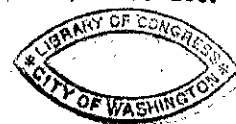


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THE
CONFEDERATE FLAG

ON THE
OCEAN.

A TALE OF THE
CRUISES OF THE SUMTER AND ALABAMA.

BY
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THE
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CHAPTER I.

ESCAPE OF THE SUMTER.

In the month of June, and upon a night of that month, in 1861, we may say that the whole strength of the Confederate navy lay within a small merchant screw-steamer, of some five hundred tons burden, at the "Head of the Passes" of the many outlets of the Mississippi River.

This small craft, which was soon to become the terror of the Yankee marine, was the now famous Sumter. Her commander, the noble and patriotic Raphael Semmes, was seated in her cabin examining letters and papers received that day. He was a man whose locks were grizzled by the passage of a life of more than half a century, much of which had been most worthily and honorably spent in the service of that government against the perversion of which he now drew his sword.

The causes which led to his resignation of his position in the navy of the United States are too well known to be mentioned here. As he was a southerner by birth and political feeling, the same motives which actuated Robert E. Lee, whose name only the blind

fanatic dares impeach, impelled the gallant Semmes to resign present rank, renounce certain future promotion, and seek dubious fate in the impoverished, almost fabulous navy of the Confederate States.

It is the contemptible fashion of many at the North to call this extraordinary man "a pirate," and to denounce him as a "Kidd," a "Black Beard," or worthy only of the opprobrium heaped upon the names of those bloodthirsty wretches who cruised, in former times, under the black flag. But these charges are merely the venting of impotent and cowardly spleen against one who, as a hero, was irreproachable, as a commander on the high sea peerless, and as a kind-hearted, generous foe, unsullied by any act of unnecessary severity. Foreign nations give him a worthy record of praise, and had the flag of the unfortunate South emerged from the tremendous struggle triumphant, the North itself would doubtless rank his name and daring equal at least to those of Paul Jones, Decatur, and Perry.

We behold in his acts the sublimity of daring and prudence. With a small merchant steamer, hurriedly and incompletely transformed into an inferior vessel-of-war, he boldly issued upon the mighty waves of the Atlantic, and challenged the gigantic power of one of the first maritime powers of the earth to crush him. Like the Roman Coriolanus, he may now, did his modesty not forbid, recall the days when he "fluttered your dove-cote" at the North, and exclaim:

"Alone, I did it."

On the night of the 29th of June, 1861, the brow of Raphael Semmes wore an anxious and troubled look. For weeks his intended cruise had been delayed, until any heart save his might well have "sickened with hope deferred. No sooner was one obstacle overcome, than, hydra-like, two sprang into its place. It had been his favorite hope that the Sumter would be plowing in the wake of the fat merchant ships of the North before the passes of the river should be blockaded by the United States fleet; but the imperfectly organized naval department of the South was incapable of furnishing either the necessary workmen or supplies of arms.

Thus dragged along the month of May, to be followed as wearily by the month of June and its scores of disappointments, until every pass of the river was rigidly blockaded by the enemy, and, to all appearance, the final shutting up of the tardy Sumter.

On the night of the 29th of June, the commander, while seated at his secretary, was approached by the First Lieutenant with a letter marked "private," which had just been brought aboard.

"It is from my young friend, Eugene Perkins," said the commander, after a hasty perusal. "It bears a very old date, and has evidently been delayed. I am sorry that the letter did not reach me before, for I reserved a lieutenantancy, as far as I was able, for him, until the place was filled. He may reach us in time to serve in some capacity, for it seems as if the Sumter is to cool her nose in the Mississippi water for some time yet."

"I survived our disappointment in failing to get out on the 21st with some equanimity," observed the First Lieutenant, wearily; "but our failure to-day comes harder. I do not know when any hopes were so taken aback as they were to-day, when, sure of escape, we dropped down to Pass l'Outre, only to behold the Brooklyn ready to gobble us, body, bones, and all."

"Very vexatious, no doubt," replied the commander, encouragingly. "But perhaps our next attempt, being the third, may be successful, and then—" He did not conclude the sentence, but the flash of his expressive eye and the frown upon his brow boded no good to the enemies of the Confederacy.

At this moment an officer of the watch entered to report.

"Two strangers aboard, sir; young gentleman and his servant, just from New Orleans, sir, with dispatches."

"Send in the young gentleman and his dispatches. Let the servant remain on deck," replied the commander; and then to the First Lieutenant, "One of the weaknesses of our people is, that our young men must be attended by a servant. On my way through the Confederacy, wherever I met our young men flocking to the armies, I noticed that nearly every other man, even of the privates, was attended by a servant. Our people are brave, and will fight like heroes, but they are not sufficiently self-dependent. Better leave that host of negroes at home to raise wheat and corn, for this war will be one of exhaustion, and should our crops fail to supply both army and people, we will not succeed."

These words of the commander were indeed prophetic, for the downfall of the Confederacy may be mainly attributable to the failure and neglect of the agricultural strength of the South, from which resulted suffering at home, desertion from the army, and the consequent ruinous depreciation of the currency.

"The young gentleman with dispatches," said the officer, again entering the cabin; and turning, the commander recognized our friend, Eugene Perkins.

"I am heartily glad to see you, Eugene," said the commander, cordially greeting the young gentleman, and at the same time re-

ceiving a packet of letters from his hand. "Unfortunately, your arrival has been delayed until you have lost the position which I endeavored to secure for you."

"I do not seek rank in devoting my services to my country," Captain Semmes, replied Eugene, with modest pride. "I am ready to serve her, if necessary, as a common seaman."

"Oh, we will try and do better than that for so true a patriot," said the commander, with a bright smile, which became his dark countenance well. "At least, we may need you as a supernumerary officer, especially as one of our officers is sometimes in feeble health. But we will arrange all this to-morrow, my young friend, and in the meantime, I resign you to the care and affability of my first officer, Lieutenant —; but, stay a moment. I hear you have brought a servant with you."

"A faithful fellow, who refused to leave me," replied Eugene; "he may be useful as a cook or a cook's assistant, though I must say that he is no seaman, nor has he ever seen water. I, of course, need no servant."

"So I judged," said the commander, musingly. "Well, the First Lieutenant will attend to that matter. If possible, he shall be employed."

A bow here dismissed the interview, and Eugene withdrew with the Lieutenant, who proved to be a kind and affable gentleman, eager to aid in every particular.

With this gentleman Eugene spent some time in conversation, and then retired for the night. On the next morning it was reported that the hated Brooklyn had vacated her watch, and gone in chase of a vessel far to the leeward.

The reception of this news on board the Sumter was most joyful, and, steam being gotten up in a hurry, her bow was for the third time directed seawards, and she was soon boldly plunging down the turbid waters of the river, to enter upon that career of success which raised a howl of rage and anguish amid the northern ports.

All was now excitement on board, and every face flushed with eagerness, save that of the steady-eyed commander, over whose resolute features no emotion, except that of iron determination, seemed to play. Yet, no doubt, his calm nature was stirred to its deepest depths. Twice already had the Sumter been baffled in her attempts to escape from the Argus-like vigilance of her powerful foes, and for a time it seemed as if the treachery or incompetency of her pilot was to drive her back to anchorage for the third time.

As the open sea was soon to appear in view, this pilot grew pale

and embarrassed, and the eagle eye of the commander at once divined his emotion.

"What is the matter with you, pilot? Have you lost courage?" he demanded, sternly.

"The fact is," whined the fellow, who was either a coward or a failure, "I haven't been along Pass a l'Ouvre for a matter of three months or more, and your honor knows that the channel is always shifting."

"Well, sir, why did you not state all this before you engaged to steer us through?" exclaimed Captain Semmes, in a stern voice, which terrified the craven.

"I thought—that is, I believed, your honor—you see—"

"Here comes a pilot-boat on the starboard bow," cried the First Lieutenant, "and he is signaling his desire to board us."

This was fortunate for the Sumter, and having taken another pilot on board, the steamer, under his guidance, again dashed boldly on.

When about six miles from the narrow opening of the bar which lay between her and the open sea, and plunging gallantly on upon the broad mouth of the river, the intention of the Confederate cruiser was divined by the commander of the Brooklyn, and the course of the latter vessel was immediately changed.

"She is heading for the bar," remarked Captain Semmes, as he watched the movements of his vindictive enemy through his spy-glass, "and I judge we have no advantage in distance."

"We have one great advantage, however," remarked Eugene, at his side. "The stream is in our favor, and, though I have heard that the Brooklyn carries light heels, I think if we can evade her superior metal, we shall reach the Pass point."

"Heaven grant it!" said the commander, fervently.

The two vessels were now rapidly converging to a common point, and the long-range guns of the Brooklyn are prepared to sink the saucy steamer which thus dared her prowess of sail and steam. Intense anxiety pervaded the bosoms of both Federals and Confederates, for upon the events of the next four hours much depended.

The smoke-stacks of each vessel poured forth dense columns of pitchy smoke, as their respective firemen, catching the fierce excitement, fed the red hot furnaces until the fires roared again. Sharp and rapid are the hissings of the steam, and furious are the rap-raps of the powerful propelling wheels. The pilot of each craft exhausts every recourse of skill, knowledge of his profession, and cunning stratagem, to gain even the slightest advantage. Nearer

and nearer approach pursuer and pursued, as each plows the mingled waters of sea and river in her efforts to first reach the narrow opening of the bar. The hearts of the crew of the gallant Sumter are anxious, indeed, as the formidable speed of the Brooklyn seems certain to cut them off from the safer waters of the Gulf.

All regarded eagerly the faces of the pilot and the commander, as these two engage in eager conversation, for the Brooklyn foams through the waves, as if sure to capture the daring steamer. But the Sumter holds her course straight for the Pass, steam and fortune aiding her. The anxious engineers watch, with eager eyes, the rapid movements of their shining machinery, and crowd on steam to the highest pressure they dare.

At length the Pass is reached! The noble Sumter has still the advantage! Boldly she dashed into the narrow opening, amid the dangerous sands. A false movement of the helm will wreck her hopes and ruin all. But her pilot is expert, and under his steady care, the little cruiser speeds through the Pass with unabated speed; her helm is put to starboard, and she rounds her course to the eastward. The bar is crossed, and the Sumter is at last afloat upon the heaving billows of the Mexican Gulf.

But danger of immediate capture is by no means over. The Brooklyn, as the Sumter crosses the perilous bar, rounds to for a moment, her heavy pivot-gun belches forth a spiteful mass of smoke and flame, a roar shakes her strong decks, and the iron globe, intended to cripple her chase, is hurled across the waves. But the bolt falls far short of its object, and the Brooklyn, swinging around in renewed pursuit, crosses the bar herself, and again bounds on in relentless pursuit.

Here the heavens seem to join their fury in the scene. Rain and wind, fierce and tempestuous, rage for a time, and the meridian sun is hid amid black clouds of storm. This soon passes away, and looking astern, Captain Semmes beholds his pertinacious foe still eager in the chase, crowding off under all sail and steam, and evidently gaining upon her quarry like a doom.

The Sumter is immediately hauled two points nearer the wind, and the baffled Brooklyn is forced to furl her sails. Now a difficulty in the boilers of the Sumter—the hot water of her boilers is carried with the steam into the cylinder of her engine, and she is forced to slacken speed. Again the Brooklyn gains upon her, and speedy capture stares her commander in the face. Once in range, a single ball from the powerful gun of the Brooklyn will compel surrender. But the difficulty is overcome; the utmost pressure is fearlessly,

desperately put on, the propeller threshes the sea at the rate of sixty-five revolutions a minute, the rapid working of the oiled machinery jars the entire ship, the fury of the engines seems to threaten to burst open her laboring sides, but the Sumter gains upon her enemy, and, after a few hours' pursuit, the Brooklyn puts up her helm, changes her course, and suddenly retires to watch the door of that stable from which the most valuable steed had escaped.

As the stern of the Brooklyn is presented to the Sumter, three loud and hearty cheers rise from the decks of the Confederate cruiser, and she bounds on exultant, with the stars and bars of the young Republic gallantly streaming in the breeze of the Mexican Gulf.

CHAPTER II.

