temple for a living. His name was Lum Shan. But Fu Shan says, Lum would rather come over to America and go into business in Saleratus. Lum Shan don't like his temple, but I don't know why. Well, then, I says, 'Speak up, Fu Shan. Don't be bashful, Asia. If you've got a medicine for the hopeless, let it come, Asia. What's five thousand years got to say to a man with an absolute constitution, a stomach voracious and untroubled, who looks around him and sees no utility anywhere? Ebb and flow, work and eat, born and dead, rain and shine, things swashin' around, a heave this way and then that. You write a figure on the board and wipe it out. What's the use? Speak up, Asia, but don't recommend no more curry.'

’Hi! Hi!’ says Fu Shan, the little yeller idjit! ’My got blother have joss house by Langoon. All light. He tlade. You go lun joss house by Langoon. Vely good ploperty.’ That’s what he said. Why not? That’s the way I looked at it."

He paused and blew smoke. Maya Dala and Irish were gone. I asked, "Are you learning Burmese off Maya Dala?" and he nodded.

"Now," I says, "what I don’t see is this temple business. Where was the profit? Don’t temples belong to the priests?"

"Seems not always," he says. "They’re a kind of monks, anyway. It’s where old Lo Tsin Shan was original to begin with and mysterious afterward. Suppose a Siamese prince brings a pound of gold leaf to gild things with, and some Ceylon pilgrims leave a few dozen little bronze images with a ruby in each eye. They’ve ’acquired merit,’ so they say. It goes to their credit on some celestial record. Their next existence will be the better to that extent anyway, now. Suppose the temple’s gilded all over, and lumber rooms packed to the roof with bronze images already. Do they care what becomes of these things? Don’t seem to. Why should they? They’re credited on one ledger. You credit the same to the business on another. Economic, ain’t it? That was the old man’s perception, to begin with. But afterwards,--maybe his joss house got to be a hobby with him. Oh, I don’t know! Nor I don’t care. Fu Shan says it’s good property. What he says is generally so. Profits! I don’t care about profits. What good would they do me? I’m going to run that temple if it ain’t too monotonous."

That was the limit of Sadler’s knowledge of this thing. Maya Dala remembered the Shway Dagohn, but as to the other pagodas and monasteries,--there were many--he didn’t know--he thought they belonged to the monks, or to the caretakers, or to no one at all, or maybe the government. What became of the offerings? He thought they were kept in the pagodas. Sometimes they were sold? It might be so. He thought it made no difference, for it was taught in the monastery schools, that the "Giver acquires merit only by his action and the spirit of his giving, wherefore are the merits of the poor and rich equal." Why should they care what became of their gifts? From Maya Dala’s talk one seemed to catch a glimpse of the idea, which occurred to old Lo Tsin Shan, that fishy Oriental, one day forty years before, and sent him up the river to interview King Tharawady on his gold-lacquer and mosaic throne. Yet he had let the profits lie there, if there were any, maybe thinking all along of the handsome tomb he was putting up for himself, when his time came. You couldn’t guess all his Mongolian thoughts, nor those of his son, Fu Shan, of whom Sadler asked medicine for a dyspeptic soul. Fu Shan said, "Go lun joss house by Langoon." Sadler didn’t seem to care about the business part of it either, though it looked interesting. He only wanted the medicine.

Days and nights we talked it over, and got no further than that, and drew nearer the East. The East is a muddy sea with no bottom, and it swallows a man like a fog bank swallows a ship.

Sadler made some verses that he called his "Prayer;"--"Sadler's prayer," and he told me them one wet day, when a half gale was blowing, and he sat smoking with his feet hitched over the rail. He appeared to be trying to get a bead on infinity across the point of his shoe. It ran this way, beginning, "Lord God that o'erulest":

"Lord God that o'er-rulest
The waters, and coolest
The face of the foolish
With the touch of thy death,
I, Sadler, a Yankee,
Lean, leathery, lanky,
Red-livered and cranky,
And weary of breath,

"That hain't no theology
But a sort of doxology,
Here's my apology,
Maker of me,
Here where I'm sittin',
Smooth as a kitten,
Smokin' and spittin'
Into the sea.

"The storm winds come sweepin',
Come widowed and weepin',
Come rippin' and reapin',
The wheat of the loam,
And some says, it's sport, boys,
It's timbrels and hautboys,
And some is the sort, boys,
That's sorry he come.

"Lord God of the motions
Of lumberin' oceans,
There's some of your notions
Is handsome and free,
But what in the brewin'
And sizzlin,' and stewin'
Did you think you was doin'
The time you done me?

"Evil and good
Did ye squirt in my blood?
I stand where I stood
When my runnin' began;
And the start and the goal
Were the same in my soul,
And the damnable whole
Was entitled a man.

"Lord God that o'er-gazest

The waste and wet places,
The faint foolish faces
Turned upward to Thee,
Though Thy sight goeth far
O’er our rabble and war
Yet remember we are
The drift of Thy sea."

Sadler left the _Good Sister_ at Singapore, and disappeared.

He dropped out of sight. Afterward his name went from the letter heads of "Sadler and Shan." They read, "Shan Brothers, Saleratus, Cal. Fu Shan--Lum Shan."

He was a singular man was Sadler. He held the opinion that this life was an idea that occurred to somebody, who was tired of it and would like to get it off his mind. I took him for one that had got too much conscience, or too much restlessness, one of the two, and between them they gave him dyspepsia of the soul. Sometimes that dyspepsia took him bad, and when he had one of those spells he’d light out into poetry scandalous. Some folks are built that way, some not. J. R. Craney, for instance, he was a romantic man, and gifted according to his own line, and had airy notions ahead of him that he pretty near caught up to; but as to metres, he couldn’t tell metres from cord-wood. Yet the first time I saw him again, after leaving him at Corazon, he heaved some at me, but he didn’t know it was poetry. It was some years later. I sailed the _Good Sister_ quite a time, and did pretty well by her.

CHAPTER IX.

KING JULIUS.

It was back in San Francisco and several years after, and I was master of the _Good Sister_ still, but not feeling agreeable at the time, because Fu Shan and the agent at ’Frisco kept me sitting around collecting barnacles. They didn’t seem to know what they wanted me to do with her. I guess the business of Sadler and Shan didn’t prosper well for a while after Sadler left, on account of sportive Caucasians.

I was leaning over the rail one day, looking across the wharf, and I saw J. R. Craney come strolling down with one hand in his pocket and the other pulling a chin beard. He hadn’t changed so much, except that he looked older and had a chin beard and wore a long black coat and plush vest. He looked at the _Good Sister_, and he looked at me, and neither of us said anything for a long time, and his business eye was absent-minded and calm, and the blind one pale and dead-looking. Then I says:

"Why don’t you get a glass eye, Craney?" and he says, "I wished you’d call me J. R. Phipp. What you doing with that there ship?" which was a promising rhyme, but he didn’t know he’d done it. I judged his family name had been collecting barnacles, till it wasn’t worth cleaning maybe, or maybe he was a fugitive or exile from Corazon, or maybe he’d speculated in matrimony, and was fleeing from hot water, or maybe kettles, or maybe he’d assassinated his great aunt’s second cousin’s husband, which was no business of mine, any of it.

"Look here," I says, not feeling agreeable. "Here’s my programme. You go up to 22 Market Street, and ask the agent. Then he’ll say he don’t know. Then you’ll tell him he’s a three-cornered idiot, because you’ll admire the truth, and come back and we’ll have a drink."

"All right," he says, absent-minded and calm, and went off up Market Street. By-and-by the agent came down with Craney floating behind.

"This is Mr. J. R. Phipp," says the agent, "who has chartered the _Good Sister_. Get her ready. Mr. Phipp will superintend cargo himself and sail with you."

That was the way it happened. Craney spent days going round the stores in the city and buying everything that took his eyes. He bought house-furnishings and pictures, toys, horns, drums, cases of tobacco and spirits, glass ornaments and plaster statues, crockery and cutlery, guns, clothes, neckties, and silk handkerchiefs, and cheap jewelry. He’d go in and ask for a drygoods box. Then he’d potter around the shop till the box was full. He’d buy out a show case of goods, and maybe he’d buy the show case. He bought barrels full of old magazines and books on theology and law, and a cord or two of ten-cent novels, and some poetry that was handy, and three encyclopaedias, and two or three kinds of dogs, and a basket phaeton with green wheels, and a printing press, and a stereopticon. The agent says to me:

"He has a scheme for trading in the South Pacific. He’s a lunatic, and he’s paid for six months. Send me news when you get a chance, and come back by Honolulu for directions. He’s a lunatic," he says, "and you’d better lose him somewhere and get a commission on the time saved."

Then he hurried off the way you’d think he was a man with energy, instead of one that would sit still and let the weeds grow in his hair. But Craney went on buying chandeliers and chess-boards and clocks and women’s things, such as dresses and ostrich-feathers hats, and baby carriages, and parasols, and an allotment of assorted dinner-bells, and one side of a drug store. I don’t know all there was in his cases, only I judged there wasn’t any monotony. I says:

"Maybe now you might be done."

He came aboard and looked thoughtful. Then he felt in his pocket and pulled out a bunch of knitting needles, and looked thoughtful.

"Well," he says. "I rather wanted to look up some front porches, ready made, with door-knockers, but I didn't get to it. It's just as well."

We dropped out of the Gate with the tide on a Saturday night, and stood away to the southwest.

Craney was always a talkative man, liking to open out his point of view. At first I thought he'd gone lunatic of late, and then again when he showed me his point of view, I found he hadn't changed so much, as got more so.

Many nights we sat on deck in the moonlight and with a light breeze pushing in the sails, for the weather in the main was steady, and he'd smoke a fat cigar, and look at the little shining clouds. He'd talk and speculate, sometimes shrewd, and then again it was like a matter of adding a shipload of pirates to the signs of the zodiac, and getting the New Jerusalem for a result. By-and-by, I felt that way myself, as if, supposing you kept on sailing long enough, you might run down an island full of mixed myths and happy angels. Sure he was romantic.

"I'm a romantic man, Tommy," he says. "That's my secret. Yes, sir, Romance, that's me! That's the centre of my circumference, that's the gravity of my orbit, that's the number of my combination. Visions, ideals! I'm a man to get up and look for the beyond. I want to expand! I want to permeate! I want the beyond! Here I am, fifty years old. I gets up and looks out on to the world. I says: 'J. R., this won't do. Is it for nothing that you're a man of romance? Is it for nothing that you long to permeate, to expand? The soul of man' I says, 'is airy; it's full of draughts. Your soul, J. R., flaps like a tent,' I says, 'in the breezes of dawn. The world is round. Time is fleeting. Is man an ox? No. Is he a patent inkstand? No. Was he created to occupy a house and fit his head to a hat? No. Then why delay? Why smother your longings?' I says; 'J. R., this won't do. This ain't your destiny. Rise! Be winged! Chase the ideal! Get on the vastness! Seek and find!' But what? I says, 'Fame, fortune, a vocation that's worthy of you.' Where? I says, 'In the beyond.' Then I took a map, Tommy, and looked over the world; I examined the globe; I took stock of the earth, and compared lands, seas, climates. The likeliest-looking place appeared to be the South Pacific Ocean. Why? It appeared to be, in general, beyond. It was the biggest thing on the map. It was tropical. Palm-trees, spicy odours, corals, pearls. 'All right,' I says: 'J. R., it wouldn't take much to be a millionaire in those unpolluted regions. You'd be a potentate. You'd wear picturesque clothes, and lie on poppies and lotuses. You'd be a Solomon to those guileless nations. You'd instruct their ignorance and preserve their morals. You'd lead their armies to victory on account of your natural gifts. You'd have your birthdays celebrated with torch-light processions. You'd be a luxurious patriot.' Now

that’s a pleasant way of looking at it. But it seemed to me the likeliest thing was to go out as a trader. Now as to trading. Sitting on a stool and figuring discounts is business, and trading cheese-cloth for parrots is business too. A horse is an animal, and so’s a potato-bug. But I take it where society is loose and business isn’t a system, there’s always chance for a man with natural gifts. But you’re going to ask me: What for is all this mixture I’ve got aboard? If some of it’s tradable, you’d say, there must be a deal of it isn’t. And I ask you back, Tommy: Take it in general, haven’t I got a mixture that represents civilisation? Did you ever see a ship that had more commodious, miscellaneous, and sufficient civilisation in her than this? I’m taking out civilisation. Maybe I’m calculating on a boom. Now, the secret of a boom is to spread out as far as you can reach, and then flap. That’s business. When you’ve got people’s attention, you can settle down and make your bargains. Mind you," says Craney, turning on me an eye that was cold and calm--"mind you, I don’t say that’s what I’m going to do, nor I don’t say what I’m calculating to trade for. Maybe I have an idea, and maybe I haven’t."

I says, "Course you have."

"You think so?" he says. "It’s no more than reasonable. But look at all this now"--with one thumb in the armhole of his vest and waving his cigar with the other hand toward the moon and sea--"look at this here hemisphere. It’s big and still. The kinks and creases of me are smoothing out. I’m expanding, permeating. I look out. I see those there shining waves. I says to myself, ’J. R., as a romantic man, you may be said to be getting there.’"

He used to read some in the daytime, but mostly he’d smoke and meditate and pull his chin beard, sitting on deck in a red plush-covered easy-chair, with his feet on the rail. One time he had a volume of poetry in his hand, turning over the leaves.

"Some of it appears to be sawed down smooth one side," he says, "and left ragged on the other, and some of it’s ragged both sides."

Then he read a bit of it aloud, but it didn’t go right, for sometimes he’d trot, as you might say, when he ought to have galloped, and sometimes he’d gallop when he ought to have trotted, and sometimes he’d come along at a mixed gait. As a rule, he bumped.

He was no hand at poetry. Nor was he romantic to look at, but thin, and sinewy, and one-eyed, and some dried up, clean shaven except for a wisp of greyish whisker on his chin, and always neatly dressed now. When he’d laugh to himself, the wrinkles would spread around his eyes, one blind, and the other calm and calculating, and absent-minded. He’d sit with his cigar tilted up in one corner of his mouth, and his hat tilted forward, and whittle sticks. He’d talk with anybody, but mostly with me and Kamelillo, whom he appeared to be asking for information. Kamelillo knew island dialects about the same as he did English, but wasn’t much for conversation. Craney came one day with a bundle of charts, and he collected me and Kamelillo in a

corner and spread his charts on the deck. They were old charts.

"Now," he says, "here is the lines of trade."

He had the regular routes all marked on his charts.

"There appears to be some vacant spaces," he says. And there did. "And here's about the biggest!" And it was. "There don't seem to be any island there, but here's a name, 'Lua,' only you can't tell what it belongs to." No more you could. The name appeared to be dropped down there so that section of the Pacific wouldn't look so lonely. I brought out the ship's chart, but it didn't give any name, only two or three islands sorted around where Craney's chart said "Lua." It looked as if you might find one of them, and then again you might not.

"Ever been on any of 'em?" he asked. I hadn't and Kamelillo didn't know, but looked as if he might have swallowed one without remembering it.

"Nor I," says Craney, "but I know there's likely to be natives when the islands are sizable."

"These might be only coral circles," I says.

"Well, I guess we'll go and look at 'Lua,' anyway," he says. "A man don't put 'Lua' on a map without he's got some idea."

It was nearly two months from the day we left the coast of the States when we came to the edge of the letter "L," as according to Craney's chart, and we sailed along the bottom of it and around the curve of "U," and up the inside on the right, where the ship's chart had an island, but we missed it, if it was there. Then we came to the top of the right leg of "U," where there might be an island on Craney's chart, except that it looked more like part of the letter. Craney says:

"Try 'A.'"

We cut across into "A." It was in the curve of the twist at the end of the "A" that we sighted land at last. The ship's chart had an island in the neighbourhood, but somewhat to the north. Likely Craney's notion of coasting the edge of the letters was as good as any. I never claimed the ship's chart was a good one, for it wasn't. I only told him I'd rather sail by the advertisements in a newspaper than by his.

There was a reef at the north end of the island, and we ran south down the coast some miles to where it fell away to the southwest, and dropped anchor at night in a bay with a white beach and a long row of huts back from it under the trees. A bunch of natives ran down and stood looking at us. Some of them swam out a little, or paddled on a log, and then went back. There was a splashing and calling all night, and fires shining on the beach. Kamelillo thought he'd been there

before, but he didn’t remember when; but if he had, it stuck in his mind, there was some trouble connected with it, and with one he called a "bad-lot chief"; but I told Craney that Kamelillo had seen too many islands and too much strong drink in his career, and he might be thinking of something that happened in New Zealand.

In the morning Craney took Kamelillo and went ashore. I saw the natives gathered around him. They all went up the beach and disappeared, and the boat came back with word from Craney that he and Kamelillo were going inland and wouldn’t be back before night. I didn’t think he ought to go off careless like that; but they came back safely about seven o’clock, only Craney seemed to be thoughtful and not talkative. He said there was a business opening there, and he guessed he’d speculate; and he sat on deck in his red plush chair till past twelve, smoking fat cigars and staring at the shore. The next day he had up three or four cases from the hold. There was a crowd waiting for him on the beach, and I saw him tying the boxes on poles, and some of the barbarians shouldered the poles, and they all went off in procession. I didn’t ask him when he’d come back, and he didn’t come for near a week. Only every day there would be a native come down and dance around in the shallow to attract attention, or maybe swim out to the ship with a bit of paper in his mouth. And the paper would read: "O. K. Business progressing. Yours, J. R." or; "I’m permeating. Yours, Julius R." So I judged it was a peaceful island, and likely Craney had found something worth trading for. We went ashore every day, but not inland. We were satisfied to stay on the beach, and to watch the naked little children dive in the surf, and to play tag with the population.

But one day I followed a path a mile inland, and climbed a hill and saw an open valley to the south with several hundred palm-leaf huts, and farther up was more open country and some hills beyond thickly wooded. I judged the island was twenty miles north and south, but couldn’t see how far it went westward, and coming back, found a note for me: "O. K. I never see folks so open to conviction. Yours, J. R."

It was Craney’s business, and not mine. I thought to myself, sometimes these men you’d think lunatic weren’t that way, only they had their point of view. Next day there was another note: "Two of ’em are dead. I guess it’s a good thing. I bought it anyway. Julius R." And while I was thinking it over, and thinking sometimes these men that claimed they’d got a point of view were really lunatic, Craney came back. He must have had three hundred natives following him, and they camped on the beach and seemed to rejoice, for they danced and sang most of the night, while he and I sat on the deck and talked it over,

"This island," says Craney, "is full of politics. I’ll tell you. They had a king lately, and, according to accounts, he was old and fat, and his morals were bad. But he died, and up came five candidates for the place, and their claims to it I didn’t make out, but if it was a question of votes, I gathered the ballot was tolerable corrupt, and if it was inheritance, I took it the late

royalty had so many heirs they were common like anybody else. But everybody was busy, and it looked as if business would be dull for me, and they told me it was no use trying to be neutral. I'd have to back one of 'em. Course, I didn't know. Each of the candidates occupied a corner of the island, and now and then they'd meet in the middle for slaughter. What could I do? Well, I tell you what I did. I hired five messengers and invited the candidates to a congress. I says:

"'Not more'n ten to each party.' And they came.

"Kamelillo's a good enough interpreter, only he's sort of condensed. If a man makes a speech of half an hour, Kamelillo gives a grunt to cover most of it, and then he states what he guesses is the point of the rest. But he did well enough.

"Then I got in the middle of 'em and I argued. I says:

"'Gentlemen, this is a peaceful interview. Pile your weapons.'

"I got 'em piled in a heap and I sat on 'em, and argued, and the candidates argued. They did pretty well, considering only one of 'em had a shirt. He was old, too, and had chicken bones in his hair, and, it was curious, but he knew considerable English, and could cuss skilful in it. The other four were younger, and they appeared a good deal surprised with the way I argued it. I says:

"'Gentlemen, there ain't room in this island for a Civil War. You see it for yourself. Now I'll show you. Each of you five take one spear and one shield, and get into the middle here and fight it out. The rest of us'll watch.'

"I appealed to the fifty followers, and they all agreed that was a good thing. The five candidates were doubtful. The old man said he wasn't any good at that. I says:

"'Venerable, what you want is comfort, not to say luxury, for your declining years. I'll guarantee you that. You stay quiet.' Then I knocked open a box and showed him assorted drygoods, and says, 'What do you say?'

"He thought it looked luxurious, and said he'd think it over. By this time the others were willing to fight, for their followers all agreed it was a good thing.

"I never saw the equal of it, Tom, never! I never saw a dog-fight come up to it for prompt execution. I won't harrow your feelings as mine were harrowed. I won't puncture you with thrills as I was punctured. We buried two of 'em decent. The other two were cut up and played out quite a little. I collected weapons, and I says:

"'Now there are two ways. Either you two can have it out, and when you're through, anything that's left can have it out with me, or I'll buy you as you stand.'

"They looked surprised to see it put that way. They were low in their spirits. They said they didn't want to fight any more that week. I knocked open the boxes and spread the goods, and then they acted avaricious, particularly the old man with the chicken bones. Burying two of 'em was economic. I says:

"'Gentlemen, what's the value you put on your claims? State 'em, and state 'em reasonable."

"I dribbled out gingham dresses, and hair-brushes, and pocket mirrors, and colored prints, and bottles of bay-rum. I never saw folks act happier. I bought up the claims. I scattered what was left of the goods among the crowd. I got on the empty boxes, and I says:

"'Here's your monarch. That's me, Julius the First, and only. If anybody else from now on claims he's a monarch in these regions, he shall be skinned and melted.' And they all cried: 'Hoi! Hoi!' or words to that effect. They were unanimous. Kamelillo said they 'liked it good.'"

Craney was silent a while, and I didn't say much. I didn't know how to get along with monarchs, anyway. The men forward were working by lantern, hauling up stuff from the hold, and piling it on deck to start unloading in the morning.

"I'm going out of trade," he went on. "I'm going into royalty. That's my retinue on the beach. What's more, it's most of the male population, including nobility and masses. I'll show 'em. The old king was a bad lot. I'll be a benevolent monarch. I'll give 'em free schools and a constitution.

"Tommy," he says after a long silence, "you'll be going back to San Francisco, and maybe you'll see some folks that are looking for me, and maybe they'll be hostile. Very good. You come back with 'em and you watch me. You're an old friend of me, Tommy. You're a man capable of expanding. You can get on to large ideas. You can take in vastness. You come back, and I'll make you heir to the throne."

But I didn't hanker for Craney's throne. The last I saw of him for that time was bidding him good-bye on the beach. He appeared to have most of the public to carry up his cargo, and he appeared to be popular. Kamelillo stayed with him as interpreter.

At Honolulu there came two men aboard with a letter from the agent in San Francisco, which agent was irritating on account of slowness, and had weedy-looking hair. But the letter said:

"Put the _Good Sister_ at service of bearers. They have a warrant for Phipp." I says:

"Warrant for Phipp! What for?"

One of them was a sheriff named Breen, a slow, temperate man, and the other a detective named Jessamine, a yellow-bearded one with light open eyes, who seemed a pleasant talker, but to the best of my recollection was one you might call obstinate. They showed me their papers, and these appeared to be correct. Jessamine's papers stated that he represented parties in St. Louis, whose names don't count.

"Warrant!" I says. "What for?"

"Why," says Jessamine, "Phipp isn't his name, as you will see by the warrant;" which was no particular news to me. But I didn't like the job of going back after Craney. I didn't seem to take much interest in parties in St. Louis, but it set me arguing again whether he was a lunatic, or had a point of view. And so, though I thought it might be they were going to be surprised when they came to Lua, I said nothing about that, but fitted up a bit in Honolulu, taking my time, and set sail once more for Lua. We came there in a high wind on a rainy morning, about six weeks since I'd left it.

No one was in sight on the beach at first, but the sky clearing, I went ashore with Breen and Jessamine, and several natives ran out of the huts and across the beach to meet us. I says, "Man, Ship," and pointed inland, at which they seemed to be pleased and set off; and we followed them by a long trail that came at last in the cleared valley, where were long-strung-out villages, leading inland to the open country this side of the wooded hills. By this time we were a procession. We knew when we had arrived, for there appeared a long range of roofs through the stems of a palm grove, and a broad path led to it through bushes covered with red thick-scented flowers. It was King Julius's palace. The front of it was all one piazza, maybe two-hundred feet long and forty deep, with slim bamboo pillars; and men seemed to be still shingling one end of it with layers of plantain leaves. But the king was out in a sort of square to one side, and had about fifty warriors with feathers in their hair, practising spears at a mark. Then he saw us, and then he said something sharp, and the fifty fell into line behind, with spears and shields in disciplined order. They marched very pretty, and came down on us in a way to make a man feel shy. I says, "Which of you is going to arrest him, and how's he going to do it?" Breen says, "You have me!" And Jessamine says: "Let's see."

Then the king halted his company and came on alone, looking calm, with the thumb of one hand in the armhole of his vest, and the other pulling his chin beard. And Jessamine stepped forward and says:

"J. R. Craney, I arrest you for embezzlement." And the king looked him over calm and benevolent. He says, "You don't mean it! Better be careful. Why, the trouble is, the army ain't really disciplined yet. They'd jab you full of holes, when I wasn't looking, if they caught your idea. Better come and have tea. I didn't expect you'd be along for two months yet."

It appeared he calculated on three or four months, and my meeting

Jessamine at Honolulu had cut him short. But I didn't see but he held the cards. Jessamine might arrest till he was blown. The crew of the _Good Sister_ hadn't shipped to be speared by a king's bodyguard, and I didn't care much for parties in St. Louis.

Soon we were eating comfortably, sitting on the big piazza around one of Craney's black walnut tables. The palace seemed to be fitted and furnished so far mainly from the cargo. Each of us had two or three waiters back of his chair, some men, some women. The warriors squatted in line out in front among the flowers. Whenever we were through with a dish, Craney would send the rest of it down to the warriors, and they'd gobble it, and watch for more, with their eyes shining, but very quiet. I recollect there was something that was like a duck, and some canned tomatoes, and a kind of fruit with a yellow rind.

"There's two hundred in my army," says Craney sociably, "in four divisions. This is a special one. Mighty fond of drilling they are. Fact, 'most everybody's in the army. They're softening under discipline, but some of 'em are bloodthirsty yet."

"J. R.," says Jessamine, "I hate to do it. It's a painful duty."
Craney says: "Just so. Say no more. You couldn't be expected to know the law of this state touching the person of the king. Fact is, foreigners ain't allowed to arrest royalty here. Fact, it's a new law. I just passed it the other day. You didn't mean any harm. We'll say no more."

Jessamine looked hurt. "Come now, J. R., it's no use. You're not going to resist the law."

"I'm going to maintain it, Jessamine, maintain it."

"I say, I got the authority of the States of Missouri and California."

"I asks you, what authority they've got here? First place, you want extradition papers. You can't have 'em. I won't give 'em to you. Trouble with you, Jessamine, is you're narrow. You're small, there ain't any vastness about you, Jessamine."

"J. R.," says Jessamine, remonstrating, "this isn't right, and you know it."

"You don't expand, Jessamine," says Craney. "You don't permeate. You ain't got on to large ideas."

Craney here distributed cigars, lit a fat one himself, pushed back from the table, crossed his legs, stuck a thumb in the arm-hole of his plush vest, and went on unfolding his mind.

"It ain't the king's pleasure to leave this island, nor it ain't the ways of monarchs, as I take it, to apologise. But putting aside all that, and supposing you was expanded enough to take that in, I'm

going on to state the way it appears. You says, 'J.R., how'd you come to take the cash of parties that trusted you?' I answers, 'It comes from being romantic.' You ain't romantic, Jessamine? That's too bad. You don't see it. You don't expand to my circumference. You don't permeate my orbit. You don't get on to me. It was this way. I got up and looked out on the world. I says: 'J. R., it's clear you haven't enough cash for your ambitions. But you've got a opportunity. Throw it in. Be bold. If your conscience squirms, let it squirm. If it wriggles, let it wriggle. Take the risk. Expand to large ideas.' I took it. Say, I made parties unwilling investors in me. Now, then, there they are, as delegated in you. Here's me, Julius R., monarch by purchase and election of the sovereign state of Lua. You asks, 'What next?' I says: 'This. I'll pay. I'll settle the claims with interest on investment' But I've got to have time. Pay with what? Now there's the point. I've been investigating the produce of this island, the pearl-fishing, the coral, the hardwood. The pearl-fishing is good. As a business man, I tell you it can be done."

Jessamine shook his head. "I haven't any authority to settle the case. I'm told to go and bring you. I've got to do it. It's a painful duty."

The king smoked a while silently, then said something to his warriors, who got up and marched away around the corner. "Mighty, Jessamine!" he says, "you're slow. Most mulish man I ever saw. Well, let it go. You can't do it. Recollect, attempting the person of the king is a capital crime. That's the law of this land. It's decided and it don't change. We'll drop it."

So nothing more was said of the matter, and we talked agreeably. Whether Craney's account of his motives was accurate I couldn't say. It didn't seem likely he ever expected to settle, when he started, or he took all the chances that he never would. Maybe he cooked up the theory to suit things as they stood. Maybe not. I don't defend him, and I'm not clear where he lied or where he fancied. But it seemed to me if he'd made a long calculation, his luck was standing by him at that point.

When the king left us we went for a walk through the village, talking it over. Breen said they'd better take the offer, and I thought they'd have to, but Jessamine wasn't satisfied. He says:

"We haven't the authority. How do you know we wouldn't get into trouble at home? We've got to take him back. But you see, that isn't the point. The point is, here's where we make a hit. It's professional with me. It's reputation. It's the chance of a lifetime."

I say: "But where's the chance?"

"We'll see. But J. R.'s been the one white man so far. Now we're three to one. If he can usurp a crown, I don't see but what we can get up an insurrection."