THE RETIRED SEA-CAPTAIN.

UPON one of the fashionable streets of the slightly sanctimonious city of Boston, in the year 1861, resided Captain Jabez Hosmer, a wealthy retired sea-captain. But the reader must not suppose that Jabez Hosmer was, by any means, a fashionable man, because his residence was upon a fashionable street. Captain Hosmer "sprang from the muck-pile," he was ever wont to aver, but that was before he grew rich and retired from the rugged toils of the sea. At the time we introduce him, he had succeeded in tracing his ancestry to a paternity among the Puritans, and was fond of boasting that his great grandfather fought and devoured Pequods, bought and sold Nipmucks to West Indian planters, traded in New England rum, bored the tongues of Quakers with red-hot poker, burned alive white women for witches, originated the African "slave" trade, preached sermons four hours long, and cheated the Virginians at sight—in short, was an expert in all those salient gifts which have ennobled the name of Puritan, and created a lively emulation for strict imitation in the descendants of the holy Pilgrims.

It is by no means probable that Captain Jabez Hosmer had the slightest idea of who his father was, for his mother could not have told him—he never having seen that, perhaps, worthy lady, but having been picked up, rolled in soiled red flannel, upon one of the Boston piers, at the very tender age of about six months.

Thus deserted, he was found and adopted by an aged, one-eyed female dealer in clams. With this gentle Samaritan he thrived until he ran away to sea, at the age of twelve. Many years passed, and Jabez Hosmer, so named by the old woman, returned to Boston as the first mate of a sailing vessel.

His ancient one-eyed friend had disappeared, and her place knew her no more, so that Jabez found no ties to bind him to his probable birth-place. Though he had no natural ties, however, he had many of interest, and he resolved to adopt Boston as his home, when not at sea.

The vessel of which he was first mate, though bearing the mild name of "The Deacon," and ostensibly engaged in the gold and ivory trade upon the African coast, was in fact a "slaver," owned by several Boston deacons, who had dubbed their remunerative craft "The Deacon," in honor of their high rank in the church.

The fact that "The Deacon" was a successful slaver was known to but few, and these few either had similar righteous enterprises of their own afloat, or were in some close manner interested. It is now well known that the foundation of many of the great fortunes of the now religiously wealthy in the "Modern Athens," derive their solidity and existence from the African "slave trade," carried on for years after William Lloyd Garrison began to blow his Abolition trumpet to marshal war upon southern "slavery."

In due time Jabez Hosmer became Captain and part owner of "The Deacon," and pushing his fortunes steadily, he was finally enabled to retire into a fashionable residence, in a fashionable street, with a fashionable fortune—that is, with a property, afloat and ashore, of little less than a quarter of a million.

Let it be borne in mind that the great bulk of this handsome property consisted in sailing vessels—such as ships, brigs, barques, schooners, etc.—our captain preferring that kind of property to any other.

It is traditionary that a more profane, vulgar, heathenish old salt-tongued reprobate than Jabez Hosmer never beat a white sailor to jelly with a handspike, until he retired to that fashionable residence in that fashionable street. (I would name the street were it not that there are so many so much like our retired captain living thereon, that I might be supposed to be aiming at some of them, whereas I have no one but Captain Jabez Hosmer in my eye.)

Having retired, Jabez, to be fully in fashion, joined a fashionable Boston church, in which fashion, Boston fashion, demanded that the preacher should fulminate temporal and eternal perdition against the

barbarous portion of the late American Union called now, as a joke, of course, the Rebel States. The only reason for this fulmination was the fact that said barbarous people attended to their own affairs, elevated the negro from a savage to an inferior manhood, and snapped their fingers in the face of Boston presumption.

Captain Jabez, who had bought and sold more negroes than he had dollars; and "chucked into the sea" more dead and half dead darkeys than there were nails in the church pulpit, soon became famous for his holy horror of negro "slavery" in the southern States.

The reader may now have gained a slight insight into his character, and we will therefore speak of his family as it appeared in May, 1861. The family, besides the servants, consisted of the pious captain, his wife, and an adopted daughter. Mrs. Jabez Hosmer had filled the high and enviable position of wife unto Jabez for many years, but no offspring had blessed the union. The captain had, years before his retracy, secured the valuable services of his present dame as washer-woman-in-chief of his bachelorhood. By degrees the lady had obtained a firm hold upon his affections or fears, and finally became his legitimate spouse, in defiance of the many vows of the captain to the contrary. Why the surly old shark yielded his name to Mrs. Jabez, whilom Molly Ranter, will appear farther in our story; we will only state that he did so almost immediately after the appearance of Florence, an adopted daughter, in the city of Boston.

The personal appearance of Mrs. Jabez was by no means ravishingly enchanting. Tall and masculine in frame, angular in outline, thin in feature, with greenish eyes, deeply set beneath bushy, red eyebrows, a long, acute nose, coarse, sandy hair, and a pale complexion, as freckled as if lavishly sprinkled with cayenne pepper, a wide, thin-lipped mouth, garnished to extravagance with large, saw-like teeth, and with a temper like a furnace in full blast, this amiable lady did not strike the beholder as being anything more nor less than a virago of the most tempestuous character. Yet she, being rich and a member of a red-hot Abolition church, was considered as a charming member of Bostonian society—in her way.

Neither could the captain complain, as many husbands do, that his wife was uglier than himself. Nature had not exhausted herself in making him up. She had made him ridiculously long and broad in the body, and laughably short and broad in the legs. His head was also long, while his face was broad and brutal in feature, with cold, grey eyes, protruding and aggressive; his nose, instead of

running to an acute point like that of his wife, was of a bottle shape, and its hue betrayed a fondness for any kind of alcoholic distillation ever invented by man.

Endeavoring to follow the fashion, as became Boston aristocrats, this pair ever closely pursued the latest style in dress, except that the captain persisted in wearing slippers, all the uproar of Mrs. Jabez being in vain.

Florence, the adopted daughter, in 1861, appeared to be about seventeen years of age, though there was an uncertainty upon that point, as the captain asserted that he had picked her up at sea, the sole tenant of a dismantled ship—and she appeared at that time to be about two or three years old—too young to know her name, age, or give any information as regards her parentage. Our readers will hereafter learn whether the captain could “lie to the marines,” or adored veracity.

On the evening of a day in the month of May, 1861, the captain snored himself awake, some two hours after a hearty dinner, and found himself comfortably seated in his parlor, with the enchanting face of Mrs. Jabez not far from him. She was sewing, as if for wages, and the captain slowly taking colors and shapes, discovered that she was busy in embroidering the silken folds of an American flag.

“Hey!” cried the captain, “who brought in that job, and what in thunder are you doing it for?”

“The Fifth leaves to-morrow, and I promised to put in a star or two,” replied Mrs. Jabez, and following this information with the words: “Captain Hosmer, will you quit cursing in your sleep?”

“Roach me!” cried the captain, rubbing his short, grizzly hair until it stood on end, and not at all increasing the benevolence of his aspect thereby, “since I joined the church I have to clap a guy upon my tongue, for mayhap I might rip out a stunner that would shake the spectacles off a parson’s nose. So, I suppose, I make up for it by cussing in my naps. Did you hear me the other day when I got shut up in the cellar? I think I cussed steadily, full sail, for the matter of an hour. But you said the Fifth was agoing to start? Where for? Virginia?”

“Yes, to drive the rebels into the Gulf of Mexico,” replied Mrs. Jabez, with a dig of her needle into the flag, expressive of her hate of Jeff. Davis and all his worshippers.

“It’s my opinion,” ventured the captain, in an oily way, which he used when fearful of contradiction from the strong-minded woman, “that them rebels ain’t oysters, to be gobbled up in a

hurry. I know somethin’ about them ‘fire-eaters,’ and I tell ye, Mrs. Jabez, that they can fight like the devil—excuse me—the evil one.”

“Their embattled hosts will melt before our northern prowess like snow in the sun,” exclaimed Mrs. Jabez, who had heard Mr. Garrison use the same expression on the night before at an Abolition lecture.

“Bosh!” said the captain, checking the words “damn my eyes!” in time to save his piety. “The rebels won’t melt until their bread bags is empty, mind that. One thing is fair, though, and that is all I care for—all the fighting will be on shore, and my craft can sail at easy insurance. But where is Florence?”

“In her room, I suppose. I told her to hold herself in readiness to accompany me and my brother, Lucas, to the flag presentation at Tremont Temple to-night.”

“And after that—when you come home—you know?” asked the captain, in a husky tone, which might be taken for a whisper:

“You are to have the Rev. Jacob Hallock here to perform the ceremony, Captain?”

“You ain’t broached the subject to Florence yet?”

“What for, stupid? You know she is hopelessly blind to the merits of brother Lucas.”

“No wonder, seein’ he is nigh on to thirty years older than her, and he ain’t the best lookin’ man in Boston, by a hawser’s length,” remarked the captain.

“Captain Hosmer! Lucas can pass anywhere for my twin brother!” exclaimed Mrs. Jabez, darting a glance of flame at her spouse. “I know you do not think me fine lookin’, but there are others—yes, Captain Hosmer, there are others—” She finished the sentence by twitching her sandy head aside, as if to say that those “others” were madly in love with Mrs. Jabez Hosmer, and nothing save a high sense of her matrimonial duties restrained her abilities to play the role of a charming elderly coquette.

“Yes, he is the burned image of you, especially in the figure-head,” said the captain.

“And in resolution, Captain Hosmer,” retorted the dame, shaking her lean finger at him, and stamping sharply. “In resolution, too; so look sharp, for he won’t be fooled with—he knows too much to be fooled with, Captain Hosmer, and he and me have decided that Florence shall be his wife this very night, Captain Hosmer, so shut up and mind your own business, for I believe you are a rebel.”

“Smash!” roared the captain. “Curse the rebels? What have

the rebels got to do with your brother Lucas marrying Florence—tell me that?"

"Don't you know that she is in love?"

"Oh!"

"Yes, and with that young squirt who has been going to Harvard College—that slave-holding fellow, Eugene Perkins, from Louisiana—did you know that? Of course you don't—you never know anything until you see it in the 'Post.' What are you staring at, Captain Hosmer?"

The captain was staring, staring straight into the sea-green eyes of his wife, a steady stare of dismay, blank, profound, unmitigated. His red face grew pale, and the purple nose grew livid, while the square, bull-dog like jaws worked spasmodically.

"Eugene Perkins! from Louisiana! Is there any one of that name from that State living?" gasped the ex-"slave" trader.

"Oh, you have not told me all your secrets, then?" exclaimed his wife, eyeing him keenly. "Come, this won't pass with Molly Ranter that was—mind that. I found out enough, when you brought the girl to Boston fourteen years ago, to help me find out more. You said you had told me all—you lied, Jabez Hosmer—you tell it in your face, you do. You have kept back a part, you hev. Tell me now."

The fierce eagerness of this virago to extract the secret from her husband had much that was horrible in it, and even the hardened old ex-slave trader recoiled from her flaming eyes and furious visage, as she leaned her gaunt form far forward and grasped his necktie with her skinny claws. If ever a woman looked as if she might pummel, claw, throttle, or wrench a secret from a man, Mrs. Jabez looked like it then.

But the captain had much presence of mind, and though startled by the resolute impetuosity of the woman, laughed in her face and replied:

"I was thinking of a dream I had, that was all."

"A dream! Captain Hosmer—"

"Yes, a dream. Let go! slack off! I dreamed while I was asleep that the cursed rebels got up a navy in spite of the Powhatan, the Brooklyn and all our fleet, and that some of their cruisers sunk and burned and played old Cain generally with the Yankee marine, and that it was my luck to have every one of my craft gobbled up by the pirates—"

"What has that got to do with Eugene Perkins, of Louisiana?"

demanded Mrs. Jabez, sinking into her seat, appalled before the image of marine destruction conjured up by the captain.

"To do with him? Why, my dream said that a rascal named Eugene Perkins was one of the pirate crew—mind that!"

"Eugene Perkins, of Louisiana?"

"Just that, Mrs. Jabez," asserted the captain, who saw that he had bewildered his spouse, and thrown her "off his wake."