The village was a long row of huts built of bamboo and big brown leaves, and stretched up and down the valley. There was a large hut with two doors opposite us, and sitting on mats in front was a fat man with little bones stuck at angles in his grizzled hair. He wore a pink shirt with studs and a pair of carpet slippers, and around his neck a lot of glass pendants from a chandelier, and he looked surly and sleepy. I says:

"You can leave me out. I think you ought to take the offer. If you slip up, the king'll hang you for treason. If he's the government here, he's got a right to say what the law is. I'm going back to the ship. You needn't ask me for backing, for you won't get it."

We stopped beside the fat man, and I asked him if he hadn't been one of the rival candidates, thinking it might be the old one with the chicken bones that spoke English; and he set to work swearing, so I knew it was; and I judged from the style he swore in he'd been intimate one time with seamen, and I judged; too, he felt dissatisfied. He said he was rightly chief of the island, and that man, all of whose grandfathers were low and disgusting, meaning Julius R., was living in his house, and, moreover, had given him only three pink shirts. Jessamine sat down by him, and said nothing, but listened, and I went and found some of the beach natives, and came back with them to the _Good Sister_.

That night passed, and it came the morning of the next day, and I heard nothing from them. I went ashore, but found no one about the huts there but children and a few old women. The old women jabbered at us excitedly.

I took six of the men and started inland through the hot woods, where the green and red parrots screamed overhead. When we came out to look up the valley to the open country, we saw no signs of fighting, nor any one moving about. Through the valley, as we went up it, there was no smoke from the huts, no women bruising nuts and ground roots into meal, no fat man before the hut with two doors sitting on his mats, not a soul in the village.

But coming near the palace we could see all the red flower shrubs were trampled and smashed. Then we came on a dead body by the path; then more bodies, bloody and spitted with spears; and one man, who was wounded, lifted himself, and glared, and dropped again among the red flowers. Through the palm stems we saw the roofs of the palace, and the piazza with the bamboo pillars. The line of the bodyguard was squatted on the piazza, with their spears upright before them. Everything was still.

Then we heard a cry behind us, and looked, and saw Jessamine and Breen, but no others with them, running through the village towards us. They came up to us, and said they had been in the woods hunting for the villagers who had run away, but found none. We sat down not far from the wounded man. Jessamine had his arm in a sling, and he told what had happened, so far as he made it out.

"It was the way I fancied," he says; "J. R. wasn't so solid with his army as he thought, except the bodyguard, but I'd no idea they'd go off like a bunch of fireworks. The old fat one sent messengers around in the afternoon, and at night we went with him over back of that hill, and met a crowd who had a few torches, but it was pretty dark, and I couldn't see how many there were along the hillside. I made them a speech: how J. R. had run away from his land, and was ruling them here when he had no right, and they oughtn't to stand it; but I don't know that the fat one interpreted it. I guess he made a speech of his own. All I know is they went off like gunpowder. Whether all of them yelled for battle and rebellion I don't know; some of them might have been yelling against it. They all yelled, and pretty soon they started hot-foot across the country for the palace, fighting some with each other, so I gathered they disagreed. There are corpses all along between here and the hill, and it was there I caught a cut in the arm. Breen and I agreed to slide out of it. We went and sat on the hillside and watched. Maybe J. R. had word of what was coming. He seemed to be ready for them. I judged the bodyguard met them just above here, and there was a grand mix-up, but we couldn't see well at the distance. It was an awful noise. And suddenly it died out. Not a sound for a while. By-and-by a gang of forty or more ran by us a hundred yards away, and into the woods before we'd decided what to do; and later, after a long time, there was a sort of chanting like a ceremony over here at J. R.'s palace, and this came at intervals all night. This morning we came and found the village empty, and came up a little beyond here, till some one threw a spear past Breen's head, and we went away to look for the villagers. I don't know what J. R. is up to. He appears to be laying low with his wild-cats around him."

While we were speaking there came someone past the bodyguards, and down to meet us, and it was Kamelillo. Kamelillo didn't have much to say, except that the king wanted to see us, but he answered some questions. He thought that in the attack on the palace the other two candidates and the fat one fell to quarrelling, and their followers joined, and it might be the first two had been inclined to stand by the king, only they thought it was time to have some fighting. But they weren't going to put up with the fat one. Instead of having it out then, they had all gone off to different corners of the island, the same as they used to do, and that suddenly. Kamelillo didn't know how it came about, and doubted if the candidates knew either. He said they were a "fool lot," and the king could settle them, give him time to hang the fat one. But it was no use now--"Too damn quick," he said. The women and children had all run to the woods in the beginning. Being asked about King Julius, Kamelillo only grunted, and not having any expression of face, you couldn't gather much from that. But when we came to the piazza, where the bodyguard squatted, what was left of it, with reddened spears, ghastly to make you sick, Kamelillo grunted again and said, "He gone die," and passed in. The guard broke out wailing and chanting, and rocked to and fro, but only a moment, after which they held their spears up stiff, as the king had taught them, and sat still.

Now we followed Kamelillo to a great room, where it seemed the king held audiences and gave out laws and justice. The red plush chair was on a raised platform at the far end, and over and on three sides were heavy red curtains, and glass chandeliers hung from the rafters of the roof, and a row of mattresses covered with carpet was laid in front, maybe so that subjects could prostrate themselves comfortable. But the room was dusky, and still. It seemed to be empty. But we passed up it and stopped, for on the carpeted mattresses before the throne lay Craney, all alone.

His coat and vest were put back, his shirt torn open, and his breastbone split by a spear or hatchet, and it was clear he hadn't long to live.

A ribby chest he had, and a dry, leathery skin. The blood soaked out from under the cloth he held there against it, and ran down the little gullies between the ribs. Jessamine sat down and acted nervous. He says:

"I'm downright sorry for this, J. R.," but Craney didn't seem to hear, but motioned with his hand and says softly:

"You'd better clear out."

Jessamine says, "Now, we can't leave you this way."

But Craney didn't hear and says, "Call in the guard." The spearmen came filing in, barefooted, stepping like cats, and took position on each side, so that you could see it was according to discipline, and maybe they'd done it every day when he'd held a court or something. We slid back, feeling shy of the spears, and J. R. looked pleased, and he says:

"You're narrow, Jessamine. You don't permeate. You don't expand. You don't rise to large--Oh, Jessamine! I'm dying, and I'm sick of your face. Tommy,"--he says, speaking hoarse and low--"you'd better go." His eyes wandered absent-minded to the plush chair with the curtains and chandeliers and the spearmen standing around it, and down the long room, like he was taking his leave of things he'd thought of, and things he'd been fond of, and things he'd hoped for, and things he'd meant to do. He muttered and talked to himself: "I sat there," he said, "and I did the right thing by the people. Gentlemen, these black idjits are friends of mine. If you don't mind, I'd rather you'd go. But you can stay, Tommy, if you want to."

So I stayed until he was gone. When I came away I left the spearmen chanting over him.

That was Julius R. Craney. Why, I don't praise him, nor put blame on him. Kamelillo said he was "old boy all right," but Kamelillo's notions of what was virtuous weren't civilised notions. A man ought to be honest. I've known thieves that were singular human. He was mighty happy when he was a king, was Julius R.

CHAPTER X.

THE KIYI PROPOSITION--SADLER CONCLUDED.

It happened in the year ’84 that I took in sailing orders at Hong-Kong to go round to Rangoon for a cargo of teak wood. It’s a hard wood that’s used in shipbuilding. That was a new port to me, and it wasn’t a port-of-call at all till the English took it. You go some thirty miles up the Rangoon River, which is one of the mouths of the Irrawaddy, which is the main river of Burmah; and the first you see of the town is the Shway Dagohn Pagoda, the gilded cone above the trees. Rangoon had already a good deal that was European about it, hotels and shops, stone blocks of buildings, the custom house, offices of the Indian Empire, and houses of English residents. The gilded pagoda looks over everything from a hill. The crowds in the streets are Eastern, Chinamen, Malays, and Bengalees, and mainly the Burman of the Irrawaddy. I was anchored over against the timber yards. I says to myself:

"Rangoon! Pagoda! Why, Green Dragons and Kid Sadler!" I wondered if he was there to be asked, "How’s business? How’s the dyspeptic soul?" and whether he had an office maybe near the custom house, and exported gold leaf and bronze images of Buddha. I started to find the temple of Green Dragons, and followed a broad street, leading to the right, for nearly a mile. Then it grew wooded on each side. Gateways with carved stone posts and plaster griffins, took the place of shops, and behind them you could see the slanting roofs of the monasteries, and their towers, strung to the top with rows of little roofs. A stream of people moved drowsy in the road, monks in yellow robes with their right shoulders bare, women with embroidered skirts, men with similar skirts, men with tattooed legs, and men in straw hats with dangling brims. There were covered carts looking like sun-bonnets on wheels and pulled by humped-necked oxen. There were little skylarking children, and Chinamen, and black-bearded Hindoos.

Then I saw a stone stairway going up the side of the hill. I went on, staring ahead at the cone that shone in the air, and getting bewildered to see so near by the quantity of dancing statues on the roofs of the temples that crowded the hill, and those acres of tangled-up carving. So I came to the foot of the stairs.

Close to the right was a gateway in a white wall, and on each side was a green lacquer dragon, that had enamelled goggle eyes and a size that called for respect. The gateway led under a row of roofs held up by shiny pillars. Over the wall you could see a gilded cone pagoda with a bell on top.

It looked pretty inside of the gate, with flowers and trees and

little white and gold buildings. A yellow-robed man sat under a roof near the gate with some children squatted around. He wasn't Sadler. He didn't look as if an inquiry for Sadler would start anything going in his mind. There was a faint tinkle of bells, and the far-off mutter of a gong.

Anyway there were green dragons. I went in, thinking of the years gone, of Fu Shan, who used to sit, sucking his porcelain pipe on Sadler's porch, and looking down on the creek where the boys were rowing with his countrymen, and looking down on Saleratus that was a pretty unkempt community, and saying, "Vely good joss house, gleen dlagon joss house by Langoon;" and then of Sadler saying: "Stuck-up little cast-eyed ghost! Speak up, Asia, if you've got any medicine for me."

Farther on another man in a blue robe sat under a tree, with his feet stuck out in front. By the black clay pipe he was smoking, and by his hair that was red enough to keep a man surprised as not harmonious with his robin's-egg blue robe, the same was Irish.

He whooped joyful to see me, and said I'd find Sadler over "beyont the boss pagody."

"Tommy boy," he says anxious, "ye won't be shtirrin' oop the Kid. He ain't been into anything rampageous, nor the women, nor the drink, nor clawin' to do nothin', since we coom, and me gettin' fat with the pacefulness of it. Lave him aisy for the love of God!"

In the cone pagoda there were people praying on the floor, and it was ringed with little bronze Buddhas and big wooden Buddhas, standing, sitting, and lying, that all smiled, three hundred identical smiles. Then I came out beyond to a small temple on a mound, a sort of pointed roof on a circle of lacquer pillars. A yellow-robed man sat on the floor, with right shoulder bare, leaning against a pillar. A woman stood in front of him, talking fast. Three children were playing on the grass. You could look over the wall, and see the shuffling crowd in the streets, and those going up and down the stairway to the Shway Dagohn. The yellow robe was smoking a pipe. Moreover he was Sadler.

The woman stared at me and scuttled away, and I says, "How's business? How's the dyspeptic soul?"

"Business good," he says. "Dyspeptic's took a pill. Sit down, Tommy. Glad to see you." Those were his remarks, and it didn't look as if the East had swallowed him, except that he was remarkable calm, and his head was shaved, and his clothes didn't seem proper on a white man.

Then bit by bit, he unloaded his mind, which appeared full of little things, like a junk shop. He says: "See that woman that left?" he says. "She has four children, all girls, and she's mad over it. Around here, when a woman's going to have a child, she generally puts in a bid at the temple for a boy. Queer, ain't it! Well, that one has

had four girls. Every time she comes around afterwards and lays down the law. Sometimes she brings her man, and they both lay down the law. Well, it's lively! That one on the left," he says, pointing to the children, "that's Nan, proper name Ananda. She's one of their four. She's got the nerve of a horsefly! The chunky one in the middle, his name's Sokai, but I call him Soaker for short. His folks work in the rice fields. The littlest one's Kishatriya, which I call him Kiyi on account of his solemnness. Seemed to me it ought to cheer things up, to call him Kiyi. His folks died of cholera. He keeps meditatin' all the time.

"Business," he says. "Oh! Fu Shan--Lum Shan. Why. Yes! Saleratus!" He seemed to have trouble getting his mind to those long-past things. I says, "Fu Shan introduced you to his brother, didn't he?"

"Why, Fu Shan gave me a letter. You remember that? Well, as I recollect, it turned out this way. Lum Shan, he just says, 'All light,' and lit out. All there was to it. He left me kind of surprised. I thought, 'There must be some poison around here,' but there wasn't. But it don't suit him. Then I looked up the title to the temple. Old Lo Tsin had got it recorded in the English courts in '53, when they annexed the town, and the title appeared to be good. I investigated some more. There were twenty yellow monks teaching school here. There's forty now. I got 'em in. But they appeared to think Lum Shan, or me, was a sort financial manager, that managed affairs mysterious. They said, 'Why should the holy be troubled? All things are one.' I thought they were pretty near right there, but I didn't see any advantage in it. I thought it was an all-round discouragin' statement. It was the oneness of things that was tiresome. I strolled around and thought it over. Then I says: 'Lend me one of them robes.' 'But,' says they, 'it is the garment of the phongyee. You are not a holy one.' 'Think not?' I says. 'Right again. Any kind of a blanket will do.'

"They gave me a blue cotton sheet, and recommended I go and sit three or four weeks in the pagoda, and consider that 'All things are one.' I says, 'All right,' I squatted every day before them bronze or wooden individuals, and remarked to each one some fifty times a day, 'All things are one,' till it seemed to me every one of 'em was thinking that identical thing too, and every one of 'em had the same identical and balmy smile over it. 'Take it on the whole,' I says, 'that's a singular coincidence, ain't it?' After three or four weeks I says, 'All things are one,' and felt about it the same way as they looked. There was no getting away from the amiableness of 'em. Then I says: 'How's this? Is monotony a benefit? Is enterprise a mistake? Is the Caucasian followin' up a blind trail? What's up?' I says.

"Then I went out and strolled around. A lot of yellow monks live over the west wall, and pass the time, meditatin' on selected subjects and teachin' school. Monks, now, are the mildest lot of old ladies out. The institution furnishes two meals a day, and they all go into the city mornings with begging bowls to give people a chance to acquire merit by charity. Then they come back and give away what

they've collected to poverty that's collected at the gate. That way they acquire merit for themselves. Economical, ain't it? Then I saw how old Lo Tsin felt. He admired the economy of it anyway. I guess he admired it all around. He stood pat by his own temple, and then got himself buried there. The thing give him a soft spot on the head.

"Now, they think I'm a sort of an abbot, and folks come in from everywhere to show me a cut finger and discuss their sinfulness, and if Nan's mother ain't mad because the temple keeps puttin' her off with girls, then Kiyi's got the fever and chills, or somethin' else is goin' on. Always something to worry about. But a man can go over to the Pagoda, and tell 'em 'All things are one,' and get three hundred identical opinions to agree with. Cheers you up remarkable. Look at Kiyi! Ain't he great?"

Sadler went on in this way unloading his mind of odds and ends. Down on the slope below Nan was thumping Soaker on the back to make him mind her. She wore a striped cloth and a string of beads for her clothes. Laying down the law appeared to run in her family. Soaker took his thumping in a way that I judged it was a custom between them. Little Kiyi crept up the steps and squatted on the stone floor in front of us. He had a big head, and arms and legs like dry reeds. He sat, solemn and still, while Sadler was unloading his mind, and it seemed to me that Kiyi was mysterious, same as the bronze Buddhas in the cone pagoda.

"He's got it," says Sadler, speaking husky. "Worse'n I did."

"Got what?" I says.

Sadler's face had grown tired, sort of heavy and worn, while he was looking down at Kiyi. "Born with it. He got injected with the extract of misery beforehand," he says. "He was born wishing he wasn't. I know what it is, but he don't know what it is, Kiyi don't. He don't know what's the matter. First thing he saw was the cholera."

All about the gardens there was a tinkle of bells made by the wind blowing them, and a gong kept muttering somewhere. Kiyi rolled over on the edge of Sadler's yellow robe, curled up, and shut his eyes, and went to sleep. He had no clothes but a green loin cloth. His hair was done up in a topknot. Then I looked at Sadler, and then at Kiyi, and then I thought he was the littlest and saddest thing in Asia.

When I was about ready to sail, I took the Shway Dagohn road again, with Stevey Todd, thinking Sadler might have messages to send. It was a windy afternoon. The hot dust was blowing in the road. The yellow old man sat inside the gate alone. There were no children under the trees. He came out of his dream, and motioned to stop us, and mumbled something about "Tha-Thana-Peing," which was the Kid's title in that neighbourhood. Whether it meant "His Solemn High Mightiness," or meant "The Man That Pays the Bills," I didn't know. "No go, no go," mumbles the yellow old man.

"Ain’t you keeping school to-day?" I says.

"Dead," mumbles the yellow old man.

"Who? Not Sadler! No. Tha-Thana!"

"Kishhatriya," he mumbles, "Kiyi," and he fell back into his absent-mindedness. So we went past him to the little temple behind the gilded cone. Most of the monks were sitting around it on the grass, and Irish, with his hair remarkable wild, among them, and against a pillar sat Sadler, bent over Kiyi’s body that was on his knees. One of the yellow robes recited a monotonous chant. Maybe it was a funeral service, or maybe they were going over their law and gospels for the benefit of Sadler. He looked up, and the reciter stopped, and it was all quiet. Sadler says:

"See here, boys, what’s the use? They can’t make an Oriental of me. This ain’t right, Tommy. Now, is it? No, it ain’t right." He looked old and weighted down. He looked as old as a pyramid. "See here," he says, "Tommy, what’s the idea of this?"

Then we backed out of that assembly. Seemed to me it was a proposition a man might as well dodge. Only, I recollect how little Kiyi looked like a wisp of dry hay, and Sadler uncommon large, with his fists on the stone floor on either side, and his head hung over Kiyi, and how the yellow men squatted and said nothing.

Maybe Sadler is studying the "Kiyi Proposition," still, to find out how the three hundred bronze Buddhas can give three hundred cheerful agreements to the statement that "All things are one," when, on the contrary, some things have Kiyi luck and some don’t. I don’t know. The rights and wrongs of this world always seemed to me pretty complicated. There was Julius R. that was slippery and ambitious; there was Sadler that had a worm in his soul; there was Clyde that kept one conscience for argument, and another for the trade; there was Tommy Buckingham who was getting older and troubled about the intentions of things. And yet again there was folks like Kreps and Stevey Todd, say, mild and warm people, and a bit simple, each in his way, and yet they always kept themselves entertained somehow. "All things are one," are they? I couldn’t see it either, no more than Sadler. For this is the Kiyi Proposition. You says: "Here’s a bad job. Who did it?" I says: "I don’t know." You says: "Well, who pays for it?" I says: "Ain’t any doubt about that. It’s Kiyi."

It was quite a parcel of years I sailed the Pacific, ten years, or thereabout, altogether. The time I saw Sadler behind the Green Dragons was my last cruise there. I says to myself:

"Tommy, you ain’t a ’bonny sailor boy’ any more. Why don’t you sail your own ship? Haven’t you got a bank in the West Indies? Why don’t you liquidate on Clyde? Why don’t you quit your foolishness?" and when Stevey Todd and I got back to San Francisco, I left Shan Brothers and the _Good Sister_ for good, and we came east by

railroad to New Orleans.

CHAPTER XI.

THE VOYAGE OF THE "VOODOO".--NARRATIVE CONTINUED.

Monson was the man’s name that I came to deal with in New Orleans. He had a schooner named the _Voodoo_, a coast cruiser that never went further to sea than the Windwards. There was another white man on the crew, but the rest were negroes. Monson was billed already for Martinique and Trinidad, and that was why I dealt with him, and got him cheap for a short trip beyond Tobago.

Stevey Todd set out for the north to find some relatives he thought he had, but found none to his mind, and concluded he was an orphan. But he found a restaurant to his mind in South Street in New York, and there he settled himself and waited for me to come along. It’s a place where seamen generally turn up sooner or later, and I told him I would come there. Monson and I set sail the third of September in the year ’85.

Now, Monson was a man of great size and long yellowish hair and beard, and shy, innocent-looking eyes. It always gave me a start to look up six feet of legs and chest, and end in an expression of face which seemed about to remark that the world was a strange place, and might be wicked. The other white man and the negroes were a bad lot, and given to viciousness, but Monson ruled them with a heavy fist. He hadn’t been three hours away from the river before he was banging a negro with a board, the others looking on and grinning. He was spanking him, in a way. He ran to me with tears in his eyes. "I’ll throw that nigger overboard!" he shouted, dancing about, and shortly after he appeared to have forgotten the matter. I thought I should get along with him, but I thought I’d have to keep cool and calm in dealing with him. He was such a man as it seemed better to be acquainted with in a big open space where there was room for him to explode. He was apt to be either gay or outrageous, and that about any little thing. He was simple and furious and very hearty, and that all made him good company. The negroes looked murderous, and the other white man shifty and dirty, but he was a competent seaman.

Three weeks later we passed Tobago and were looking for Clyde’s little island. We dropped anchor there one evening about eight o’clock. The moon was high and the sea bright. It was sixteen years since I’d seen that shore last, the night I rowed old Clyde up the inlet, and we buried his canvas bags. It was hard won enough by the old man, that money, with twenty years’ dodging South American customs. We’d buried it in the middle of a triangle of three trees. I remembered how black the sea had been, and rough off shore. I remembered the black cruiser with its pennon of smoke. The inlet had

been reedy, and the water there quiet, and the soil we dug in punky and wet.

I sat in the stern of the dingey now and let Monson row, which he did powerfully. His forearm was like a log of wood, the muscles coming out of it in knots. I was glad enough there was no danger to seaward, and wished I could carry Clyde’s money away in a check, instead of the meal bags we had in the dingey.

We rowed along and came to the inlet. There was a lot of marsh grass and deep-growing reeds, and clear water between that stretched away inland. It made a straight line between the water reeds leading up to a triangle of three trees. There was a little white house in the middle of the triangle, with two lit windows.

I says: "Monson! Somebody’s squatted on it!"

"What!" he says.

Somebody was singing in the house. Monson looked around from his rowing, and found it very funny to his mind, for he laughed with a roar, and the singing stopped short.

"Turn into the reeds!" I says, and we crouched there in the boat.

"It’s just where the house is," I says, "or it was. There wasn’t any house then."

Monson shook with laughter though he kept it quiet, and I don’t know what pleased him. It would have pleased me then to see him dead, I was that savage for the people in the house. One spot on a mean little island, and they’d squatted on it! Yet it was plain enough, for the inlet led up to the three trees, which seemed to invite a man to do there whatever he had planned to do.

"Stuff ’em up their chimney," says Monson. "Tip the hut into the creek. That joke’s on them, ain’t it?"

I didn’t see how the joke was on them.

"Why, I never knew an Injy islander to dig a cellar," he says: "They lie on the ground and get ague. Course, they might dig a hole."

The door of the little house was closed, when we came soft along the muddy shore and crept up to the window. There were five men inside, around a table, leaning forward, whispering together and drinking aguardiente. That’s what Kid Sadler on the _Hebe Maitland_ used to call "affectionate water." They were small men, but fierce-looking and black-eyed, and they appeared as if they were talking state secrets, or each explaining his special brand of crime. Monson roared out and struck the door with his fist, and they disappeared. Three of them went under the table.

Monson had to bend his head to enter, and his shaggy hair pressed along the ceiling. He pulled some by their legs from under the table, and one from a bench in a dark corner by the hair, whom he left suddenly, for it was a woman, and the two others he hauled from a closet.

"Bring us some more!" he shouted in Spanish, laughing uproariously. "Aguardiente! Hoorah!"

I don't know, or forget, how he quieted them, but pretty soon we were seven men about the table, and the woman was serving us with "affectionate water." One of them, with the woman, was owner of the house, and the others, it seemed, lived across the island. They had heard Monson's laugh, and afterward, hearing and seeing nothing more, they'd taken it to be ghosts and were afraid. They were fierce-looking little men, but pleasant enough and simple-minded. "Doubtless," they said, "the senores were distinguished persons, who had come on a ship and would buy tobacco." We arranged that the four, who lived across the island, should come back in the morning with their tobacco. So the four went away affectionate with aguardiente, and we were left alone with the fifth. His name was Pedronez and his wife's Lucina. Then I asked how long they'd lived there.

"One year, six months," he says, counting on his fingers.

"Build the house?"

"Si, senor. A noble house! A miracle!"

"Ever dig a hole here?"

"A hole! But why a hole? In the ground of the noble house! Ah, no! By no means!"

Monson roared again, to the fright of Pedronez and Lucina, who flattened herself against the wall. He went out and brought in the spade, and the bags. I guarded the door, and Monson dug where I pointed in the hard trodden earth of the floor. Pedronez and Lucina backed into corners and chattered crazy. They seemed to think the hole was for them, and Monson meant to bury them in it, which had as reasonable a look as anything.

Clyde's money was there still, lying no more than two feet from where Pedronez and Lucina had walked over it eighteen months, grubbing out a poor living. The brown bags were all rotted away and the coin was sticky with clay. I laid a handful on the table, and told Pedronez to buy the tobacco of the others in the morning, but I didn't suppose he would. It seemed a hard sort of joke played by luck on the little Windward Islander, Clyde's money lying there so long, twenty-four inches from the soles of his feet. I remember how Pedronez clutched his throat and shrieked after us into the night. He had shiny black eyes and skin wrinkled about the mouth, and Lucina was draggled-looking. When we were out of the inlet we could hear him

yelling, and I had an idea he and Lucina took to fighting to ease up their minds.

We came under the dark of the ship's side. One of the negroes leaned over above us, and Monson told him to turn in, so short that he scuttled away with a grunt. We heaved the stuff aboard, and took it below, and stowed the whole four meal bags under my bunk. We got up sail before daybreak and slipped away while the stars were still shining.

Now, I took Monson to be a simple man, though sudden in action, and a man with an open mind, and sure to blow up with anything it was charged with, and in that way safe, as not having the gifts to deceive. I don't say the estimate was all gone wrong, but I'd say a man may act so simple as to take in a cleverer man than me. He came to me the next day and took me down below, acting mysterious, and he put on an expression that was like a full moon trying to look like a horse trader, which wasn't a success. Then he jerked his beard, and looked embarrassed.

"Why," he says, "it's this way. I think I'll have half that pile, don't you see?"

I says: "What?"

I felt like an empty meal bag with surprise. Then I says, "Of course I was meaning to make you a present, Captain,"

"No," he says. "That's not it. It's this way. The niggers is so tricky, they'd drop you overboard, tied to a chunk of iron, if I told 'em they might, don't you see? And if I don't tell them they might, seems as if I ought to have half. Because," he says, "they'd love to do it, because they're that way, those niggers, and it seems that way, as if I'd ought to have half, don't it?"

"Why don't you take it all?" I says, sarcastic and mad.

"Why?" he says, looking like a full moon that was shocked. "No! That wouldn't be fair, don't you see?"

I kept still a while, and then I thought maybe there'd be a way or two out, and I spoke mild.

"There's some reason in it, when you put it that way."

"That's right," he says, and acted joyful and free. "It's that way;" and he went above, and I heard him banging the negroes, likely for the wickedness they were capable of. I sat on my bunk and wondered why a man like me was always having trouble.

Then I took a lantern and went exploring down in the hold of the ship, which was pretty much empty of cargo, and foul, and smelt as if things had rotted there a hundred years. There were barrels and boxes

and old canvas, and heaps of scrap iron, and some lead pipe, and coils of bad rope. Afterward I came on deck, and had supper and talked with Monson. He kept nudging me now and then, and saying, "It’s that way;" and me answering, "There’s reason in it, when it’s put that way."

About nine o’clock I went below. By ten Monson and all the negroes were asleep, except two with the other white man on watch. I waited an hour, and then took a saw and a lantern, and crept from the cabin down the ladder to the hold. The sea was easy, though moving some, and slapping the ship’s sides and the hold was full of loud echoes, smelling bad, and very black beyond the space of lantern light, a slimy cold place, and full of sudden noises. I worked till far in the morning, sawing lead pipe into thin sections of maybe an eighth of an inch thick, and thinking about Monson and whether he was deep or not. I thought he was right about the negroes, but I thought Monson wasn’t deep, but simple by nature. It was the same as when one small boy says to another, "You give me your jackknife and I won’t tell anybody to lick you." That gives him a sense of good morals that’s comfortable inside him.

I carried up maybe thirty pounds of lead pipe in eighth-inch sections, and emptied out two of the bags, and shovelled in the lead pipe. I put in enough sticky coin on top to cover it well, and the rest I put some in the other two bags, but most in a leather satchel under some clothes. Then I tied up the bags and shoved them under the bunk, with the lead pipe ones in front. Eighth inch sections of lead pipe aren’t so different from gold coin, so long as they’re in a meal bag with the proper deceptiveness on top. Then I turned in and went to sleep.

In the morning I went to Monson and said, as glum as I could, that I guessed he’d do as he liked, and as to the negroes dropping me overboard he was probably right. Then he acted shy and timid. He followed me back to my cabin, and stood around like he was part ashamed and part confused, kicking his heels together nervous, and smoothing his hair.

"Why," he said, "you see, it’s this way. I think I’ll take ’em now."

Then he fished out the two front bags, opened them, squinted in, tied them up, and walked off. I sort of gaped after him, and sat down on my bunk, and wondered why a man like me should have that kind of trouble, and how soon Monson would take to fooling with his bags, and find out he owned so much lead pipe. But I heard him banging one of the negroes, and judged he was cheerful yet. I went up on deck and lay down on some cordage. Monson left the deck soon after.