Mrs. Jabez, being a firm believer in that Bostonian delusion and Yankee swindle called Spiritualism, was quite superstitious, and as she was well aware that the greater part of her husband's ill-gotten wealth was upon the sea, and as the possibility of a rebel navy sinking, seizing, selling, and burning flashed through her mind, she at once imagined that the spirits had made Jabez Hosmer a speaking, though very stupid, medium. Clairvoyancy was another Bostonian humbug in which she placed great faith, and the startling dream affirmed by the captain shocked her from her customary acuteness.

"Captain, you must try and get all your craft in port as soon as you can," she remarked, earnestly. "If I recollect right, you did not follow my advice, and insure 'em all."

"Bah! there is no danger, Mrs. Jabez. Do you suppose that the mighty Yankee nation can't protect its commerce? Nonsense! If any rebel pirate should try that game, we'd catch him and 'Kidd' him in a week. But let us speak of Florence."

CHAPTER III.

FLORENCE FLIES.

As is common among the parlors of many fashionable houses sometimes, folding-doors served to divide the spacious reception saloon of the captain into two apartments, and while the preceding conversation was going on, these doors were closed. The household discipline of the worthy Mrs. Jabez was exceedingly strict, and her laws made it almost a capital offense for any of her servants to venture into her peculiar domains unsummoned. Therefore she had no fears that the conversation was overheard by a third person, especially as she felt confident that Florence was safely locked in her room, indignantly awaiting the hour when the gallant

Fifth should be presented with the banner, as per programme of the lady committee.

But Miss Florence was not of that meek character which vents its protestations against tyranny in tears. No sooner had Mrs. Jabez locked her up than she deliberately opened a window, and clinging to the blinds, lowered her beautiful self to the latticed-roof of a window balcony below. Thence descending, with an agility which would have reminded the captain of his scape-grace boyhood, she reached the balcony, and noiselessly raising a window, entered the dining-room of the mansion, where she paused a moment "to take soundings," as the captain would have phrased it.

The reader will at once perceive that Miss Florence was a young lady of resolution, quickness, and daring; and while she pauses, we will give a brief description of her appearance.

As we have already said, she seemed to be about seventeen or eighteen years of age, although her form was fully developed into the lovely exuberance of full womanhood. A glance at her face, however, told you that she was still in her teens, as that indescribable expression peculiar to unmarried young ladies was brilliantly charming upon her beautiful features. Old Jabez always wasted breath when he introduced her as

"My adopted daughter, sir—found adrift in the tropics, sir, fourteen years ago, sir—don't know who her parents was—my adopted daughter, sir," for she no more resembled him or Mrs. Jabez, in any single feature, than an angel resembles the devil in horns and hoofs.

Of stately height, perfect and graceful figure, a complexion blending on the rose and lily, hair like shining jet, eyes black, large and brilliant, lips delicately moulded, and red as carmine, a frank and noble expression ever flitting over faultless features, Florence was undoubtedly a beauty of the highest order, uniting in her magnificent person the loveliness of a northern and southern belle, rarely found in one.

She knew that she was called an adopted daughter, but she knew that the Hosmers entertained for her no feelings of affection; and suspected, justly, that they both feared and disliked her. Why, she was of course unable to divine, for she knew nothing of her parentage, nor had she ever given her so-called protectors any reason to fear her. At an early age she had been placed in a boarding-school at Jamaica Plains, near Boston, and had quitted that secluded asylum only on graduation, in July, 1860. Since that time the jealousy,

or the purposes of Mrs. Jabez, had held her closely immured, almost a prisoner in that house.

But while at Jamaica Plains she had become acquainted with a student of Harvard College, Eugene Perkins, of Louisiana, whose manly beauties of person and character, so far superior to any hitherto seen by her, had won her first love, and women of her temperament never love but once, and then even to death.

This tender secret she had firmly believed was known only to Eugene, with whom she had exchanged vows of eternal fidelity. That the astute and vigilant dragoness, Mrs. Jabez, had discovered it, and was laboring desperately to thwart it by forcing her to marry Lucas Butler, Florence did not suspect.

Her purpose in escaping from the durance in which Mrs. Jabez had placed her, was not to avoid the flag presentation, but to have a parting meeting with Eugene, who was upon the eve of leaving the realms of Abe Lincoln for New Orleans, there to take his position as a naval officer under Captain Raphael Semmes, of the Confederate cruiser Sumter. Having succeeded in escaping from her room, it was now the object of the young lady to escape unperceived from the house.

While pausing upon what course to take, whether to make her egress through the hall, or by way of the servants' apartments, her attention was directed by a dismal roar, which at first caused some fluttering of her heart. She smiled at her trepidation, however, when she recognized this dissonant noise as the snoring of the captain.

"He is still taking his nap in the front parlor," thought Florence. "My hat and shawl are in the rear parlor, and I think the folding-doors are drawn. Mrs. Jabez must be in the parlor with him, working upon that flag she is crazy to fight under. I wish they would make her colonel and let her go. But I will try to get my hat and shawl, for I do not like to appear on Boston Common bareheaded."

She glided from the dining-room, across the hall and into the rear parlor. She had barely entered, when the conversation we have narrated began. Florence had no desire to play the eavesdropper, and proceeded to secure her hat, veil and shawl, intending to withdraw from her perilous position as speedily as possible; but the mention of her name, as the burly captain asked, "Where is Florence?" instantly gained her attention to all that followed.

The fair face of the young lady, which was mantled with a rosy red under the excitement of her position, turned ashy white as she learned the miserable fate Mrs. Jabez and the captain had plotted

for her. Never, until that instant, had she regarded Lucas Butler, the brother of Mrs. Jabez, with any sentiment save that of contempt and indifference; but this sudden revelation at once caused her to think of him with feelings of terror and disgust.

"Great heavens!" she mentally exclaimed. "Do they really intend to force me to become the wife of that ugly, vulgar old debauchee—a man whose face so resembles that of a goat that he might pass for a satyr!"

The further conversation of the pair of plotters left no doubt upon her mind, and Florence, daring and strong as she was, felt her limbs tremble beneath her as she listened.

Mere temporary evasion of the vigilance of Mrs. Jabez had led her to attempt an escape from the house, only to exchange farewells with her lover at their trysting tree upon the Common, but this cruel and barbarous plot demanded that her escape should be not only speedy but permanent. Yet, as the captain was now awake, and likely at any instant to go prowling about the house, as was his habit, the unhappy young lady was fearfully perplexed as to her best and safest course. While she hesitated the conversation proceeded, all of which reached her attentive ears, when suddenly the captain exclaimed:

"But where is the evening paper? I have not read it. Ah! here it is, and blast my eyes!—excuse me—if the first thing I see isn't this," and he read aloud from the paper:

"**REBEL PIRATES.**—We are reliably informed that the rebel government is plotting to swarm the seas with piratical cruisers, to prey upon northern commerce—not merely by the exploded authority of letters-of-marque, but actually as commissioned men-of-war. Our government is upon the alert, and the plans of the rebels are well known. The United States steamer Brooklyn, the frigates Niagara and Minnesota, as well as the Powhattan, are now watching the movements of the rebel steamer Sumter, at the mouth of the Mississippi, supposed to be commanded by one Raphael Semmes, late a commander in the United States Navy, now a piratical traitor. Still the Sumter may elude the blockade, and if once upon the seas, our sailing vessels will suffer enormously before she can be captured. Rates of marine insurance are rapidly advancing."

"What do you think of that, Mrs. Jabez?" roared the captain. "Curse my liver!—excuse me—if my dream was not a warning. Let me see—what have I afloat?"

He scrambled his crooked legs wildly, and extricated from his pocket a memorandum book, from which he read as follows:

Golden Rocket, ship, Bangor, Maine.....	\$15,000
Ber Dunning, brigantine, Maine.....	3,000
Montmorency, ship, Maine, coal trade.....	1,000
Anna Schmidt, ship, Maine.....	100,000
Nora, ship, Boston and Calcutta.....	27,000
Ocean Rover, barque, Boston, whaler.....	25,000
Altamaha, hermaphrodite brig, New Bedford.....	3,000

"But what's the use of running over the list?" cried the captain. "I know I have a matter of three hundred thousand dollars, more or less, afloat, and nearly all of it uninsured. Curse the rebels! Semmes? Who is he? Wish I had him here, I do. I'd work him, mind that. But, pshaw! there ain't no danger, not a mite. The rebels can fight on land; let 'em, damn 'em—excuse me—they'll go under like lop-sided junks in a hurricane, mind that. But let me read the war news."

As the captain settled himself for the perusal of the "war news," Florence resolved to seize the opportunity to depart, and boldly entering the hall, tiptoed her way to the front door, the door of the front parlor being closed. In opening the front door the lock made so loud a noise that she knew the attention of the watchful Mrs. Jabez was aroused thereby, and resolutely slamming the door after her, she ran down the stone steps and hurried along the street towards Boston Common, where she knew her lover was awaiting her.

On hearing the slamming of the door, Mrs. Jabez, already alarmed by the noise of the lock, darted to the window in time to catch a glimpse of the retreating maiden, and forgetting her fashionable piety, screeched:

"Blast that gal! if she ain't run away!"

CHAPTER IV.

AN ELOPEMENT.

CAPTAIN JABEZ, who had become entangled, bewildered, and "out of his reckoning" in floundering, like a speared porpoise, amid one of Abe Lincoln's war proclamations, of which he could neither make head nor tale, but who was resolutely feeling his way along, in hopes of finding a little joke at the end, no sooner heard the screeches of his better half, than he scrambled to his puffy slippers, lurched into the hall, clapped his hat upon his head, and roaring out—

"Darn her eyes!—excuse me—I'll give her chase and overhaul her afore she doubles the next point corner. If I don't, sink me!"

With these words he trotted down the street steps, and "under full sail, every line taut as a fiddle-string," as he expressed it, put himself in chase of the fair fugitive, whose silken shawl was in sight as his fat feet struck the pavement.

But the ecstasy of rage with which the infuriated Mrs. Jabez entertained herself and her astonished cat was marvelous to behold. By no means confident in the fleetness of the captain, whose legs were liable to involuntary attempts at the most difficult feats of the Highland Fling when he tried a "double quick," she darted towards the hall, resolved to follow the chase herself. But as she sprang forward, the flag she adorned became entangled around her tongs-like legs and toasting-fork like feet, thereby causing the long lady to spread herself like a flying squirrel in headlong descent, and to execute a gymnastic feat upon all-fours, which concluded with bringing her sharp nose in violent contact with an overturned work-box.

Happily for her reputation for intense piety and matronly decorum, no one heard the expressions of Mrs. Jabez as she regained her feet and stamped venomously upon the flag of her country for its share in her disaster. Having been a washerwoman upon the Boston wharves for many years, few ladies could exceed Mrs. Jabez in vituperative language, and no doubt the "adored flag" received, in the space of three minutes or less, from the patriotic lips of the irate

lady, a more thorough cursing and anathematizing than the poet of the "Tribune" dreamed of when he sang:

"Tear down the flaunting lie,
Half-mast the starry flag,
Insult no sunny sky
With hate's polluted rag!"

The appearance and style of Mrs. Jabez was so terrific that her pet cat, a feline gentleman of uniform dignity of demeanor, started from the vicinity, tail rampant, as if these heroics had forcibly and rapidly impressed his instincts with sudden death; nor was he mistaken in his prudence, for, when enraged, Mrs. Jabez was wont to vent her wrath upon any living thing within her reach, as our feline gentleman had had keen experience.

Having shaken off the trampled flag, Mrs. Jabez snatched up from the hall-table what she supposed to be a sun-bonnet, clapped it upon her sandy head, and followed close after the captain, who reminded one of a crippled steam-tug, puffing and snorting against a head-wind, cross-sea, and ebb-tide.

As the lower limbs of Mrs. Jabez were of the greyhound order, she soon bore alongside the captain, and was rapidly forging ahead, without even hailing him, when the captain brought her to with a bellow of astonishment as he noticed her singular head-gear.

"Lay to! What in—excuse me—are you doing with my quarter-deck, Sunday hat on?"