I’d calculated on the bags staying under my bunk till we came to New Orleans, thinking to pass off the two that were doctored on Monson in a hurry, and then to get out of reach hot-footed. I calculated now that, as soon as he found his bags had been doctored, he’d mention it candid and loud, and meanwhile I might as well get my gun in working

shape for trouble. Maybe I might make a bargain with the shifty-looking white man, and organize an argument as to which should be dropped overboard, Monson or me. But I hadn't got to the point, when Monson came lounging up the gangway, still acting apologetic. I judged maybe he'd stowed away his bags without digging into them. I says:

"Let bygones be, Captain," and he says, "That's right! It's that way."

It was a remarkable thing how friendly and kind we got, hoping there was no hard feeling.

That day the wind rose to a gale and the sea went wild. It kept Monson on deck night and day for four days. It kept us in a boiling pot, and on the fifth we entered the mouth of the Mississippi. Then Monson went down to sleep, and he hadn't waked when we anchored off the levee at New Orleans, which was six o'clock in the evening. By eight I was on a train going north, with a new trunk in the baggage car.

I've never happened to see Monson since. I guess he was contented. When I opened the bags, one of them was mainly full of eighth-inch sections of lead pipe.

Maybe he'd heard me go down to the hold in the first place, but probably he found first his lead pipe at the time he left me on the deck, and then he'd changed things a bit more to his ideas of what was right, bearing in mind the natural wickedness of the negroes. He didn't appear to have noticed that some of the stuff was stowed in my leather satchel, but he got nearly a third of Clyde's savings.

I came to New York and I walked along South Street, thinking of the day, twenty years back, when I first walked along South Street, cocky and green. Then I came toward the slip where the _Hebe Maitland_ had lain that day, and where I'd looked at her and said, "Now, there's a ship." I thought of Clyde and that odd talk in the cabin of the _Hebe Maitland_, where all my deep-sea goings began. And I looked up and I says, "Now, there's a ship!"

The prow of her came up to the sidewalk, and the bowsprit stretched over the street, pointing at a house on the other side that was a restaurant by its sign. The _Annalee_ was the ship's name in gilt lettering, and the clean lines of her and her way of lying in the water would give you joy. I walked alongside her on the dock, and I went across the street to look at her that way, and stood in front of the restaurant. And there I sniffed around a bit, and there I smelt hot waffles. "It's a tasty smell," I says. "Smells like Stevey Todd," and I went into the restaurant, and there was Stevey Todd. "Stevey," I says, "if you'll give me some hot waffles and honey, I'll buy that ship out there if she's buyable." And Stevey Todd gave me hot waffles and honey, and I bought the _Annalee_.

It might be thought, and some would say so, that the trouble I had with Monson came of Clyde's money being unclean, as not got honestly,

but through dodging South American customs, and I'm free to admit it was sticky when I dug it up. But it's never acted other than respectable since that time. I never agreed with Clyde in argument, more than did Stevey Todd. A man falls in with various folks by sea and land, and he finds many that are made up of ill-fitting parts. Clyde was an odd man and a bold one, though old and dry. Monson I took for a loud and joyful one, simple and open in his mind, and violent in his habits and free of language, and yet he acted to me both secret and moderate, and I guess I mistook him.

Stevey Todd and I went to sea again in the coasting trade, and mainly to the south, and saw the coasts and parts we knew in the _Hebe Maitland_ days. So I passed several years more.

CHAPTER XII.

THE FLANNAGAN AND IMPERIAL--CONTINUING THE NARRATIVE.

I was taking a cargo of machinery and carts one time to the city of Tampico in Mexico, and from there I was to go for return cargo to a little republic to the south that we'll call Guadaloupe, whose capital city we'll call Rosalia. The real names of them sounded that way, soft and sleepy, and warm and sweet, like hot waffles and honey. According to reputation it was a place where revolutions were billed for Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, and the other days left for siestas and argument. They were fixed that way in respect to entertainment.

But there came to me in Tampico a man named Flannagan, who said he was manager of "The Flannagan and Imperial Itinerant Exhibition," a company composed of three Japanese performers, a tin-type man from New England, and a trick dog who was thoughtful and spotted. Flannagan said he wanted to go far, far from Tampico, because, he says, "Thim Tampican peons ain't seen tin cints apiece since they sold their souls," he says, "at that price," he says, "to the divil that presides over loafers." I told him I was going to Rosalia in Guadaloupe which had a local system of entertainment already, and he says, "Guadaloupe!" he says, "Rosalia! D'ye moind thim names! It's like sthrokin' a cat"; and the company came aboard at five dollars a head, three polite Japanese tumblers and rope-walkers, the thoughtful dog, whose name was David, and the tin-type man, who was cynical He'd gone into tin-typing, Flannagan said, so as to express contempt and satire for his fellow-men.

"But," says Flannagan, "it do be curious how thim Dagoes in this distimpered climate rejoice to see thimsilves wid a villyanous exprission an' pathriotic attichude in a two be four photygraph."

We sailed away down the Gulf, through the Strait of Honduras and

into the Caribbean Sea, with quiet weather, so that the Japanese could rope-walk in the rigging and tumble peaceable about the deck. The only trouble was the feeling created by the vicious photographs the tin-typer took of the crew. David used to sit quiet mostly, and look over the sea, and scratch his spots, for some of them were put on.

Flannagan was a fiery-eyed and easy-spoken man, who had picked up the tumblers in California and the tin-type man somewhere on the plains. But David was a friend of his of years' standing, and he was a dog I should call naturally gifted, and with that of a friendly nature, sober, decent, middle-aged, comfortable, and one who took things as they came. But Flannagan had hair that was wild and red, and his complexion was similar. He was large and bony. His voice was windy, his manner oratorical, and his nature sudden. The Japanese spoke little English and couldn't be told apart, but as to that there was no need of it. They were skilful, small, and dark, with rubber bones and extra joints, and they could smile from a hundred and thirteen classified and labelled attitudes. We came one afternoon into the harbour of Rosalia.

Speaking of Rosalia, it's a green and pink and white town, in a valley that opens on the sea, with mountains behind it. It's a prettier town than Portate. In the centre is the little square or plaza, filled with palms and roses and bushes. There's a lamp-post near the middle and the ruins of a stone fountain. Around three sides of the plaza are shops, where you can buy your hands' full of bread and fruit for a cent or two; and casinos or saloons where they play monte and fight gamecocks; and a hotel, with men asleep on the steps of it. On the fourth side is the Palazio del Libertad, which they commonly call it La Libertad. It contains the government and the families of most of it. There are the offices and residences of the President and the departmental ministers, the legislative chambers, courtrooms, soldiers' barracks, and other things. It's the pride of Guadaloupe and the record of its revolutions. It's been sixty years in building, and each new government adds something to remember it by. It has white stucco fronts, and towers, doors, inner courts, and roofs. If you are looking for a department, you walk along the fronts till you see a likely-looking sign that seems to refer in figures of speech to that department. Then you go in. But when the government changes by revolution--or by election, which sometimes happens, when no one is looking--why, then the departments shift around in La Libertad to suit themselves better, and they're apt to leave their signs behind them. Besides that, each new minister will decorate himself and his department with names to fit his ideas of beauty and usefulness, and he'll proclaim these in the official gazette for the intention of his department. The Guadaloupeans argue the competence of a minister according as he has a department with titles that sweep the horizon and claim kin with the Antipodes and the Resurrection. Only it seemed to me that these things tended in time to make the figures of speech on the signs sort of far-fetched.

It was that way that Flannagan and I, with David, the tin-type man and the tumblers, fell on the "Department of Military and Internal

Peace," when we were looking for permits to ship cargoes and deliver Japanese performances, under the sign "Office of Discretionary Regulations." That may have been all right enough, for most of the departments were that accommodating they would do any agreeable business that came their way; but it appeared to me, the revolutions left the government too full of idioms.

There we waited till Flannagan became fierce with the heat and the impatience of him.

"Discretionary!" he says, striding around with his nostrils full of wrath, and banging at doors. "Would they be boilin' us the night wid the discreetness of 'em?"

With that there was an opening of a door, and there waddled in a little fat mestizo, both shorter and fatter than seemed right or natural. He wore red and yellow livery and shining buttons, and we thought he was likely the official butler or door boy. He seemed to have eaten too much, as a rule, and looked sleepy and in a bad temper.

"Boy" says Flannagan, striding up to him, "where's the misbegotten and corrupt official of Disthressionary Regularities? Do we wait here till the explosion of doom? Spheak, ye lump of butther!" he says. "Or do we not?"

"Carambos!" says the extraordinary clothes, backing off and speaking snappish. "If you don't like it, get out!"

"Carambos, is it?" says Flannagan, enraged and grabbing him by the collar. "Impidence!" he says, "an' ye talk so to the Manager of the Flannagan and Imparial!"

With that he gets him also by his new trousers and heaves him into the corridor, where was a handsome half-caste Spanish woman, more Spanish than Indian, who looked dignified and happy in a purple dress. She fell against the wall to avoid him, and appeared surprised. He scrambled up. Then he clutched his hair, and waddled down the corridor, shrieking, and the purple dress began to gobble with her laughter.

"Why," she says, in a mellow voice--"Ho! ho! haw! haw! Why does the distinguished senor cast the Minister of Military and Internal Peace thus upon his digesting, immediately his too great meal thereafter?"

"Hivins!" says Flannagan.

"Now he will say the internal peace is disturbed, meaning his digestion, and bring the military, to the end that the distinguished senors shall be placed in the dungeons of La Libertad, which," she says kindly, "beyond expectation are wet, and the senors will probably decay. He is my husband--Ho, ho! haw, haw!" she says. "He is a pig"

Flannagan was speechless for a moment. The tin-type man pointed his camera at the purple dress, and was going to take a misanthropic photograph, and David went and stood on his head before her, so that she laughed harder: "Ho! ho! haw! haw!" and spread out her hands, which had two rings to a finger, and the mixed stones of her necklace clicked together with her laughter.

"Put up yer camery, typist" says Flannagan, getting hold of his diplomacy. "None of your contimptimous photographs of the lady. Sure," he says, "it's wid great discomposure I'm taken to be treatin' so the iligint buttons an' canned-tomato clothes enclosin'," he says, "the milithary an' internal digestion of the husband of yourself," he says, "as foine a lady, an' that educated, as me eyes iver beheld. 'Tis me impulses," he says, "'tis me warm an' hearty nature. But your ladyship won't be allowin' a triflin' incident to interfere wid enjoyin' the exhibition by me Japanese frinds of the mystherious art of ancient Asia, an' me that proud of your ladyship's approvin'!"

"What can they do?" she says, looking interested, while the three Japanese bowed in a limber manner, and smiled thin and mystical Asiatic smiles.

"Oh, hivins!" said Flannagan. "Oh, that I might see thim again for the first time, in the bloom of me innocence of marvels! For a thousand years by the imerald seas of the Orient," he says,--and then one of them bent backward, and brought his head up between his legs, and smiled; and the purple dress fell against the wall with pleasure and surprise.

"Come after me," she says, opening a door in the corridor, "heretofore the arrival of my pig husband."

We went up twisting staircases that appeared unaccountable and weren't counted. We saw furnished rooms through open doors, and at last we came to a large room, high up under a tower, and looking out over the Plaza, and in another direction over the roofs of La Libertad. It seemed to be unused, and was darkened with shutters, and littered with the miscellaneous and upset furniture of past administrations.

The Minister of Military and Internal Peace was named "Georgio Bill," from which a man might argue the origins of his family. The purple dress was called "Madame Bill," because French titles were popular with the official ladies. She left us there in a stately manner, and then fell down the stairs through mixing her feet. She was dignified and cheerful, but she had large feet.

Through the shutters we saw the Plaza beginning to stir with the evening crowds. A few blocks over the flat roofs of houses, we saw the harbour, and the _Annalee_ floating at anchor.

When Madame Bill came back she brought with her two negresses with

baskets, who straightened the furniture and laid the table. The shutters were closed, and a lamp or two lit, and we dined sumptuous to the elegant dialogue of Flannagan and Madame Bill. "For a thousand years," says Flannagan, "by the imerald seas of the Orient"; and the Japanese did moderate after-dinner tumbling, with mild but curious bow-knots. David marched and saluted, and after that he climbed into his chair, and got his pipe, which Flannagan lit for him; he got it fixed between his teeth, laid his head on his paws, pulled a few puffs, and went to sleep. He was a calm one, David, as I said, and ingenious, and experienced. Madame Bill lit her cheroot thoughtful, and there was conversation.

"The Senor Bill," she says, "is at the present pursuing the foreigners throughout Rosalia and La Libertad with a portion of the Guadaloupean army. It was not wise to cast the Minister of Military and Internal Peace so upon his digestion, which is to him important. But without doubt you are distinguished and experienced, especially the Senor David. They will not look for you perhaps here, which is over my apartments, but will attack, it may be, the ship of your coming here, and in that way be imbecile and foolish."

"Hivins!" says Flannagan. "But I'm thinkin', wid great admiration for yourself, ma'am, I'm thinkin' this country wid its interestin' people in pajamies, its scenery resemblin'a lobster salad, an' government illuminated by figures of spache an' inspired wid seltzer-wather--I'm thinkin' it would make its fortune, sure, by exhibition of itself in the capitals of the worrld, ma'am. Not Barnum's, nor the Flannagan an' Imparial, would compare with it. An' 'tis thrue, ma'am, as a showman in the profession, I couldn't be exprissin' betther me wondher an' admiration."

Then the tin-type man put in, and he sneered some: "I ain't much on admiration and wonder."

"You're not, typist," says Flannagan. "'Tis curdled like he is, ma'am, wid inveterate scorn, the poor man!"

"The human bein' is vicious from original sin," says the tin-type man. "It comes out in the camery," he says. "You can't fool the camery. It tells ye the Bible truth," he says. "Nor I ain't expectin' anything from a broiled and frizzled country like this, where the continent's shaved down so narrow you could take a photograph of two oceans. And yet it's as good as anywhere else. I takes tin-types and says nothing."

"Santa Maria!" says Madame Bill.

And Flannagan says proudly: "'Tis as I told ye, ma'am. There's not such an other to be seen for extinsive scornful-fulness."

"Speaking of the ship, ma'am," I says, "I guess it's all right. Ain't you afraid your husband will get internationally complicated?"

She gestured and grinned.

"Afraid! I! My Georgio! Neither for him nor of him. Moreover, I think,"--pausing with her cheroot in the air--"that he has heard from below, and is now outside the door. He pants. He has climbed the stairs in haste, the little pig. Ho, ho! haw, haw!"

At that the Minister of Military and Internal Peace burst in, with the sweat of his fatness on his face, his teeth sticking out, and his features expressing intentions.

"You do, you Madame," he says, "you woman! You hide them, my enemies, insulters!"

"You would do best," she says to Flannagan, "without doubt, now to enclose and suppress him, my Georgio."

"I go! I return!" he says, stamping his feet.