Mrs. Jabez, who had not noticed the grins and stares of those she met, clapped her hand to her head, and found that in her haste she had mistaken the tall "bee-grim" beaver of the captain for her sun-bonnet, an error which forcibly proves the perturbation of mind with which she was afflicted at that moment.

Burning with mortification, the dame, not being able to see Florence in any direction, commanded the captain to call in the aid of the police, and then hurriedly returned to her home, mentally vowing extreme, excessive, and extraordinary vengeance upon Florence—when caught.

"The police!" muttered Captain Jabez, as he stared about him. "I don't like 'em, and shan't go nigh 'em, if I can help it; I'll cruise towards the Common, where I have heard that them as is soft upon each other often meets. Then there's the Museum, too—but I'll try the Common first."

Meanwhile, Florence, who expected a close chase, had given the captain the slip by suddenly entering an alley, and passing through

it at a run, coming out upon another street. Still walking rapidly, she hurried to the Common, little suspecting that chance had directed the captain to the same locality.

Pacing to and fro, with the slow but impatient steps of an expectant lover, near the base of a gigantic elm of the Common, was a young gentleman whose superior gifts of form and feature would have attracted admiration in any assemblage. He was elegantly clad, and wore his garments with an air of grace and ease which proved that he had seen much of the world already, although he could not have been more than twenty-three or twenty-four years of age. This young gentleman, whose dark eyes flashed with a brave and noble spirit of daring and love of adventure, was Eugene Perkins, of Louisiana, recently a law student of Harvard University, awaiting the coming of one who was the dearest on earth to him, to bid her farewell, ere departing upon that dangerous career he had chosen, namely, to fight for the supremacy of the Confederate flag upon the sea.

The proud and lofty motive of this young man was well proved by the fact that, although he possessed great wealth, both in the South and in the North, he willingly, nay, eagerly, threw away a life of certain ease and pleasure to tempt the dangers of the sea, added to the perils of maritime war. It is well known that as the exigencies of the contest compelled the belligerent powers to call for "more men," "more men," thousands of the wealthy young men of the North fled to Canada for refuge, or took shelter under the infamous three hundred dollars exemption act. No desire to avoid duty and danger could find a place in the breast of Eugene Perkins, who firmly believed, and was willing to risk all, that the cause of the South was the cause of true democratic liberty.

His inclinations led him to choose a naval position, as during his earlier life he had been a midshipman in the American navy, a position he had left reluctantly to please his uncle, his only living male relative of any nearness of kin. When the war began overtly in April, he had at once wrote to his uncle, then in England, that his duty as a citizen of the South demanded that he should strike in her defence, and that he intended to abandon the study of the law to take a position, no matter how lowly, under Captain Raphael Semmes.

In reply to this communication, his uncle had written, applauding his resolve, and lamenting that age and infirmity denied himself the privilege of striking a blow for his beloved South.

Thus, in the latter part of May, 1861, we find the young gentleman

upon the eve of a speedy departure for New Orleans, and awaiting the coming of Miss Florence.

His patience was at length rewarded by the appearance of the young lady, flushed with haste and evidently much excited.

"You do not know what difficulty I have had in keeping my appointment, Eugene," remarked the young lady, as her lover grasped her hand, and led her to an iron bench not far from the tree. "I have been locked up, made a descending escalade, pierced the territory of the enemy, and been hotly pursued by a marine master and a sea-ogress."

"Of course you mean by that the delightful pair, the Hosmers, who have probably detected our secret," replied Eugene. "I regret this, as you will be exposed to continual persecution."

"No doubt of that, if I return to their house. But you do not know what a fate they wish to force upon me, dear Eugene," said Florence, who then rapidly narrated the conversation she had overheard.

The lovers were so busy in exchanging comments upon this important subject, that they did not notice the cautious approach of a third party, clad in a semi-naval garb, who regarded the young pair first with surprise, and then with silent rage.

The third party was a man over fifty years of age, tall and lean almost to deformity, with the face of Mrs. Jabez peering from immense red whiskers—whiskers of a dirty, grizzly red, still bearing traces of having been dyed brown. Cruelty, lust, avarice, cowardice, malignity were deeply engraved upon the repulsive face of this man, whose cap, with a band of gold, denoted that he held some rank upon the sea. His utterance, harsh and hoarse, was the first intimation that the lovers had of his proximity.

"Miss Florence," said he, drawing near, "it is no doubt without the knowledge of my sister that you are thus violating maidenly decorum in billing and cooing in public."

At first sound of this dissonant voice, Florence started as if in terror, and clung closely to her lover, whose dark eyes flashed astonishment upon the speaker. But when the insulting remarks were concluded, Miss Florence calmly replied:

"Eugene, this is Captain Lucas Butler, of whom we were speaking."

"I am extremely happy to make your acquaintance," exclaimed the southerner, rising gravely, and seizing the long nose of the intruder with his nervous fingers.

The length of the nose of Captain Lucas, and the vigor of

Eugene's fingers, enabled the lover to retain his hold while he dealt his prisoner several severe slaps upon the face, saying, rapidly :

"Let this teach you never to presume to address this lady in public or private, and should you desire any further acquaintance with me, expect a worse chastisement."

Stamping with rage, and wrenching his nose from those iron-like fingers, Captain Lucas thrust a boatswain's whistle into his mouth, and blew it shrilly. Its keen notes were instantly answered by the rapid approach of two powerful, dark-featured men, whose appearance smacked of the sea, and to whom Captain Lucas roared out—

"Smash that fellow! Beat him to a jelly! He has insulted—he has assaulted me! Hammer him!"

"I won't pass here, captain," replied one of the men. "We are in Boston now, and the fellow has already drawn his repeater, and means blood. I see it in his eye. If this was in South America, we wouldn't leave a whole bone in his body. But he'll shoot, and the police will cage all."

"Spot him then! Follow him up! Curse him, I'll have satisfaction, if murder comes of it," snarled the cowardly Lucas, turning away.

"See here, my hearties," remarked Eugene, as he turned upon the two bullies, "if you follow me, I'll lead you to the Mayor's office. I pulled your captain's nose, and he deserved it. I'll do more for you, if you attempt to annoy me."

The seamen, who had other game in view, took the hint and withdrew, leaving the lovers to pursue their way unmolested. But the strollings of Captain Jabez suddenly brought him face to face with Eugene and Florence, as they were about to leave the Common, in fact, as they were in the act of entering a carriage.

"Thunder! What does this mean?" roared Captain Jabez. "Eloping! This won't do."

"Out of the way, sir!" replied Eugene, as he collared the captain and whirled him aside.

"Get in, Florence—haste!" and, before Captain Jabez could regain his feet and comprehend what was going on, the carriage had rolled away with the lovers, leaving him rocking upon his heels and toes, in a paroxysm of impotent rage.

CHAPTER V.

FLORENCE SEEKING REFUGE.

EUGENE, of young and excitable passions, had shared largely in the fierce excitement of the chase, and tears of joyful enthusiasm rolled from his eyes as the Brooklyn relinquished the pursuit. But before speaking of him as aboard the Sumter, it is due to the curiosity of the reader to speak of the welfare of Miss Florence, and to take up for a moment the events which followed the sudden escape of that young lady in the carriage from Boston Common.

Being fully resolved never to return to the house or power of Captain Hosmer, to incur the risk of a hateful union with the hideous transport captain, Lucas Butler, Florence consulted with her lover in the carriage as to what was best to be done.

"I think the proper course for you to pursue is to call upon our friend, the Rev. Oliver Stevens, and be made the wife of your humble servant," was the gallant reply of Eugene.

"Would you consent to be married by a ~~minister~~ ^{severely injured} playfully replied Florence.

"To become your husband," returned the impatient lover, "I would consent to have the ceremony performed by a Kalmuck Tartar."

"Of course, for the Kalmuck Tartars are really better Christians than the ~~Aboriginals~~," replied Florence. "But seriously, my dear Eugene, I do not think it best for us to marry yet. You have never informed your uncle of—"

"Oh, though he bears the same name that I do," said Eugene, "he is only my uncle by several degrees removed. He is not the brother of either of my late parents, only second or third cousin. True, he is the nearest male relative I have, and has been my guardian; but I am now two years over age, and—"

"No, no! don't try to persuade me, or I will not listen to you," exclaimed the prudent young lady, placing her tiny hand over his moustache. "Your uncle might be displeased, and thus I be the means of depriving you of the countenance of your sole male relative—"

"But listen—"

"No, I will not listen, Eugene. It would not be right, and might

cause future unhappiness. Your uncle, from all that you have told me, is a man who has seen much sorrow, and one who loves you as if you were his own son. It would be ungenerous in you, and imprudent in me, to take so important a step without even his knowledge."

Our readers are doubtless pleased to see that our heroine possessed unusual discretion and magnanimity, as well as charming beauty. Many unhappy results which follow clandestine marriage would be escaped, did the fair always reason so prudently.

"Well, what shall I do?" asked the perplexed lover, more deeply in love. "I must depart in the morning, to be in time to join my ship."

"Tell the driver to drive straight to Roxbury. I have a warm old lady friend there; she loves me, and she hates the Hosmers. She will protect me, I know. Then do you, before you leave Boston, write to your uncle, and fully set before him the whole matter. If he consents, why, I suppose, when the war is over, I must say yes."

"When the war is over! Heaven knows when that may be," exclaimed Eugene. "It may last seven years."

"What if it does? Didn't Jacob wait twice as long before he got the one he loved?" cried Florence.

"Besides, it may be a year before I receive a letter from my uncle," said Eugene, in a sad tone.

"Cheer up! my future Nelson," replied Florence, laughing. "The great William H. Seward says the war will be over in ninety days—think of that!"

"Seward is a fanatical hypocrite."

"Of course he is; but we won't go into politics, Eugene. We will go into Roxbury, if you please; so check the driver, who is taking us to Charlestown or Chelsea, and tell him to drive to Roxbury. When we reach there, we will leave the carriage and hunt up my old friend, Mrs. Tibbets."

"Why not drive up to her house?"

"Silly man! Because Captain Hosmer will cross-examine our hackdriver in Boston within forty-eight hours, and try to find out my hiding place."

"True; I think you have twice as much common sense as I have," replied Eugene, checking the carriage, and giving the desired order to the driver.

The vehicle was turned, and a rapid ride soon carried the lovers

across the famous "Neck," and took them into the beautiful city of Roxbury.

"Now let us leave the carriage," said Florence, who was quite collected.

Leaving the carriage and dismissing the driver, the pair walked through several streets, until Florence halted herself and companion before a neat and unpretending cottage, at the door of which the young lady rapped with the boldness of one sure of a welcome reception.

The summons was answered by the opening of the door, and the appearance of a hag so old, so repulsive in form and feature, that Eugene whispered to Florence—

"Good heavens! it is not possible that this woman is your friend!"

"No, I never saw her before," replied Florence, staring in wonder at the fierce-featured, one-eyed crone, whose solitary optic glared upon the youthful pair like a bull's-eye lantern.

"Has Mrs. Tibbets moved away?" asked Florence, shrinking from the evil face of the crone, whose tall, lean, bowed form, fearfully gaunt, clad in a dingy, black gown, bent far from the door of the cottage, and seemed to mock at the lovers.

The crone rolled the blood-red eye from Florence to Eugene, then back again, appeared to study each closely, and replied—

"Are ye close of kin? you and the young gent, I mean. You two look enough like to be brother and sister, only that he is dark. But I'm guessing that you are lovers, eh?"

Florence, blushing deeply and amazed at the sharpness of the crone, was about to reply, when an elderly lady, of great benevolence of countenance, hurried from within the house, and throwing her arms around the young lady, exclaimed—

"My dear Florence Hosmer, how delighted I am to see you. Come in."

Eugene had not recovered from the sharpness of the crone, and being a great admirer of extraordinary ugliness, if we may use the phrase, continued to observe her. He noticed that when Mrs. Tibbets called the young lady Florence Hosmer, the solitary eye fired up fiercely for a second, then grew speculative, to be followed by a dissatisfied shake of the head.

"My friend, Mr. Eugene Perkins, Mrs. Tibbets," said Florence, after exchanging cordial salutations with the benevolent and warm-hearted old lady.

"What did you say his name was?" cried the one-eyed crone,

suddenly much interested, and staring more glaringly than ever at the young gentleman.

"Kate! Kate!" exclaimed Mrs. Tibbets, in a chiding tone. "There, return to the kitchen, my good woman. Poor thing," she remarked to Eugene, "she is of unsound mind, very, and we must excuse her. Any friend of my Florence is warmly welcome. I used to teach her embroidery some years ago, when she was a pupil at Jamaica Plains. But come in."

The three went into the house, paying no further attention to one-eyed Kate, who, having seated herself upon the doorstep, began a wandering retrospective revery, in which she seemed to tally off dates, events and numbers upon her clam-like fingers.

"One—nine—eighteen—no, fourteen—that's 1846—this is 1861—so it must have been in 1847—fourteen years ago—and she must be, say seventeen or eighteen. Hosmer—Eugene Perkins. All of which means something, and now I have a clue. I'll go and think about it." So saying, she entered the house as noiselessly as a puff of black dust, and disappeared.

Meanwhile, in the cosy parlor of Mrs. Tibbets, Florence was setting forth before that lady the causes which had led her to seek refuge from the machinations of the Hosmers; to all of which revelation the benevolent widow listened with a pleasant and sympathetic interest, interrupted only by those "Oh's!" "Ah's!" and "Good Lords!" so countless among elderly ladies.

"You are a very prudent girl," she said, when Florence had concluded, "and have done exactly right in coming to me. I knew Jabez Hosmer many years ago, and I knew his wife when she was Molly Ranter, for my poor dead husband was a sea-captain, and we were sometimes forced to meet such unpleasant people, and I know that both are hard-hearted, mercenary wretches. When Captain Tibbets was living, and we were prosperous, they were ready to kneel to us, but when his sudden death left me almost penniless, they treated me with insulting impudence. You must remain with me, Florence, until brighter days dawn, my love. Of course the law is with Jabez Hosmer, and if he learns where you are, he can annoy you. But as he does not know of our acquaintance, and probably not of my existence, there is little probability he will find you—though you must be careful, very careful, and live retired as a nun."

"I am sure that will not be hard to me," observed Florence, "for I have been a prisoner ever since I can recollect. But I must do something to earn my food and clothing."

"Of course it will be impossible to rescue anything from the clutches of the Hosmers," said Eugene, as he placed several bills of large denomination in Mrs. Tibbets' hand, "and as I may almost claim Florence as my wife, it is my duty to provide for her comforts, Mrs. Tibbets. Do not refuse the money—I have plenty; and if at any time you should need more, call upon Messrs. Kimbrough & Wynn, money brokers, State street. I leave their card with you, and will see them before I leave Boston."

Mrs. Tibbets, although a very benevolent and charitable lady, was also very prudent, and therefore thankfully received the gift of the gentleman, who then observed:

"But, my dear lady, why do you keep about you so unpleasant an object as that one-eyed crone?"

"My dear young friend," replied the charitable dame, "it is doubtless her misfortune and not her fault, that she is not more pleasant in appearance. I found her, a few days since, starving upon the streets, and took her in until she may do better or find some relative whom she says lives somewhere in Boston. She is not of sound mind."

"Would it not be well for Florence to assume some other name, your own, for instance, as the search of the Hosmers will be very eager?"

"If she desires it, of course," replied Mrs. Tibbets.

"Very well. Then my letters to her will be addressed to Miss Tibbets, care of Messrs. Kimbrough & Wynn," said Eugene, as he arose to depart.

Mrs. Tibbets, being a lady of discretion, now bade the young gentleman adieu, wished him a prosperous career, and withdrew from the parlor, and we follow her example, being unwilling to intrude upon the affectionate farewell of the lovers.

Having bidden adieu to Florence, Eugene returned to Boston, held a confidential interview with Messrs. Kimbrough & Wynn, and left the city for New York upon the first train.

On his route to Richmond he passed through Washington, then resounding with the overweening confidence of the destructives, that confidence which was soon to be panic stricken at Bull Run. Proceeding to Richmond by the course usually pursued at that time by the southerners, hurrying from the North to the South, he there received despatches from the Secretary of the Confederate Navy, and after many delays, among which was an order received at Charleston, recalling him to Richmond, the young gentleman finally reached the Sumter in time to participate in the excitement of her escape from the Brooklyn, as related in the preceding chapter.

CHAPTER VI.

THE BURNING OF THE "GOLDEN ROCKET."

THE 1st of July, 1861, the first dawn which greeted the defiant flag of the young Confederacy, when flung to the breezes of the sea, was ushered in by a bright and cloudless sun, which seemed to the enthusiasm of Eugene, prophetic of a brilliant and illustrious cruise. Several years had passed since he had floated upon the heaving main, and as his eye dwelt upon the grand expanse of water, majestic in its rolling immensity, he felt all the delight which thrills the heart of those who love the perils and beauties of the sea, upon again finding themselves caressed by the swelling bosom of the bounding billow.

Aided by a breeze from the south-west, the Sumter careered over the waters of the Gulf at a rate of eight knots an hour, and as there was not a sail in sight, Eugene moved about the steamer to become acquainted with her peculiarities. It was while passing about the forward part of the vessel that he became conscious that his features were being studied by a seaman, whose dark and sinister face flashed upon his mind like the remembrance of a picture. At first Eugene deemed this intent observation to arise from mere curiosity upon the part of the sailor to become acquainted with his superior, but when the young gentleman suddenly turned upon him and remarked :

"I think I met you in Boston, sir, not many weeks ago," the seaman replied in broken English, and with a strong Spanish accent :

"No, senor, you mistake. I never saw your honor until now, nor was I ever in Boston."

"Perhaps I do mistake," observed Eugene, turning abruptly away, as if he had dismissed the subject finally ; but Eugene had a retentive memory, especially in the matter of face, and he mentally affirmed :

"The fellow is speaking falsely, for I remember that cut-throat eye perfectly well now. He was one of the men who answered Lucas Butler's whistle upon Boston Common ; but he may desire concealment lest his former connection with the Yankee transport, if discovered, may prejudice him in the eyes of the crew of the Sumter."

He now turned to look after the welfare of his late servant, Cyrus, whom he found huddled up near a hauser-hole, enduring all the horrors of sea-sickness for the first time.

"Dat you, Massa Eugene," groaned Cyrus, as he languidly opened his saucer-like eyes. "'Fore God, dis nigger nearly gone. Sich feelin's—oh, de Lor' hab speedy mercy!"

"Cheer up, Cyrus, in a few hours you will be laughing at yourself."

"De days of de latter are gone," groaned Cyrus, as the ship heeled a-port, as if about to capsize and empty him into the sea. "Grab hold of dem ropes, massa, she gwine ober! Gor a mity, now she comed clean up an' gwine ober de oder way! Massa, I lubs you, you know I do ; but I nebber expect this wabblin' of my innards. 'Fore God, my lights, liber, pluck, an' intestin's is all done clean mixed up like clabber and 'lasses! I done gib de fishes all I eat since last Christmas, and I feels all de time like gibbin' dem de entire contents of dis child at onct, and den flingin de jug arter de contents."

"Wait, Cyrus, and I will get you some brandy," replied Eugene, pitying the evident agony of his faithful servant.

"Dey told me on de ribber I war to be a cook," mused Cyrus, after yawning at the hauser-hole as if comparing, triumphantly, the size of his mouth with that of the aperture, "but when I put my head in dat dark little place whar dey cook, 'fore God, I turned clean wrong side out, and de head cook beat me haf to deff with a skillett, caze I war sick, and drag me up to dis hole to refresh myself with the breezes of de Gulf."

The practical attention of his young master, however, soon alleviated the pains of Cyrus, and after that day he never felt a touch of that awful though harmless sickness, and became a very useful assistant of the chief cook.

The day passed away without any important incident to mark it as memorable in the captain's journal, and having rounded Cape Antonio on the following day, the Sumter stood away towards the west, under full sail. That day, also, was passed without any incident of moment, but on the next day, the 3d of July, in the middle of the afternoon, the look-out of the Sumter reported a sail in shore, evidently beating steadily to the windward, and pursuing a course which would inevitably result in casting her within the prize-hungry beak of this newly fledged sea-eagle of the Sunny South.

The crew of the Sumter now indulged in various emotions as regarded the nationality of the stranger, who resolutely held her course,

either regardless of the fact that a Confederate cruiser was afloat and near, or ignorant thereof.

No signals were made to attract her attention too hastily, as there was certain danger that, should she prove to be a Yankee, and learn the destructive character of the Sumter precipitately, she would change her course and hurry to regain the protection sacredly held by almost all nations—when it suits their policy—"the marine league of neutrality;" therefore Captain Semmes held quietly on, the smoke-funnel being down, the propeller hoisted, and the terrible cruiser presenting the tame appearance of a merchantman engaged in the peaceful pursuits of commerce.

Nearer and nearer drew the formidable cruiser and her unsuspecting prey. Now they are apart barely a mile, when, at a command from the Confederate commander, up rises the ever-aggressive banner of haughty England, and floats, deceptively, from the Sumter's peak.

Every eye that could be turned thitherward, is now fixed upon the merchantman, who, as yet, has made not a single flutter which could mark her as the property of a neutral or a foe.

At length, with an indolent majesty, there glides up the halliards of the stranger "the gorgeous folds of the banner of the great and arrogant American Republic," and as the steady trade-wind grasps the stars and stripes, the true character of the doomed merchantman is revealed.

"Take your fill a starin' at that," was the remark of the Yankee captain, as he complaisantly regarded "the flaunting lie." "You Britishers are darned fond of showing your red rag in every corner. Thunder! down goes the British flag by the run, and what on earth is that they are hauling up now?"

"The rebel flag! by George!" roared his mate, as the stars and bars rushed aloft like a flash of light. "Captain Salter, that's a rebel pirate, and there he bangs away across our bows!"

All was now noisy confusion on board the Golden Rocket, the name of the ship. Escape was impossible, and the ship was hove to.

It was not long before a boat from the Sumter was alongside, and an officer of that ship aboard.

"What ship is this?" demanded the Confederate, as Captain Salter met him at the gangway.

"Who in thunder are you, and what do you want?" replied Salter, pulling his fur cap first to the right and then to the left.

"Answer my question, sir," sternly observed the Confederate, as

he laid his hand upon his sword-hilt, "or I'll sink you in five minutes!"

"Guess somebody'll smart right considerable for this," snarled Salter, casting a furious glance towards the Sumter, which lay dark and threatening at short range. "Guess you'll be caught some day and strung up for pirates. This is the Golden Rocket, from Maine, bound to Cienfuegos, Cuba; no cargo. Now, who be you?"

"Give me the ship's papers," said the Confederate, curtly.

At this demand the worthy Salter opened his eyes until they appeared about to drop from his head, and he twitched his fur cap until he twitched it from his bald head.

"The ship's papers! What on earth do you want with the ship's papers?" he roared.

"That's my business, sir. Make haste. I am not trifling, sir. Produce the papers immediately," replied the Confederate, who was a stern, dark-browed man, not accustomed to waste breath by long speeches.

"I protest!"

"Produce the papers!"

Chewing the oath he dared not speak, Captain Salter hurried below, and soon returned with the ship's papers, which the Confederate placed in his pocket, saying:

"I will submit these to the inspection of Captain Semmes. In the meantime, be patient; you will soon know your fate!"

The officer then returned to the Sumter, leaving Captain Salter in a paroxysm of impotent rage.

"There'll be a fuss about this," growled he to his first officer, as they paced the quarter-deck. "What! rebels at sea! They dare to overhaul a craft like this! Won't Jabez Hosmer pitch and toss when he hears of it?"

"Captain Hosmer is a heavy owner in her, eh?"

"I think he is," roared Salter, dashing his fur cap to the deck; "so am I, by Hokey. What do you s'pose these pirates will do with us and the ship?"

"Sell the ship."

"Sell thunder! They can't! Who'll dare buy property stolen from Uncle Sam? The rotten concern of a Confederacy ha'n't been recognized as a power. Cuss 'em, they are pirates."

Meanwhile, the fate of the Golden Rocket was being discussed in the cabin of the Sumter.