"Nayther," says Flannagan, enclosing his collar with one hand, and suppressing his features with the other. "Ye sits in the chair, me little man. Ye smokes a cigar in genteel conviviality afther coolin' down to be recognised by a thermometer--an' ye listens to the advice of your beaucheous an' accomplished lady," he says, "that has in moind a bit of domestic discipline."

He dropped him in a chair facing Madame Bill. David, in the next chair, woke up, and appeared to say to himself, "They're doing something else," and went to sleep again. The tin-type man sat by the window and looked through the shutters at the Plaza. They were making a noise on the Plaza. Now and then a military let off his gun, and the people shouted as if they wanted him to do it again. The Japanese bowed to Bill across the table, and smiled mystical.

"By the tomb of my mother, you shall pay!" gurgled Bill.

"Come off!" says Flannagan kindly. "She hadn't any tomb, an' ye disremember who she was."

"Why," says Madame Bill, "the Senor Flannagan on that point speaks nearly the truth."

"A-r-r-r! I'll have your blood!" says the Minister.

"An' me givin' ye the soft word," says Flannagan, "an' apologies for takin' ye for a decorated rubber ball, an' bouncin' ye on the floor! 'Twas wrong of me. Sure, now, Misther Bill, an' is there more needed between gentlemen?" He looked for help to Madame Bill, who gazed at the smoke of her cheroot and seemed absent-minded.

"Listen, my Georgio," she began at last, "I have considered, and I say you have done foolishly to scatter the soldiers about the city to hurry and to inquire, so that the people become excited. Hear in the

Plaza already how they cry out like children, and each one is angry at a different thing."

The Minister started, and listened, and wiped his wet forehead with his sleeve. The roar in the Plaza was increasing. He sprang to his feet, and puffed, and he says:

"The military is scattered! It is a mob! I must go! Attend me, my wife!"

But Flannagan enclosed his collar. "Respict for me own intherests," he says, "is me proudest virtue. Would ye have me missin' the sight of a rivolution from a private box, an' the shpectacle of explodin' liberty? An' ye'll be havin' me blood to-morry by the tomb of your mother? Ah, now!"

"Let me go!" he says, shrieking and struggling. "I accept your apology! Say no more!"

Flannagan looked at Madame Bill. The crowd was shouting more in unison now. They says, "Vivo Alvarez!" and "Bill al fuego!" which the latter means, as you or I might say, "To hell with Bill!" The Minister shivered and struggled, but more moderate.

"The military will be confused, will do nothing without order!" he pleaded to Madame Bill.

"The military," says the tin-type man, from the shutters, speaking through his nose, soft and scornful, "they appear to feel tolerable good. There's a batch of 'em on the steps under here, a-sittin' in their sins, and shoutin' 'Down with Bill!' very hearty like."

"Mutiny!" howled the Minister. "Alas!" and he sat down, wiped his forehead with his sleeve, and panted, and appeared more composed.

Flannagan sat down, too. "I do be feelin' warm the same," he says. "Shall we have a drink?"

Madame Bill was still turning things over in her mind. "Doubtless they so shout," she says. "They are not without sense. Listen again, my Georgio. I have considered. It is perhaps not bad. Moreover, it is done. But the Department of the Military is not good for you. It worries you, therefore you disturb it, therefore it does not like you. Also, we have lost popularity in Rosalia. But in the interior, as yet, no. Therefore, consider. Senor Alvarez is perhaps generous. If he overthrow the government, he will desire there come an election, and who knows? We may for him go to the interior, and in reward be Minister of Agriculture, which is cooler. But if he overthrow not the government, but by compromise become Minister of Military and Internal Peace, then my Georgio will be in innocence a victim, and perhaps will have to hide, which is hot and dull, or go to the dungeons of La Libertad, which is dull and wet; or we would escape from the country in the distinguished ship of the Senor

Buckingham, or in the Imperial Company of Senor Flannagan, which would be better."

"An' it's proud I'd be to have ye," says Flannagan, "as I said, ma'am, in the capitals of the world. Hivins!" he says, "the tropical advertisements! By the mimory of Ireland, 'tis a filibuster expedition I foresee! Me genius is long suppressed."

Madame Bill shrugged her shoulders. "Who knows? Therefore be calm, little one. We will see what they do in the Plaza."

The fallen or falling Minister emptied a glass of iced wine, and looked more contented than before. He was a pleasant enough man as a rule, except when not digesting well, and generally submissive to Madame Bill. We put out the lights and opened the shutters, and all looked out on the Plaza except David, who woke up, and taking things in, appeared to say to himself, "They're doing something else," and went to sleep again.

The Plaza was a boiling mess, but the military were enjoying themselves in good order. They were collected on the steps of La Libertad below, about five hundred of them. They seemed to be leading the cheering. The hotel across the Plaza was lit up and the windows full of heads.

Then a hush fell everywhere, and the faces were turned toward the portico, with the six great pillars and lamps on each, that formed the centre of the Plaza front of La Libertad. Two men stood on the top step, one in a sombrero, and the other in black coat and tall hat. The tall hat, by his gestures, was addressing the crowd, but we couldn't hear him.

"The President and Alvarez," says Madame Bill, very calm. "They compromise. My Georgio will be hot and dull."

The crowd cried "Vivo" everything except Bill. They wanted him "al fuego" just the same, which, as you might say, means something like: "Oh, take him away. Put him somewhere and boil him!" They seemed distressed with him that way, and I took it Madame Bill was right that he'd been too lively with his military, and it was up with him. A band began to play by the hotel.

"My wife is ever right," says Bill, and began feeling toward the table for the iced wine. "Carambos! It is not with Madame Bill to be discouraged. No! Bueno! All right, my wife. What did you say?"

Madame Bill said we'd leave him there, which we did, after closing the shutters. We left him drinking iced wine, eating mangoes, blowing smoke, and looking like a porpoise in respect to complexion, but shorter and fatter than a porpoise, and remarkable youthful.

It came on the Monday following and my cargo was shipped. There was a platform put up on the Plaza, and I heard Flannagan making a speech

there, in which the feeling was eloquent, and the languages as they came along. The tin-type man, under the platform, was taking tin-types to make a man remember how he was depraved. David's spots were running with the heat, but he scratched them and made no trouble. The Japanese sat on their heels and smiled.

"For a thousand years," says Flannagan, "by the imerald seas of the Orient, have the ancesthors of me frinds on me right developed the soopleness of limb an' the art that is becalled by the Mahatmas an' thim Boodhists 'the art of the symbolical attichude,' as discovered and practised in the Injian Ocean's coral isles, which by the same they do expriss their feelin's till ye get a mysthical pain in your stomick wid lookin' at 'em. 'Twas so done," he says, "by the imerald seas of the Orient."

That evening they came secretly aboard, Flannagan and the Company, and with them Bill and Madame Bill. We weighed anchor the next morning, and got away. The Bill family became an addition and a credit to the Flannagan and Imperial, as it turned out.

CHAPTER XIII.

FLANNAGAN AND STEVEY TODD--CAPTAIN BUCKINGHAM RETURNS TO GREENOUGH--THE NARRATIVE CONTINUED.

The Flannagan and Imperial was the last cargo I carried, but I carried it near five years. It was what you might call a continuous cargo; the _Annalee_ was in partnership with it; that is, Flannagan and I went into partnership together. Madame Bill's influence appeared to act expansive on Flannagan's ideas, and they expanded the Company. She was an uncommon woman, with a pushing mind, and exhibited as "The Princess Popocatapetl, Lineal Descendant of Montezuma and Queen of the Caribbeans." Flannagan engaged Bill to exhibit as "The Fat Boy," and he was very successful in this way, weighing two hundred, and in height four feet eight inches, though thirty to forty years old. His face was round and smooth as an apple, and he wore a little jacket and sailor hat, and carried a piece of gingerbread in general, when on exhibition; and in that way he looked as young as might be needed, and satisfactory to every one. Flannagan used to rent the advertising space on Bill's legs, for "Infants' Foods" and "Patent Medicines for Dyspepsia," which was popular and profitable. But I was saying Madame Bill was a handsome woman, and valuable, and Flannagan himself hadn't a better eye for giving the public sensations. She expanded his ideas. Yet Flannagan had a knack. He was grand at speech-making, and sudden and spectacular by nature.

He shipped with me then from Rosalia to the different ports I was billed for that voyage, picking up more additions to the Company, till it was a large company. I was free to admit he made good profits

out of the seaport cities between South America and Charleston; so at Charleston, when he offered me a partnership, I felt agreeable, and took it, on this agreement; I to put in the use and management of the _Annalee_, and he to put in "The Flannagan and Imperial;" I to run the ship and he to run the show. The profits should be divided half-yearly, after paying expenses of ship and show.

We ran under this agreement several years, and exhibited all the way from Boston to Rio, according to the season, and sometimes went inland up navigable rivers, such as to Albany and Philadelphia. We summered northward and wintered southward, and did better than most shows on transportation expenses, besides having an open season through the year. Prosperity kept us together until after Bill died, which came from his being too ambitious, and proud of his line in the profession, and having his heart set on two hundred and fifty pounds. Stevey Todd, here, he got too interested in helping Bill along in his career, and fattening him up to a high standard. But Bill's digestion was never good. He died rather young.

Stevey Todd has cooked for me so long, that it's got to the point that other victuals than Stevey Todd's seem unfriendly strangers, likely to be hostile. I claim that, as a cook, Stevey's a bold and skilful one, and enterprising. But outside the galley he's a backward man and caution's his motto, and in argument he's, as you might say, a gradual man. His nature, as differing there from Flannagan's, might be seen in this way. For when Bill was dead, Flannagan and Stevey Todd each wanted to marry Madame Bill, and their notions of it were as different as sharks are different from mud-turtles, Flannagan's notion mainly resembling a shark's, as follows. He says:

"Popo," he says, pretty quick, "Bill's off. Here's to him, an' may his ghost weigh two hundred and fifty. I'm on," he says. "Whin shall it be?"

Then a madder woman than Madame Bill was seldom seen, for she threw Montezuma's crown at Flannagan, and chased him under the tent ropes with the gilt-headed and feather-tufted spear of the Queen of the Caribbeans, which ruined an eighteen-dollar crown and stuck Flannagan vicious in the shoulder-blade with the spear.

Whereas Stevey Todd bided a while, as a cautious man would do, until some decent time had gone by; and then he gets me, as a friend, in ambush inside the cabin window for precaution and testimony, and plants the scornful typist at a distance to take photographs that might be useful, and then he brings Madame Bill to the window.

"Now," he says to her, "supposing there was a man that we'll call middle-aged, and that might be a cook maybe by profession, for it wouldn't do no harm if we took it he had leanings that way, and if you said he was as good a one as ever stepped into a galley, I wouldn't go so far as to say so myself, nor yet deny it, for Bill had that opinion himself, and he was a man of good judgment on things that had to do with his line, though when his feelings moved him he

was apt to put it warm, nor I ain't denying that when his digestion was otherwise, his remarks was sometimes contrary. Now, supposing there was a lady, whose merits I wouldn't nowise try to state, but if you was to say her talents was good, and her weight a hundred and forty, I wouldn't say you was wrong, which I've heard it put that as a Lineal Descendant she was worth climbing the volcano to see, which supposing she complimented it by borrowing that name, it's no harm if she did. Now, supposing those parties was talking of this thing and that, as anybody might do, and, say, they got to talking of the show business maybe, or, say, they happened to mention such a thing as matrimony, now," says Stevey Todd, "what would be your idea of that last as a subject of conversation between those parties?"

Madame Bill didn't answer the question, though it seemed to me put delicate, but she burst into melodious laughter, and ran away, and the tin-type man, whose natural expression was dislike of his fellow man, he looked disgusted more'n you'd believe, and went away too. Then Stevey Todd put his head through the window, and he says:

"Now, supposing a party acted in such or such a way to one party, which acted another way to another party, what would you say might happen to be her meaning?"

I gave my opinion candid, and truthful. I said, as to Madame Bill, I judged something or other pleased her, and by her behaviour to Flannagan it looked as if there was something then which she hadn't liked, though what it might be in either case was more than I could say, but speaking generally it looked hopeful for Stevey Todd, and I stated that same opinion. Stevey Todd went back to the galley, and it seemed to me the difference between his nature and Flannagan's was something to wonder at and admire, and when I saw Flannagan he seemed to have the same opinion with me, for he says:

"Powers an' fryin' pans! Thot cook!" he says. "Thot galley shlave! Thot boiled pertaty widout salt! Shall a barrel of flour put me in the soup? Tell me thot!"

At the time we were exhibiting in the larger towns about Long Island Sound, where it happened we'd never exhibited before, dropping into harbours and setting up the big tent on any bit of land convenient to the pier. We stayed a long or short time, according to patronage.

Whether it was that Flannagan was too busy, or angry at Madame Bill for her actions, and didn't know if he wanted a wife with a spear, or one that was reckless with her headgear, I couldn't have said at that time; but he surely said no more to Madame Bill that I knew of, whereas Stevey Todd kept arguing with her all over the ship, and mainly under the cabin window. Sometimes he'd trim his sails close in to the subject of matrimony, and sometimes he'd be sailing so far off the quarter that I couldn't but call out to him through the window and tell him, "Hard a lee there, Stevey! You'll never fetch it that tack;" when he'd shift his helm, feeling the edge of the breeze with as neat a piece of seamanship as a man could ask, and come up dead

into the wind, his sails dropping back stiff on his yardarms, and the subject of matrimony speared on the end of his bowsprit; then Madame Bill would get up, and run away laughing. She seemed to enjoy those arguments, and I judged Stevey Todd would fetch port maybe in course of time. Meanwhile I sat smoking peaceful at my cabin window, and watched the shore slipping by, that I knew so well of old. By-and-by I saw Telford Point, and then the Musquoit River mouth by Adrian. Stevey Todd sat under the window putting fine edges on his arguments. And I says:

"Stevey," I says, "I was born and bred on this coast," but Stevey Todd was that taken up with his points of argument to Madame Bill that he didn't have any interest in my beginnings, and I went off to find Flannagan.

"Flannagan," I says, "I got a sentiment."

"Sintimint, is it!" he says. "Come off! Ye salted codfish! If I ain't got tin to your one, I'm another," he says.

It made me mad to hear him talk that way, and I set him down on the starboard anchor and I argued it. I told him of the little town of Greenough, and then I told him of Madge Pemberton, that afterwards was Madge McCulloch, and how the old shore village lay, its street and white houses and its church with the gilded cupola, till Flannagan got interested. And there we talked a long time.

"Why, ye are salted, Tom," he says, "but I'm not just sayin' ye're canned. We ain't due in New London till Thursday, an' it's on me moind we'll exhibit a bit in this town of Greenough."

That afternoon, then, we hauled into the harbour, by where the fishing boats lay, and moored the _Annalee_ to the old stone pier. Flannagan saw the tent, platform, and benches put up, and in the early evening he went inland to the village and didn't come back for some hours.

It was a moonlight night, and the show people were still getting ready for the next day. I was at the deck-cabin window, smoking an evening pipe, looking at the tent that stood on the sandy piece of land beyond the pier. I could see the trees of the village, and the church spire against the sky, and I thought of the way I'd meant to come back to Greenough, when I left it to go "romping and roaming," as Sadler had said, and how now I was come home with grey hairs.