"At so early a date in our cruise," was the conclusion of Captain Semmes, "we cannot spare a prize crew," and the same officer who

had already so seriously disturbed the serenity of Captain Salter, was again despatched to inform that worthy of his fate.

"Man your boats!" said the officer, as he met Salter at the gangway. "See that you and every soul of your crew are aboard of the Sumter within half an hour. You are all prisoners of war!"

"Prisoners of the devil!" roared Salter. "Why, we hain't fit ye. What—why—who—which—where—when?"—but astonishment now choked the utterance of the enraged merchant-captain, and he rolled his eyes from the sea to his ship in utter bewilderment.

"Bear a hand! Be lively! It is already night, and time presses," shouted the Confederate.

"Are you goin' to scuttle the ship?" gasped Salter, staring in dismay. "You'd better not, I tell ye. Billy Seward and old Abe—"

"O! ~~Billy~~ Seward and ~~old~~ Abe!" thundered a "rebel ~~man~~" *private* punching the Yankee in the ribs. "I wish we had both of them sons of sea-cooks aboard, old fur-top. Tumble over the gangway!"

"I've got some private property," began Salter.

"Hurry and secure it, sir," said the Confederate officer. "Unlike your civilized and pious breed, we do not filch and steal."

Finding protestation useless, Salter darted into his cabin and secured his most valuable possessions, an action in which he was imitated by every one of his crew.

Although the Confederates made all haste to clear the ship of all articles which might be of service to them in their intended cruise, the night was well advanced when the order was given to apply the torch to the doomed merchantman.

She was fired in the cabin, forecabin, and hold, and as the last boat left her side, a red glare of flame suddenly shot up from her cabin hatch.

Captain Salter, leaning over the bulwarks of the Sumter, shed tears of rage as he marked the rapid progress of the flames.

"I call that ere piracy," growled Salter, unaware that Eugene stood near. "But they'll all be hung for it, and that's one great comfort, by God!"

"If you call it piracy to burn a lawful capture at sea," remarked Eugene, clapping him upon the shoulder, "what do you call destroying, plundering and burning the houses of peaceful southern citizens?" *damn rats! old niggers*

"Them's all rebels," stammered Salter; but perceiving an angry flash in Eugene's eye, he continued: "So ~~Old~~ Abe calls 'em, you

know. I don't meddle with politics, and I think it's deuced hard that my property——"

"What is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander," replied Eugene. "But, captain, we have to make you secure."

"Make me secure!" roared Salter, as a seaman slipped a pair of handcuffs upon his wrists. "Irons! ~~Old~~ Abe will——"

"To the d——I with ~~Old~~ Abe," replied the irreverent rebel, as he moved away. "If ~~Old~~ Abe had acted like a white man, there'd be no war, you lubber." *You are a liar the devil convinced*

Old Salter, stunned by the audacity of his captors, could only shake his head and stare at the blazing ship, now completely enveloped in flames. The fire had raged like a furnace amid the inflammable interior of the ship, and bursting from every aperture, leaped into the rigging as if endowed with life and wrath to destroy. Darting up the ratlines and stays, and mounting fiercely to the spars, and wreathing the lofty masts, they shed their appalling glare far into the dense darkness of the tropic night. The wind, rising to aid the destruction, grasped great shreds of blazing canvass, huge fragments of burning rigging, and myriads of burning sparks, sweeping the fiery shower miles to leeward. *the
was
big
staring
man
Abe
out*

Riding the steady swell of the sea in grim silence, unbroken save by the swash of the surge against her bows, the Sumter was lighted up by the ghastly brilliancy, her crew gazing in thoughtful speechlessness upon the first victim of the cause.

"It is sad to be forced to destroy so noble a ship," remarked Captain Semmes, after giving orders for the Sumter to proceed upon her cruise, "but we have no alternative left us."

The Golden Rocket continued to burn for hours before she keeled and plunged beneath the sea forever; and long after she had vanished, Eugene gazed towards the quarter in which he had last seen her blazing spars. *Sumter*

*I've just mind to
tear hell out of this
damned book*

CHAPTER VII.

TREACHERY ABOARD. *Good*

PRIZE after prize continued to greet the Sumter, day after day, until the 25th of July, at an early hour of which day the Abby Bradford was captured.

Two days after her capture a prize crew was put aboard of her, under the command of Lieutenant Eugene, with orders to try to force her way through the blockade of the Mississippi River to New Orleans.

Thus, for the first time, our hero found himself with an independent command, bound upon a very hazardous service.

As he had had nothing to do with the selection of his crew, he knew very little of its character. He was pleased to find as his cook, however, his own servant, Cyrus, who, being also for the first time with an independent command of the cook's galley, was disposed to assume all the important airs usually worn by those imperious pot-entates.

But if pleased to find Cyrus his cook, Eugene was by no means satisfied to perceive among the faces of his crew the dark and treacherous features of Roderiguez, the Spaniard, whom, he felt confident, had once been under the command of Captain Lucas Butler.

This man had not appeared on deck until the Sumter was hull down upon the horizon, and Eugene was much surprised that he had not noticed him sooner. Calling Cyrus aside, he asked:

"Cyrus, what kind of a man is that Spaniard? You see him splicing a rope near the foremast."

"Oyster-mouth man," replied Cyrus; "neber open it except to eat—dat's him."

"Does he move among the other men freely, Cyrus?"

"Dat's one he berry intimacy wid, Massa Eugene—a freckled-faced, white-bearded Dutchman—he on board too."

"Point the Dutchman out, Cyrus."

"Massa, dey hoff lookin' sider ways' at us dis minit. 'Spect dey thinks we's talking about dem."

"Well, what is the Dutchman's name?"

"Dey calls him Dirk Spicer, Massa."

Eugene said no more at the moment, but retired to his cabin to consult the roll of his crew, at which he had never glanced since he had received it from Captain Semmes.

He started as he saw that it did not contain the names of Roderiguez Diaz and Dirk Spicer. Filled with oppression at his discovery, he returned to the deck and called his whole crew aft. His order was obeyed, and for the first time since he left the Mississippi, he noticed the freckled-faced, white-headed Dutchman spoken of by Cyrus. Eugene gazed at him very keenly, and felt his heart sink as he slowly but surely recognized in him the other of the two men who had answered the whistle-call of Captain Lucas Butler in Boston Common.

Eugene had no doubt of this. At the time which Captain Lucas had summoned his bullies to his aid, every circumstance had been vividly impressed upon the memory of the young man.

He proceeded to call the roll, closely watching and noting each man as he replied to his name. Finally, the roll was completed, and the two suspected men had not answered.

"Diaz," said Eugene, sternly, "neither your name, nor that of this man, is upon the roll of my crew. Why are you aboard?"

Instead of seeming at all embarrassed, but bowing with all the stately politeness of his nation, the Spaniard gave Eugene a note, and calmly awaited his perusal of it.

The note was as follows, and, to all appearance, in the handwriting of Captain Semmes:

"On second thought, I think it best to add Diaz and Spicer to your crew. Place their names upon your roll."

"RAPHAEL SEMMES."

Eugene, greatly puzzled, scrutinized this billet keenly, but he could not pronounce it a forgery.

"Why did you not hand this note to me before?" he demanded, as he placed it in his pocket. "You have had ample time. We parted company with the Sumter several hours ago."

"Your excellency was too busy," was the humble reply.

"Return to your quarters," said Eugene, waving his hand to the crew, and then turning to his first officer, an intelligent midshipman, whom we will call Jasper, he said:

"I think you were present—I was not—when the crew for this ship was told off by the first lieutenant."

"I was, Mr. Perkins, and I am very sure that these two men came

aboard with the others; and, now I think of the matter, they seemed in great haste, as if smuggling themselves aboard. But suppose they did, Mr. Perkins, we are all the stronger landed for that, and when a prize crew was put aboard the Cuba the other day, you know that one seaman managed to smuggle himself out of the Sumter. The more I consider the matter, the more I think these two have contrived to slip aboard."

"But this note, Mr. Jasper," remarked Eugene, giving him the billet.

After a glance at it, the midshipman replied:

"All is right, I judge, for I am sure that is the handwriting of Captain Semmes."

But Eugene was by no means so easily satisfied. He returned to his cabin, and took from his trunk all the letters he had received from Captain Semmes, and compared them with the writing of the note. The resemblance was perfect, yet there was one circumstance which did not fail to arrest his attention, and that was the fact that in no case had Captain Semmes signed his name in full, but always thus:

"R. Semmes."

"It would be very remarkable," mused Eugene, as he revolved this subject in his mind, "if Captain Semmes, in so slight a matter, should deviate from a life-long habit, and sign his first name in full. I am confident that this note is a forgery; and now that I have so determined, I must endeavor to discover the motives of the forgers. Those men have been followers of Lucas Butler—of that I have no doubt. He has placed them upon my track, and yet they shipped in the Sumter before I joined her. Then they learned my destination somewhere on the route from Boston, and pushed ahead to avoid suspicion. All this seems very clear to my mind. Now, what is their object? Had they shipped to betray, if in their power, the Sumter, they would now be aboard of her. But they attach themselves treacherously to me. I know almost nothing of the character of Lucas Butler, yet from the short interview we had, and from the fact that he is a cousin of that political knave, B. F. Butler, I am very sure that he is capable of any villainy. I must conclude he has put these fellows in my wake for my ruin."

Eugene now began to cast about for an ally in whose fidelity and shrewdness he could implicitly trust. He thought of the first officer, Jasper; but Jasper was a young gentleman extremely obstinate in maintaining any opinion which he had expressed, and was also of a fiery, impatient temperament, which precluded the idea of shrewd-

ness. A gallant and faithful officer beyond all doubt, but rash and impulsive.

Eugene had no intimates among the crew, nor was there one whose true character was known to him. But there was Cyrus, ignorant, but faithful and cunning, like most of his race. Cyrus, then, must be his ally, and Cyrus was summoned to the cabin.

"Cyrus," said Eugene, in a guarded tone, "I think we have two traitors aboard."

Cyrus awaited further developments before volunteering his remarks. He grinned and nodded, however, to prove his attention.

"You know whom I mean," continued Eugene. "You know, also, that we have a dangerous design in view—to run the blockade of the Mississippi—and that the chances are nearly all against us. I think these two men, of whom we are speaking, mean treachery, especially to me. You must get into their confidence and learn their designs, Cyrus."

"Ki!—that mighty perillous, Massa Eugene. Dat Spanishman—whoo! he carry a dirk like a sword; an' the Dutchman—he no coward—eyes yaller like wild-cat!"

The hour was long past dark, and the small cabin was lighted by a single lamp, swinging to and fro with the roll of the ship. As Cyrus ceased speaking, he threw back his head to indulge in one of those empty guffaws peculiar to the negro. As he did so, his eyes encountered that same pair of yellow eyes staring down into the cabin through a window, the deadlight being removed.

These inquisitive eyes vanished almost as quickly as they were seen, but not before Cyrus had recognized the pale, tallowy complexion and white locks of Dirk Spieer, the Dutchman.

This startling fact he at once communicated to his master, in the same guarded tone they had been using.

Eugene felt the hot blood fly to his face, as he learned that his suspected enemies had already begun to play spy upon him, and for a moment he paused, upon the point of ordering the men to be placed in irons, upon mere suspicion.

He would have fared far better in the future had he yielded to this impulse, but his reflection told him he had no proof to warrant so severe a measure; and, after much doubting as to the best course, he resolved to wait for positive proof. He dismissed Cyrus, after enjoining caution and cunning, and then returned to the deck.

The night had become very dark, and the wind had risen to a stiff breeze. Every sail was set, and the ship was plunging rapidly ahead, held to a direct course towards the American coast.

Eugene was well aware that several days were needed to carry his prize within sight of that bar over which the Sumter had careened so gallantly, and in that time he hoped to be able to find ample cause to place Diaz and Spicer in irons; and yet, at the same time, he also hoped that his suspicions might prove to be unfounded. There was a chance, he reasoned, that these suspected men had smuggled themselves aboard the Bradford to escape the dangerous service of the Sumter; yet, as he remembered their connection with the vindictive Lucas Butler, this hope faded away. He felt great anxiety, as this was his first command, and especially as he was unacquainted with his crew, many of whom he knew cared nothing for the cause of the South, and only for their pay. Diaz and Spicer might already have tampered with some of them, and their influence might create a mutiny.

As these reflections passed through the mind of the young officer, he felt more and more the great responsibility which the confidence of Captain Semmes had put upon him. As the night wore on, he grew more and more restless, until his blood bounded with heated pulses through his veins. The consciousness that there were traitors, cunning, daring, and intelligent traitors, aboard, weighed heavily upon his mind.

The night was intensely dark, as we have said, and the ship making rapid progress towards the gauntlet she had to run, the helmsman guided only by the compass in the binnacle before him, and his knowledge of the seas. Wearied at length by his unpleasant thoughts, Eugene retired to his cabin, leaving the charge of the ship to Mr. Jasper and the appointed watch.

He threw himself upon his bed, undressed, not believing that he could sleep; and in this he was correct, for hours passed without bringing sleep to his eyes. Unable to endure this restlessness, he again sought the deck, to cool his throbbing temples in the breeze. He found the watch on the alert, the ship still gliding under full sail. Still, he felt an uneasiness for which he could not account, and carefully surveyed every part of the ship.

It was with a feeling of terror, therefore, that he discovered a lantern, covered with red baize, hanging over the starboard bow of the ship. A light was burning in the lantern, and the radiance it shed was dim, yet it would have been sufficient to attract the attention of any ship on the watch, and Eugene knew that the Yankee cruisers were keenly on the alert to catch all blockade runners. The lantern was cunningly suspended, and Eugene would not have

seen it had he not, in his careful survey, gone out upon the chains.

Concealment was the chief purpose of the officer, both by day and night, and the discovery of the lantern was instant proof of the presence of traitors. Who those traitors were Eugene was sure he knew; yet he had no proof. All inquiry concerning the affair elicited no information, and Eugene was forced to let it rest in obscurity.

The lantern was tossed into the sea, the forward watch changed, and Eugene again retired to his cabin. But he had now resolved upon a decided course, and prepared himself to execute it, the intense darkness of the night being favorable to his plans. He felt that the traitors had plans for communication with the enemy, should any of his cruisers chance to be in the vicinity of the Abby Bradford.

As no doubt the reader has already surmised, the lantern had been hung over the bows of the ship by Diaz and Spicer, who were the emissaries of Lucas Butler to effect the capture of Eugene, if possible. Nor could two more daring men have been selected to play this part. Yet they entirely underrated the boldness and intelligence of the man whom they were to betray. His cunningness had led them *Rats* to believe that they were unsuspected, and although the lantern had been discovered, they attributed it to accident.

Sheltered in an obscure nook of the fore-castle, these worthies consulted together, using the Spanish tongue in guarded whispers.

"That trick has failed," said Diaz.

"Yes, and a pity, too," replied Dirk, "for I am sure the Powhatan, or the Iroquois, or some other United States ship, is not far off."

"And you think this youngster does not suspect, Dirk?" inquired Diaz, in a tone of some doubt.

"Suspect! Why, no. Why should he? The finding of the lantern was an accident, and devils alive! I am going to hang out another one before daylight! If seen but for an instant, our friends will understand that this ship is a rebel prize."

"I think you had better let this alone for to-night," remarked the more cautious Diaz. "As for me, I sheer off. That youngster has the eyes of an eagle and the fierceness of a tiger."

"Coward! You sheer off already! Remember the reward!"

"Oh, yes, the reward is all very fine, and I wish I was in New York or Boston, with only half of it in my pocket, Dirk; but I tell you we must handle this youngster as we would a rattlesnake."

"Then why not strangle him in his cabin? We have done as much before, and, devils alive! to men with beards," growled Dick Spicer. "What in h——I are you doing in the forecabin, you black dog?"

This latter speech was addressed to our friend Cyrus, who, faithful to his master, had lost no time in putting himself upon a vigilant watch of the suspected men. He had heard the whispered conversation, but was wholly unable to understand a word. The grasp of the fierce Dutchman was upon his woolly head, and Cyrus trembled lest a knife should be thrust into his ribs. He cried out:

"Jess curled down to sleep, massa—dat's all, I swear. Let go dis nigger, massa, and he gib you all you ask."

"You rascal, didn't you used to belong to our skipper, Mr. Perkins?"

"Ask my back, dat been 'quainted wid his whip dese twenty years," replied Cyrus, gladly seizing this opportunity to cultivate an intimacy with Spicer.

"His lash! Ho! then he used to give you a rope's endin' often?"

"Rope's endin' means wolloppin', I reckon," muttered Cyrus. "Yah! he nearly killed dis nigger forty-eleven times wid a hoe handle."

"So you hate him?"

"Dat's de true fax ob de case, massa. I hate de wood he walks on," said Cyrus.

"I say, Diaz," remarked Spicer in Spanish, "this fellow may be of use to us, eh?"

"Perhaps, and perhaps not," replied the ever-cautious Spaniard. "Captain Lucas told us we were to have no allies, and a nigger is as treacherous as a fox. Better not have too much to say with him; send him about his business."

"Rascal," said Dirk, giving Cyrus a punch in the side, "go on deck and see what is going on. Then come and tell me."

"You mean to try the trick of the lantern again?" asked Diaz, when Cyrus had departed.

"See here, you foreign lubbers, growled a sleepy sailor, as he raised himself in his hammock, "if you can't sleep, d—n ye, let a better man than both of ye have his snooze, or, blast ye, I'll shy a marlingpike at ye."

After this hint, the pair relapsed into silence, until the hard snoring of the late speaker told them they could converse undisturbed.

"You intend to try the lantern again, Dirk?"

"Wait until the negro comes down," was the reply.

Cyrus soon after made his appearance, using extreme caution in his descent and approach.

He reported that every one of the watch was sound asleep, and that only the helmsman was awake.

"This is a chance not to be thrown away," said Dirk, in Spanish "Keep the negro below until I return, Diaz."

"Be cautious, and examine the sleepers," observed Diaz.

"Trust to me for that; I'd be a fool to be caught by any of the stupids," growled the daring Dutchman, as he left the forecabin.

"Now, blackey," said Diaz to Cyrus, "I hold you by the ears until he comes back."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE PRIZE RECAPTURED.

DIRK SPICER, with all his daring, was as cautious in his movements as a cat after a nibbling rat, and upon reaching the deck, was very slow and entirely noiseless in spying about. Accustomed to nocturnal adventures of an illicit and perilous character, his eyes were enabled to penetrate to a remarkable degree the darkness of the night.

The night had lost much of its pitchy gloom, however, and his practiced vision soon discovered the various positions of the slumbering watch. But he bent his ear to each prostrate and reclining form, to satisfy himself that all were fast asleep. That they should be so he did not marvel, for the night was very warm, the breeze cool, and the toils of the preceding day had been oppressive. The discipline of the crew, also, removed from the severe eye of Captain Semmes, had become lax under the untried vigilance of the young prize commander, and Dirk Spicer knew that sailors would steal a nap at all times.

After a careful examination in the fore part of the ship, he stole cautiously aft, gliding here and there in the utter darkness until he had assured himself that no eyes on deck were open save those

of the grim and silent helmsman, whose whole attention was absorbed in his responsible avocation.

Glancing to the windward, the quick-eyed Dutchman saw far away a rocket suddenly hoot up, as if from the bosom of the sea, rise high in the air, and then float into darkness amid a shower of glittering sparks.

"What does that mean?" thought Dirk. "Perhaps a Yankee cruiser, signaling to her consort. I know there must be several in pursuit of the rebel; if so, so much the better."

He returned to the bow and again inspected the sleepers.

"All fast as rocks," murmured Dirk, as he glided over the bows, and secured a footing among the chains which swung near the figure-head.

Drawing a lantern from his pocket, he inserted a lighted match into it, and ignited the candle within. Then producing a cord, he lowered his treacherous signal almost to the water, and made the line fast to the chains.

Having accomplished this feat to his satisfaction, he returned noiselessly to the deck, and as his feet touched it, a pair of strong arms were thrown around him, while the voice of his command rumbled in his ears:

"Traitor! I have caught you! Watch, cut loose that light."

As Eugene thus spoke, another rocket flashed up from the distant sea, as if answering the traitor's signal.

Consternation at his detection held the fierce Dutchman motionless for an instant, but he was not a man to be subdued by any one man. Powerful, active, and desperate, he writhed from the strong officer, whose sinews could not cope with the iron-like muscles of the veteran seaman, and drawing his knife, lunged furiously right and left, as the watch rushed upon him.

Eugene, who had noticed the rockets of the distant ship, was reluctant to use fire-arms, knowing that their flash would direct the pursuit of the enemy, but Dirk Spicer, certain that his evil life was forfeited, now fought for revenge, and drawing a repeater, fired at hap-hazard in every direction.

Eugene then drew his own fire-arms, and rushing boldly upon the desperado, forever extinguished the treacherous glare of those yellow eyes—the almost random bullet having crushed through the Dutchman's skull.

He sprang up a foot from the deck, with a yell of agony, and then fell headlong at the foot of the foremast, and at the same instant a

flash lighted up the horizon, and a moment after the boom of cannon fell upon the ear.

"Put out every light on board," commanded Eugene; "we are not far from a Yankee cruiser."

The ship was held to the same course, and it was a relief to the young officer when a sudden squall of rain added to the already deep darkness of the night. The body of Dirk Spicer was tossed into the sea without ceremony, and when the morning dawned, the traces of the bloody conflict were washed from the deck. Not a sail was in sight. The breeze had risen to a gale, and the ship scudded along under sails double-reefed.

Even with this reduced canvass, the tall, stout masts and spars sprung fearfully, as if about to snap every moment, and Mr. Jasper cast many an anxious look aloft from time to time.

"We must hold on as long as we can," remarked Eugene. "The gale is now in our favor, but who can tell how long it will be before it will chop around square into our teeth?"

"I notice that you use the glass a great deal in looking astern, sir," said Jasper, as Eugene, for the twentieth time, surveyed the horizon.

"Take the glass, Mr. Jasper, and see if you see nothing to spoil your appetite for breakfast," replied Eugene.

The midshipman took the spy-glass, and after sweeping the horizon astern, observed:

"A sail! and the smoke of a steamer!"

"Yes, the cunning Yankee has guessed our course, and is right in our wake," said Eugene.

"It may be the Sumter."

"Not at all probable, Mr. Jasper. The Sumter is cruising along the Venezuelan coast, bound for the Port of Spain, to take in coal. This stranger is doubtless one of the many Yankee men-of-war sent in pursuit of the Sumter. But our craft sails well, and we may hold a safe distance until night, when I will change our course. But breakfast is ready, and I wish to speak with Cyrus."

The officers descended to the cabin, and in about half an hour thereafter, Diaz found himself in irons, and stowed away in as secure a place as could be found in the ship.

"You see that I was right in suspecting those men," remarked Eugene to Jasper. "At my command last night, the watch feigned sleep, for I believed that whoever had hung out the lantern might be foolhardy enough to attempt further treachery, I have only circum-

stantial evidence against this fellow Diaz, yet I shall keep him in irons until our voyage is ended."

Diaz, heavily ironed, and guarded by a sentry who seemed to regard him with no good will, by no means despaired of regaining his liberty. He was a cool and intelligent ruffian, as daring as his late accomplice, but much more prudent. Often during his adventurous life he had been in fetters, and as often he had succeeded in shaking them off. Until now he had devoted his services to Lucas Butler against Eugene, merely for reward; but now that violence had been used against himself by the command of the young Confederate, all the natural ferocity and vindictiveness of the Spaniard were fully aroused. To the powerful stimulant of gold was now added the fierce thirst for revenge, and the dark features of the prisoner grew darker and more sinister as he brooded over his situation. The chance conversation of the sailors, heard by him from time to time, told him that an enemy was believed to be in pursuit, and that night was anxiously looked for. The sentry, a heavy, dull-witted seaman, paid little attention to his charge, well knowing that he could not escape from the ship, and believing it impossible for him to free himself of his fetters. The part of the hold in which the prisoner was confined was lighted only by a dim lantern, and the roar of the gale, the creaking of the cordage, and the surging of the heavy sea, all together made so loud and continuous a noise that Diaz seized the opportunity to try the security of his fetters. To add to the noise, it was announced that the ship had sprung a leak, from the great straining of her timbers, and the clanking of the pumps concealed the clashing of the Spaniard's irons as he tossed and tugged at them.