There was the hill between Newport Street and the harbour, and far along to the west I could see where Pemberton's stood, and see what might be its lights.

Pretty soon I heard David, the trick dog, barking, and I looked out, and saw Stevey Todd and Madame Bill coming along in the wake of David, and I judged that Stevey Todd was meaning to put in an odd moment or two arguing, and that Madame Bill was going to be joyous

about it. David appeared to be feeling tolerable cheerful, as if saying to himself, "They're going to do something now, sure." They sat down by the window, and Madame Bill was speaking:

"Stevey Todd," she says, "I think it would not be such advantage, not at all. Because it is not good to my looks that I become two hundred pounds like my Bill, and if now I have a husband who cook so delicious, so perfect, as you, and who make me laugh between meals without rest and without pity, as you, which gives the appetite enormous, so that I have gained five pounds since I weigh before, and by this am alarmed, disconsolate, helas! what do I do? Am I elephants in this show? But how? I observe you do not ask that I marry you, but you say, 'It is a good time to talk here or there, about this or that --eh? Well, perhaps about matrimony." Haw! haw! ho! ho! But how so? If you do not say, 'Will you?' how can I say 'No'?"

"Taking that argument so stated," says Stevey Todd, "it might be called a tidy argument and no harm done, or you might say there was two arguments in it. Now, taking the first one, a man might make this point as bearing on it: for you take the tin-typist, who's a good eater and a well-fleshed man, and yet he's a gloomy man, as you might say, not putting it too strong; and on the other hand here's David, who's what you'd call a joking dog, and as an eater without an equal of his size, though an elderly dog, and yet he's a thin dog, as his business in the show makes needful for him. Which, I says, might be put up as an argument by such as wanted to use it, if any one was speaking contrary to cooks as being dangerous to parties in the show business, on account of interests not being along the line of weight, nor yet advertising space on legs which they're able to furnish. Now, taking the second argument, I wouldn't deny you might be right, and there's the point. For not to speak of giving no cause for crowns throwed around expensive, or spears stuck into parties disrespectful to memory of deceased, I says, here's the point. For if you can't say 'No,' till I say 'Will you?' it follows you can't do it till I say those words."

"I can too!" says Madame Bill.

"No, ye can't! No, ye can't!" says Stevey Todd.

Madame Bill began to laugh, and Flannagan, who was coming over the ship's side, he stopped at hearing her, and slid across the deck behind the companion. Then Madame Bill went below, ha-ha-ing melodious, and Flannagan called in a loud whisper over the roof:

"Hoi! Stevey Todd! Are ye done wid it?"

"She ain't said no," says Stevey Todd. "She ain't said no."

It came afternoon of the next day, and the show was opened, and the people came flocking in. Near by the tent door was Stevey Todd's "Cocoanut Cake, Hot Waffle and Fizz Table." On the platform the company sat in a half-circle, ready for Flannagan's opening speech to

explain the qualities and talents of each. It was a show to be proud of, and in point of colour resembling solar spectrums, or peacocks' tails. Madame Bill had charge of costumes, and her tastes were what you might call exhilarated. Flannagan began:

"Ladies and gintlemen," he says. "The pleasure I take in inthroducin' 'The Flannagan an' Imparial Itinerant Exhibition,' to this intelligent aujunce, has niver been equalled in me mimory.

"I see before me," he says, "a ripresentative array of this grreat counthry's agricultural pursuits, to say nothin' of thim that fish. I see before me numerous handsome an' imposin' mathrons, to say nothin' of foine washed babies. I see before me many a rosy girrl a-chewin' cocoanut candy that ain't so swate as herself, an' many a boy wid his pockets full of paynuts an' his head full of divelthries.

"Is it the prisence of such an aujunce which gives me the pleasure unequalled in me mimory? No!

"Ye see before ye 'The Flannagan an' Imparial Itinerant Exhibition,'" he says. "Yonder is the three Japanese tumblers from the private company of the Meekado, trained to expriss by motion an' mysthical attichude, the eternal principles of poethry as understood by Orientals, Hinjoos, an' thim Chinaysers: forninst the same, the beaucheous Princess Popocatapetl, whose royal ancesthors was discovered by Columbus, an' buried by another cilibrated Dago, that ought t'have been ashamed of it; nixt her, the Hairy Man, wid a chin beard on the bridge of his nose an' the hair of his head growin' out of the shmall of his back; nixt, the cilibrated performin' dog, David, that you'll recognise by his shmilin' looks an' polkadot complexion; an' so on, the others in due order, that will soon be increasin' your admiration for the marvels of creation, an' servin' as texts, I doubt not, for the future discoorses of me frind, the venerable clergyman of this parish, that sits in the front row--May Hiven bless him!--all mimbers of the Flannagan an' Imparial, includin', aye, even down to the poor wake-minded man that sells hot waffles at the door, which if ye tell him, afther this performance, that his waffles is the same kind of waffles that a shoemaker pegs on for the sole of a shoe, it's me private opinion he'll be in no timper to arguy the point.

"Is it pride in this grreat show that gives me the pleasure on this occasion unequalled in me mimory? No!

"What is it, ladies and gintlemen? What is it?

"Gintlemen and ladies," he says, "'tis no other than the approach of the public ciremonial of the rite of mathrimony between mesilf, Michael Flannagan, an' a party that has no notion what I'm talkin' about, but is further named in this docyment, which if your riverence will now shtep up on the platform, he will find to be signed and sealed by the honourable town clerk of this pasthoral an' marine community. Ladies an' gintlemen, was ye iver invited before to the

weddin' of a man of me impressive looks an' oratorical gifts, that first published his own banns, an' thin proposed, in your intelligent an' sympathetic prisence, to a lady of exalted ancesthry an' pre-eminent fame? Ye was not? Ye have now that unparallelled experience. For, as ye see by this license an' authority, this lady, the Lineal Descendant of Mexican Emperors, is known an' admired in private life as Madame Anatolia Bill.'"

With that he stepped back, and offered his hand, and said something to Madame Bill that was lost in the cheering of the audience. Madame Bill near fell off her chair with surprise, and began ha-ha-ing melodious. What with the roaring and clapping of the crowd, Flannagan and Madame Bill were up in front of the minister before Stevey Todd could be heard from the door, crying, "She ain't said no, Flannagan! She ain't said no! It ain't right!"

"Will somebody near the door," says Flannagan, "kindly take the hot-waffle-man an' dhrop a hot waffle down the back of his neck, to disthract his attintion while the ciremonies proceed?" Stevey Todd ran out of the door. But the people of Greenough was happy in front, and the show was hilarious behind. David turned handsprings till he sweated his spots into streaks.

But I've always had my doubts what may have been previous in Madame Bill's mind as regards intentions to Flannagan and Stevey Todd. Which is not saying but Flannagan's ambush was what you'd call a good ambush, as arranged by one that knew Madame Bill well, and knew her to be a show-woman by nature and gifts, that would never have the heart to spoil a fine act in the middle of it, when it was coming on well. The facts are no more than that she did nothing to spoil the act. She let it go through. Her statement was she hadn't made up her mind before. Stevey Todd's opinion was that she'd have taken himself, barring Flannagan's laying that stratagem, desperate and unrighteous. On the other hand, Flannagan thought it was predestined on account of his natural gifts. As for me, I had my doubts.

But Stevey Todd wouldn't stay with the show after that. We went on east, and left him here, boarding at Pemberton's. He said he liked Pemberton's and would stay there a bit. I says, "There's good points in a quiet life, Stevey;" and Stevey Todd says, showing what was on his mind:

"Aye, but Abe Dalrimple, he argues matrimony ain't quiet, and I don't go so far as to dispute he may be right, and that's a point to be allowed, for she throwed Montezuma's crown, not to speak of spears."

"Didn't neither," says Abe Dalrimple. "It was kettles. It wa'n't none of them things," he says, alluding at Mrs. Dalrimple.

But as to Madame Bill, she was tropical, but not balmy, and matrimony that wasn't balmy wouldn't have been good for Stevey Todd.

"But," says Stevey Todd, "as to her leanings to me and intentions

pursuant," he says, "I'd argue it, as shown by actions previous."

It was Pemberton told me Madge McCulloch was dead. She died ten years back, about the time I was leaving the Pacific. He told me she left a daughter grown up since, and that Andrew McCulloch was an irritated man by nature.

I went on with the show, but I kept thinking of a quiet life, and about Greenough and Pemberton's, and about things that were long gone by. And then, eating other victuals than Stevey Todd cooked was come to seem to me like taking liberties with strangers. Then I kept wondering if I hadn't had enough going up and down the seas. I says:

"What's the use of it? A man had best get cured of his restlessness before he comes to lie still for aye, and that's the truth," I says.

At the end of October I sold out the _Annalee_. Flannagan took his show inland, and I came back, thinking to sit down at Pemberton's and get over being restless.

CHAPTER XIV.

CAPTAIN BUCKINGHAM VISITS ADRIAN. ANDREW AND MADGE MCCULLOCH AND BILLY CORLISS. CAPTAIN BUCKINGHAM'S NARRATIVE ENDS.

One day I left Pemberton's and took the road to Adrian. It was an afternoon in November. The church in Adrian stands on the edge of the graveyard, in the middle of the village, and there I went about looking for the McCulloch lot, and found it, and there was Madge's stone. It's a flat grey stone. There's many more like it, set along on rows. It seemed a neighbourly sort of place to rest in, if a man chose, after a roaming life. I stood there till the shadow came along across the churchyard from the church steeple. Then it grew dusk, and it seemed like now and then I heard a bell tolling. Aye, it was like a bell tolling. It seemed to me I could hear it. But there was no bell.

Then I came out and went to look for Andrew McCulloch's house. It stands north of the Green, looking across the churchyard. I knocked at the door, then I backed off the step, when it opened, thinking there must be a mistake about the date, and maybe inscriptions on gravestones was exaggerated; there was a girl in the doorway that looked and acted like Madge Pemberton complete. Moreover an old seaman falling off the doorstep didn't seem to upset her balmy calmness. She says:

"What is it?"

"It's Tom Buckingham come home," I says. "But I guess you're the next generation," and I asked for Andrew McCulloch.

He’s a red-faced man with short side whiskers, a chunky, fussy, and hot-tempered man, but whether Madge Pemberton had managed him, or whether he’d worn her out, I couldn’t make up my mind about the likelihood. I sat a while talking with him, and watching Madge McCulloch, his daughter, lay the tea table. I thought how I’d give something to get her to lay the tea table for me as a habit, and I didn’t see how that was likely to come about.

Andrew McCulloch appeared to think most people in Adrian would be more to his mind if buried with epitaphs describing them accurate.

It was eight o’clock when I came out and started for Pemberton’s. I came past McCulloch’s fence, and heard some one speak near by, and there was a man sitting on the top rail near the corner. It was considerable dark.

"Been in to see King Solomon?" he says.

"What’s that?" I says.

"Major General McCulloch," he says. "Why, I believe you stayed to tea! Why, I haven’t fetched that in three months!"

"Why not?"

"Oh," he says, "why, you see, the venerable ecclesiastic he’s afraid I’d want to come to breakfast too. He thinks I am a grasshopper and a burden."

I thought it looked like a promising conversation, and climbed on the fence beside him, and took a look at him in the starlight.

He said his name was "Billy Corliss," and explained why he sat on the fence. He said it was on account of Andrew McCulloch. He said he and Madge McCulloch were agreed, but Andrew McCulloch wasn’t agreeable. That was partly because Andrew wanted Madge to stay where she was, partly because Corliss had no assets or prospects, and partly because Andrew had an unreasonable low opinion of him, as a roaming and unsettled sort. He spoke of Andrew by various and soaring names, implying a high opinion of him, and especially in speaking of Andrew’s warm temper, his respect got remarkable. He’d call him maybe, "St. Peter," in that connection, or maybe "Sitting Bull." For candour, and opening his mind, and asking the world for sympathy, I took him to be given that way. He said the town of Adrian was divided into two parties on the subject of him, and Madge, and Andrew McCulloch, so I took it Andrew’s temper had had some reasonable exercise.

"St. Peter’s got a good run of warm language," he says, "but his fence is chilly. He’s got a toothache in his shoes, he has, that man."

"Why don’t you elope?" I says.

"That’s the trouble," he says. "When I ask Madge, ’Why not?’ she says, ’Where to?’ I’d been thinking I’d take a look around the world and see."

"Don’t you do it," I says. "When you get around the other side, it’s a long way back. It took me thirty years."

"You don’t mean it!" he says. "Why, that wouldn’t do."

"Assets take time," I says, "but you might get some prospects."

Then I fell to thinking how it could come about that Madge McCulloch might get into the habit of making tea for me, seeing I was too old to marry her, besides her being spoken for. Then I thought she might do it by keeping a hotel, and I says:

"Speaking of keeping hotels--"

"Who’s speaking of it?"

"I am. I kept a hotel once."

"Seaside?" he says.

"No. Inland a bit."

"Summer hotel?"

"Aye, summer hotel. Always summer there."

"Why, she must have paid!"

"Aye, she paid. She was put up in New Bedford," I says, "and run in South America."

"You don’t mean it!"

"It’s a good business if tended to," I says. "But you don’t tend to business, you don’t. That’s the trouble with you. That hotel fell into the river more’n twenty years ago, and it ain’t to the point, but here Madge McCulloch’s been jerking the window shade up and down like she had something on her mind."

"It’s a signal," he says, and with that he dropped off and disappeared toward the back of the house. He left me on the fence.

I thought of the four men that had stood by me most in my time; now one was a miser and smuggler, and got himself hung; and one was a thief, and died of a split wishbone, on what he called "a throne;" and one was a fighter and gambler and poet, and he had a heavy fist, and he turned remorseful into a Burmese monk; and one was Stevey Todd. And Madge Pemberton thought at one time I was all right, but

she was wrong there. And I thought how here was Andrew and another Madge, and here was Billy Corliss, and here was the world galloping along lively. I couldn't but admire the way it was so made as to keep going, and me thinking it had come pretty near to a standstill.

By-and-by, Corliss and Madge McCulloch came across the yard from the back of the house, and climbed on the fence, and Madge hooked her feet on the lower rail and talked cheerful. They spread out what was on their minds pretty confident. I never knew a couple so open-minded.

"Billy wants to run away," she says, "but he doesn't know where to yet, unless it's to be a summer hotel in South America that fell into a river. He thinks it was an interesting hotel," she says. "Do you think it would be nice? But how would we get there?"

"It's wrong side up now," I says; and Billy Corliss says, "Why, there's a chance for housekeeping ingenious! Let's be social! 'Sure Mike!' says the dowager duchess, wishing to be democratic. Why, look here!" he says. "What right's a chimney got to be haughty over a cellar?"

"Oh, keep still, Billy!" says Madge McCulloch, and he closed up, sudden but cheerful, as if he'd been hit by a kettle.

I said I wouldn't recommend the _Helen Mar_ now, but I'd recommend hotel keeping as a good and sociable business.

"For," I says, "the seaman travels around the world seeking profit and entertainment, but the hotel keeper sits at home comfortable, and they come to him. I've been a hotel-keeper in South America" I says, "and might have been one in Greenough for the asking. I chose to be a seaman, and take a look around the world, being foolish and curious. Now, that was a mistake, for the man that bides in his place for the main of his life, has the best of it. He knows as much of the world as another; for if a man goes romping and roaming, and knows no neighbours and no family of his own, why, sure there's a deal of the world that he never knows. That's the moral of me," I says, "that's the moral of me. Now, as to hotel keeping," I says, "I liked that business as well as anything I ever did. I liked it well," I says, and I looked around both sides of me, and stopped, for no Madge and no Billy Corliss was sitting on the fence. Nothing there but lonesome sections of fence.

"Why," I says, "here's an open-minded couple. And it's an energetic couple. Where in the nation did it go to?"

Then I saw Andrew McCulloch coming down from the front door to the gate, but he turned to the right at the gate, and went stumping away up the street, and Madge and Billy Corliss got up from crouching beside the fence, and Madge says:

"Let's go in and get warm."

And I says to myself, "It’s a couple that’s got good sense, too," for Andrew’s fence was chilly.

We went in the house and sat down by the stove.

"As to hotel keeping," I says, "I’ve talked that over with Pemberton, and Stevey Todd, who was the man that run the emigrant hotel with me, and Pemberton’s agreeable, and Stevey Todd don’t argue against it. I’ve been thinking of building on to Pemberton’s, and making a big summer hotel. It stands in sight of the sea, and it’s a likely spot. Now," I says, "hotel keeping is a combination of hospitality and profit. The secret of it is advertising and a peaceable mind to take things as they come. A good hotel keeper is a moderate man. He sees folks coming and going from day to day, and how many does he see as comfortable as himself? Hotel keeping is a good life, you can take my word."

Then there was a noise in the hall outside, but I went on:

"It’s a good life," I says, and I looked around on both sides of me, and I saw no Madge McCulloch and no Billy Corliss. Nothing but empty chairs, and two open doors behind me.

I says, "That’s a singular coincidence."

By the noise in the hall I judged Andrew McCulloch was come back unexpected, and I judged he might come in ambitious and inquiring, and not easy to take as he came. I started for the open doors, and got through one of them hasty, and shut it behind. It was soon enough to escape Andrew, and too soon to see if it was the right door. It was dark there except for the starlight through a window, showing crockery on shelves. The place was no more than a pantry.

I’ve been in different circumstances by sea and land, but I didn’t recollect at that moment ever being planted in just those, and it seemed to me a couple, that could plant an experienced seaman that way must be ingenious as well as open-minded. I heard Andrew McCulloch talking to himself like the forerunnings of an earthquake, and I says:

"An experienced seaman might get out, but not that way. Experienced seamen don’t put off on the windward side. But," I says, "it seems to me experience and ingenuity could keep a hotel."

With that I put up the window softly and climbed out and dropped to the ground. I went round the house looking for ingenious couples, and then across the yard, and there they sat on the same fence, with their feet hooked as previous, and they appeared to feel calm and candid.

"As to hotel keeping," I says, climbing on the fence, "it’s a good life,--" and there I stopped.

I looked over at the old churchyard on the Green. It was dark and still over there. The rows of flat tombstones were grey, like planted ghosts. "Hic Jacet" means "here lies," as I'm told. Those folks that once got their "Hic jacets" over them wouldn't ever get up to argue the statement; but those that left good memories behind, I guessed they were glad of it. As for the living, if they were elderly, they'd best go to bed. With that I got down from the fence.

"Madge," I says, "do you know why I'm backing you?"

"Yes," she says, "I know."

How the nation did she know?

"Happen Billy Corliss may want to run away still" I says, "and maybe you'll be asking, 'Where to?' and maybe he'll remark, 'Pemberton's.' Then if you and he should drop into Pemberton's most any time, with a notion of connubiality, I guess likely he'd have prospects to modify Andrew McCulloch with afterward, 'Pemberton's seaside Hotel. Peaceful Patronage Welcome. No Earthquakes nor Revolutions Allowed.'"

Then I left them on the fence and came back to Greenough.

CHAPTER XV.

CONCLUSION OF THE WHOLE.

When Captain Buckingham ended, it was late and dark, the afternoon long gone into evening. The storm still roared around Pemberton's, and we five sat anchored close to the chimney. It might have been a quarter of an hour went by, and it was past time when Pemberton or Stevey Todd should be getting the supper ready, when there came a sudden tumult in the hall without, and some one bounced in, the snow flying after him, and he cried, "I've eloped and I want a minister!" That was how he stated it: "I've eloped and I want a minister!"

Then Pemberton said:

"I dare say now you're right there," and Captain Buckingham said nothing, nor looked up.

I knew it must be Billy Corliss, though I didn't know him, nor did Uncle Abimelech, nor Stevey Todd. He might have blown down from Labrador, or eloped out of Nova Scotia.

Pemberton and Corliss went out together. Then Stevey Todd spoke up cautiously:

"When I look at it," he said, "when I asks myself: 'Is he right or

is he not?' I don't hear no objections. And further," he said, leaning forward and speaking low, "it's my opinion there's a woman out there."

Uncle Abimelech lifted his eyes from the kettle that hung over the fire, and stared about and seemed to be alarmed.

"Where?" said Uncle Abimelech.

Stevey Todd pointed over his shoulder with his thumb. Uncle Abimelech followed the direction slowly along the dark ceiling, and seeing nothing alarming there, seemed relieved. He turned back to the fire and muttered:

"She throwed kettles, some."

Then Corliss came in again and after him Pemberton, and with them was a tall girl in layers of cloaks and veils, and layers of snow, which being taken off, she came out as balmy and calm as a tropic coast, and enough to make a man forget his old troubles and lay in new ones. Captain Buckingham only looked at her, and said nothing.

Corliss was a slim young man with a candid manner. For two that had run away to look for matrimony in the snow they both seemed remarkably calm. He looked us over, and inquired our names, and appeared to be satisfied with them, and to like the looks of us.

"Why, that's good," he said. "Now, Miss Madge McCulloch is Mr. Pemberton's granddaughter, as you likely know, and she's ambitious to be Mrs. Billy Corliss. That's a good idea, isn't it? But there are parental objections, hot but reasonable. Parent has no sort of an opinion of me, and wants her to run parental establishment. Both reasonable, aren't they?" he said in his candid way. Madge McCulloch was kneeling before the fire and warming her hands. She looked up and laughed.

"You'd better hurry, Billy, or the minister will be snowed in."

"Why, that's reasonable, too," he said, "I was only going to say that those reasons, as stated, were warm;" and he once more went out with Pemberton.

After a time she laughed again.

"If daddy should come here, what do you think would happen?" and she looked at Captain Buckingham, who looked at her and said nothing, his thin brown face as still as an Indian's.

Stevey Todd said cautiously:

"I'd almost think, Miss, in that case, you'd be in hot water."

"It's in the kettle," said Uncle Abimelech, and Madge McCulloch, "So

it is! I wonder if there’s tea."

Then she and Stevey Todd laid the table, and we sat watching her make tea, and saw no objections.

"Shall I tell you about it?" she said calmly, pouring tea.

"If so be it’s agreeable, Miss," said Stevey Todd; and Uncle Abimelech said, "I takes no sugar in mine," but Captain Tom was silent.

She said she had run out of the back door before it was beginning to grow dusk, and climbed the fence and gotten into Corliss’ sleigh, but she was afraid they were seen by neighbours; so that it appeared likely Andrew McCulloch would hear about their going. "He might come after by-and-by, and do something that would be very hot,--Wouldn’t it?"

Stevey Todd said, "It might be as you say, Miss," and Uncle Abimelech, "It’s better when it’s hot," looking into his teacup as if disappointed, but Captain Tom said nothing.

"It was snowing and drifting," she went on, "and we kept falling into ditches, but at last we saw the light of the hotel by the roadside and were glad."

So Billy Corliss had come and bounced at the door, and said he wanted a minister, and quite right he was with respect to those circumstances and Madge McCulloch, as Stevey Todd hinted, though cautiously.

When Pemberton and Corliss came back with the minister, it was clear that Pemberton agreed with Stevey Todd on that point. It may be he was not in the habit of agreeing with Andrew McCulloch. Certainly he gave Madge McCulloch away in marriage to Billy Corliss. And she, saying that she wanted a maid-of-honour, chose Uncle Abimelech for that purpose, which seemed scarcely reasonable, but the minister married them and went his way. Then Stevey Todd could not get over thinking he would have been a better maid-of-honour than Uncle Abimelech, more suitable and more according to the talents of each, and he said this, though indirectly and warily; and Uncle Abimelech said that he recollected licking Stevey Todd thirty years back on the _Hebe Maitland_, "took him across his knee and whaled him good;" and Stevey Todd, though cautiously, seemed to hint that some one who might be Abe Dalrimple, couldn’t do it again, and in other respects resembled a dry codfish. Billy Corliss stood up and said:

"Gentlemen, the elements are raging. In the town of Adrian the ear of imagination detects explosions. But Pemberton’s is dedicated to peace and connubiality."

Then they retired with their connubiality, and paid us no more attention, and Pemberton, Captain Buckingham, Stevey Todd, Uncle Abimelech, and I sat by the fire.

Uncle Abimelech seemed to have something on his mind that he would like to get off, for his eyes wandered uneasily, and he muttered:

"Kettles."

"Throwed ’em, did she?" said Pemberton to encourage him, and Uncle Abimelech said:

"Some," and cast his eyes and jerked his thumb vaguely upward, toward the ceiling.

"If she throws ’em at him--Aye--" He struggled with the thought, bringing it slowly out of dim recesses to the light. "She ought to pour the bilin’ off first. It ain’t right."

Silence fell over us again. At last Captain Tom said:

"Supposing a man is loose-jointed in his mind, like Abe, or Billy Corliss a trifle, and gets took back of the ear with something hard, that steadies him, it’s no great harm if it’s warm."

"She ought to pour off the bilin’," said Uncle Abimelech uneasily.

After that we sat for a while, each taken with his own thoughts, until Pemberton was knocking out his pipe, like one approaching the idea of a night’s rest, when there came a noise in the outer hall, and the wind blew snow under the crack below the inner door. Some one bounced into the room like a storm. He was a short, thickset man with white side whiskers, and looked like an infuriated Santa Claus, for he was covered with snow.

"Most miserable, infernal, impossible night ever made, Mr. Pemberton! Forty thousand devils---Ah! Give me some of that, hot! Detestable night!"

"It is so, Andrew," said Pemberton, soothing and agreeable. "You’re near right."

"As referring to weather," said Stevey Todd, "though not putting it so strong, you might--"

But the newcomer broke in, and beat the table with his fist.

"Weather! No! Not weather. Mr. Pemberton, I’ll tell you what’s the matter. Here’s my daughter run away to be married with the coolest, freshest, limber-tongued young codfish that ever escaped salting. Not if I know it! I’ll salt him! I’ll pickle him! I will, if my name’s McCulloch."

He puffed hard, and sat down. Stevey Todd looked at Andrew McCulloch, then he looked at the others and winked cautiously, and Pemberton winked back. But Captain Tom did not look up. Uncle

Abimelech too kept his eyes on the fire. He seemed to be following his old train of thought, which Andrew McCulloch's coming had started again in his mind, for he began:

"Before I was married, her mother she used to throw kettles at me. They was kettles," he said bitterly, "with spouts and handles. Aye, afterward she did too, some."

Andrew McCulloch puffed and looked surprised and Pemberton said:

"Ran in the family?"

"Aye. Then she come across the bay in a rowboat, and I was diggin' clams, and she says. 'If you dasn't come to the house, what dast you do?' I see the minister down the beach, diggin' clams, an' he had eleven children, he had, diggin' clams, and she looked at him too, and I says, 'I das' say he'd rather'n dig clams.' We went fishin' afterward, and got eight barrel o' herring."

"You don't say!" says Andrew McCulloch, puffing and looked surprised.

Uncle Abimelech kept his eyes fixed on the kettle and wandered away in his mind. Then Captain Tom roused himself, and spoke thoughtfully.

"It was different with me," he said. "Her parents wanted another one. He was richer, but nowise so good-looking. I says to her, 'Cut and run!' but she wouldn't, as being undutiful. She took him. His name was Jones. He went bankrupt, and got paralysis, and is living still. Her parents died in different poorhouses."

Pemberton looked surprised at this too, and then thoughtful, and then he winked at Stevey Todd, who passed it back.

"I got my wife out of the back window of a boarding school, second story," said Pemberton. "She came down the blinds." And he wiped his face with his coat sleeve.

"Mine came through the cellar," said Stevey Todd. "She brought a pot of jam in her pocket, or else," he added cautiously, "or else it was pickles. It might've been pickles, but it runs in my mind it was jam."

But Pemberton's wife had been a widow first, as he once told me, and Captain Tom's and Stevey Todd's romances didn't run that way, by accounts. But as to Uncle Abimelech, it may be what he said was true.

They all fell silent again, except Andrew McCulloch, who whistled: "Whew, whew, whew!" and pulled his whiskers, now this one and that, and said:

"Bless my soul! You don't mean it!" and fidgeted in his chair. "I didn't suppose it was so usual, I didn't! God bless my soul!"

"It's their nature," said Captain Buckingham at length. "They're

made that way."

"You don’t mean it!"

"The best thing for ’em is hotel keeping."

"Eh!"

"Nothing like it, you can take my word. ’Pemberton’s Hotel. Pemberton and Buckingham, Owners and Proprietors. B. Corliss, Manager. Peace, Propriety, and Patronage.’ Aye, that’s it. They get restless. If they elopes, let ’em keep a hotel. Nothing like it."

"Whew, whew!" whistled Andrew McCulloch. "But they’ve gone!" he says. "See here! How you going to catch ’em? How you going to set ’em to hotel keeping when they elope off your hands? Where’ve they gone? That’s the point. Where’ve they gone?"

"Up," said Uncle Abimelech.

"Eh!"

"Connubilated," said Uncle Abimelech, pointing. "Gone up."

"Prayed over fifteen minutes," said Stevey Todd, "which I wouldn’t so state without watching the clock."

"What!" cried Andrew McCulloch. "Do you mean to say, you aided and abetted, Mr. Pemberton--"

"Peace and connubiality was his last words," went on Stevey Todd, following his train of thought. "Peace and connubiality, he says, and he meant the same."

"Ain’t the same!" said Uncle Abimelech.

"Do you mean to say," cried Andrew McCulloch--

"Don’t throw nothin’ till you pour off the bilin’," said Uncle Abimelech uneasily. "It ain’t right."

Andrew McCulloch puffed, "Whew! whew! whew!" as if blowing off the steam of his boiling. Then he said:

"Give me some of that, hot!"

And we all fell silent again.

The kettle sang, the chimney coughed in its throat. One heard outside the whistle of the wind, the moan of the surf far off in the night, and the snow snapping against the windows.

The clock struck ten.

THE END

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