After many trials, Diaz discovered that he could slip his handcuffs over his hands, and careful examination of the fetters around his ankles found a flaw in the connecting link, which he felt he could wrench asunder by a sudden exertion of his great strength.

During the day Eugene paid his prisoner a visit, and endeavored to elicit some conversation from him; but the surly Spaniard, assuming an air of injured innocence, remained obstinately silent, and Eugene left him, being more convinced than ever that he was a detected traitor.

The day wore away, and night came on, leaving the pursuing steamer still miles astern.

The third day found the horizon clear, and the gale still a stiff breeze, favoring the course of the Bradford; but more than a week

had elapsed when the lookout announced that the coast of Louisiana was in sight, just at dawn.

It was the intention of Eugene, and indeed his only chance of success, to stand boldly upon his course, flying the American colors, and to seize the first opportunity to slip across the bar of Pass l'Outre. Should he be brought to and boarded by any of the blockading squadron, he believed that he could deceive all inquiry, as he had fictitious papers prepared, and all of his crew were drilled as to their proper action. Could he escape observation until some dark night afforded an opportunity, he thought it very probable that he could evade the cruisers of the enemy, and pass the bar, especially as one of the crew had served as a pilot in those waters.

He passed two of the enemy's ships, neither paying him any attention, as his course was rather from than towards the Mississippi Passes, when he was brought to by a shot from a transport ship, armed with a single heavy gun.

The ship was hove to, and Eugene anxiously watched the boat which left the side of the transport-ship.

By the aid of his glass, he was readily able to distinguish the features of the officer who sat in the stern of the boat, while it was many fathoms from the Abby Bradford. He grew very pale as he recognized in that officer the sinister and red-whiskered features of Captain Lucas Butler.

"Mr. Jasper," said he, turning quickly to that officer, "we are lost! That officer about to board us knows me, I have no doubt."

"But he does not know me, and I can pass for captain."

"You are entirely too young to act as chief officer of a craft like this. Here, Clayton, come down into the cabin with me. The sea is rough, and those fellows will have hard pulling before they board us. Time is all I need, and I may cheat that scoundrel out of his prey yet. See that we have some awkward seamanship, Mr. Jasper."

"Aye, aye, I'll see to that," replied Jasper, as Eugene and the tough-faced old seaman hurried below, and in a few minutes, as if by accident, the sails were laid aback, and the Abby Bradford gathered rapid stern-way, speedily increasing her distance from the yawl, which was laboring towards her through a heavy cross-sea.

"D—n awkward captain that craft has," growled Captain Lucas, as he wiped the spray from his eyes and observed the apparent confusion on board of the Abby Bradford. "He's got his ship in irons, and is adding at least half an hour to our pull. Give way, men, lay to it, my lads! Curse the fool! Look at him, drifting astern like a

tub! If I was aboard my ship, blast me, I'd give him a round shot to teach him how to heave to. I'd done better to have steamed the Bay State alongside. Give way there in the bow—you shark, you are playing sojer!"

Meanwhile, Eugene had arrayed his old sailor in garb befitting the rank of a merchant-captain, and gave him instructions as to his answers to all questions which might be asked, while he disguised himself as a common seaman.

They then returned to the deck, old Clayton ably playing his part as captain, and Eugene mounting the rigging of the mainmast as high as the cross-trees, that he might escape the close scrutiny of Captain Lucas, where he apparently busied himself in binding a sail to its proper position.

The Confederate crew were soon informed of the temporary change in the command of the ship. Their fidelity was pretty well assured, as all had a large interest in the safe conveyance of the prize into the port of New Orleans, where she was to be sold and they to receive their prize money.

At length Captain Lucas succeeded in reaching the deck of the Abby Bradford, where he was met by the gruff greeting of old Clayton.

"You are a h—l of a captain to be boxing your ship about in such style," growled Captain Lucas, as he dashed the brine from his red whiskers.

"Awkward! So'd you be, capt'in, if your rudder was damaged and your ship aleak," replied Clayton. "What do you want?"

"What ship is this?"

"The Abby Bradford, bound from New York to Puerto Cabello; sprung a leak, and in a hurry to make the nearest port."

"I must examine your papers. You may be a blockade runner," said Lucas.

"All right, only be quick about it," replied Clayton, leading the way to the cabin.

After examining the ship's papers, and finding nothing to excite his suspicion, Captain Lucas drank success to the ship in a bumper of rum, and returned to the deck, followed by old Clayton, who was chuckling in his sleeve over his easy success. Captain Lucas was by no means a very bright-minded man, and the little mother-wit he had once possessed had become much blunted by his devotion to ardent spirits. His visit to the Abby Bradford had been prompted by a sudden whim to appear very vigilant, and by a dim hope that luck might give him a blockade runner.

"She leaks badly," said he, as he glanced at the sailors tolling at the pumps.

"Four feet of water in her well," replied Clayton, boldly.

"Well, captain, I am sorry that I have detained you," began Captain Lucas, as he looked ruefully towards his own ship. "I hate the pull back. Guess I'll signal to the Bay State to steam alongside; she has steam on I see."

To this, of course, old Clayton could make no objection, and Captain Lucas made signal to his ship, then over a mile distant, to steam alongside the Abby Bradford.

Eugene, perched upon the cross-trees, was unable to comprehend this movement, though a sly nod from old Clayton informed him that Captain Lucas was in the dark, but his attention was soon called from the rapidly approaching Bay State by a commotion in the forward part of his own ship, and the sudden rush of Diaz to the quarter-deck.

The cunning Spaniard, informed by scraps of conversation which reached his ears, as a few of the crew passed him, that a Yankee naval officer was aboard, and that an armed Yankee ship was near, at once slipped off his handcuffs, twisted apart one of the connecting links of his fetters, sprang to his feet, and knocked down his unsuspecting sentry. He did not pause to repeat the blow, but finding an unopposed passage to the forward deck, soon bounded up the forecastle ladder, and forced his way through a knot of surprised sailors, to the presence of Captain Lucas, to whom he shouted:

"This is a rebel prize, Captain Butler, and your man, Perkins, is her present commander!"

Captain Lucas, astounded by this unsuspected information, and instantly recognizing his former follower, wheeled upon old Clayton with a fierce oath, saying:

"I have caught you, have I? but you are not Eugene Perkins!"

"That man is a common seaman," cried Diaz, flashing his eyes about in search of Eugene. "It is a trick. Perkins is chief officer, and he is aboard."

"I'll find him, if he has crept into a bung-hole," roared Captain Lucas, all the more enraged, from having been so easily gulled.

A shout to his strong boat's crew hurried them aboard, and he stormed like a fury, as he swore he would hang every rebel if Perkins did not make a speedy appearance. The Bay State was now within a few cables' length, and Captain Lucas blustered and fumed

as fearlessly as did his illustrious cousin, B. F. Butler, among the defenceless ladies of New Orleans, in 1862. *another day lie*

Eugene, hearing all these loud threats, at once glided to the deck, and boldly confronted the blustering bully. His appearance was so sudden, and his demeanor so cool, that Captain Lucas instantly ran behind some of his men, shouting:

"There he is! Cut him down!"

"I surrender," calmly replied Eugene, who saw the folly of resistance, but at the same time avoiding a stab made at his throat by the vindictive Daz, who had snatched a knife from the belt of a sailor near him. "But, if I am to be assassinated, Captain Butler, this is for you," he continued, as he leveled his repeater at the head of the captain.

"I accept your surrender!" howled the red-whiskered coward, trembling in every limb. "Throw down your arms, if you surrender."

The Confederate crew had by this time clustered around their young commander, and Lucas Butler saw that all were armed, and far outnumbered his own men. Should he precipitate a struggle, the nearness of the Bay State could not save him from being a mark for rebel bullets.

"Promise fair treatment to every man of us, as prisoners of war," said Eugene, "and we will surrender. Speak at once, or we will die with arms in our hands."

"Agreed! I promise!" hastily replied Captain Lucas, who quailed before the flaming eye of the young officer.

"You swear to treat us as prisoners of war?"

"Yes, I swear it."

Eugene then commanded his crew to lay aside their weapons, and descended to his cabin, followed by Mr. Jasper.

The Bay State was soon alongside the recaptured prize, which she took in tow, and steamed towards the blockading fleet, in the distance.

Exulting in his fortune, Captain Lucas, resplendent in his gold-banded cap and full uniform, strutted upon the quarter-deck as grandly as if he had not merely a recaptured, unarmed prize in tow, but the Sumter herself.

"What kind of treatment do you expect?" asked Jasper of Eugene, as the latter arrayed himself in the uniform of a Confederate naval lieutenant.

"The hardest, Mr. Jasper. The Yankee government pretends

to regard us as pirates, and but for fear of retaliation, will so treat us."

"What are those bits of iron you are placing in your shoes?"

"Short files, for future use," replied Eugene, and at that moment Captain Lucas entered the cabin, followed by a file of marines and an armorer.

your Pecks are ad—

rebel

CHAPTER IX.

YANKEE BRUTALITY.

"Put both of the scoundrels in irons," said Captain Lucas, in a harsh voice, turning to the armorer. "Shoot them down if they offer to resist. Ready! Aim!"

The marines leveled their muskets at the breasts of the two Confederates, and only awaited the command of their brutal chief to pull trigger.

"We can die but once," began the impulsive Jasper; but Eugene pressed his arm, saying:

"Patience! He is eager for an excuse to butcher us. Wait; our time will come some day. Captain Lucas, you swore to treat us—"

"Silence, rebel dog! Don't show your teeth at me, or I'll dash them down your rebel throat," stormed Captain Lucas, shaking his fist at the helpless officer. "Clap him in double irons, armorer. You piratical rebel, you are not on Boston Common."

"Where I had the pleasure of pulling your nose," imprudently retorted Eugene, as the armorer placed the irons upon his wrists.

"For which, by—! I slap your rebel face now!" roared Captain Lucas, suiting the action to the word; but Eugene's eye was quick and his frame nimble, so that he readily dodged the furious blow of the ferocious coward, which it was the ill fortune of the armorer to receive in full force squarely in the eyes.

"Tar and thunder!" yelled the armorer, as he staggered under the blow; but perceiving that his captain had struck him by accident, yet unwilling that he alone should suffer, he wheeled upon the nearest marine, whose mouth was expanded in a broad grin, and dealt him a tremendous fisticuff in the nose, yelling out:

"You hit me, you straight-jacketed, lubberly, grinning son of a sea-horse! Take that, and be— to ye!"

The luckless marine and his musket went down with a loud clatter, and it required considerable effort on the part of Captain Lucas to prevent a general fray, as the other marines evinced a strong desire to belabor the armorer.

This disturbance being quelled, Captain Lucas ordered the two prisoners to ascend the companion-way to the deck, where they

found their entire crew in irons, and being rudely, even brutally, transferred to the deck of the Bay State.

"Hurry up the rebel pirates!" roared Lucas, garnishing his words with the foulest oaths. "You'll be hanged, every mother's son of you, and you deserve it, you pirates."

Eugene and Jasper soon found themselves huddled into a small cell, which had been hastily prepared for them near the engine-room, and the closing of the door on the cell left them in total darkness, although it was broad daylight on deck. The floor was wet from the continued dripping of steam pipes, which passed through the upper part of the cell, and the air was hot and stifling.

"I shall be taken out boiled," said Jasper, as he endeavored to pull off his coat. "Perhaps it is the intention of that red-bearded, corpse-faced old Turk to cook us alive, like crabs, and have a feast, the accursed old cannibal!"

"We are to suffer all the torment that he can inflict, no doubt," replied Eugene, "for he is a mere brute." *repeat for once*

The air grew more and more stifling, and as the engines of the Bay State began to work, jets of hot steam were shot from the leaky pipes above the unfortunate prisoners, drenching them to the skin and almost scalding them. The cell was so small that they could only sit in a cramped position, and so low that they were unable to stand erect. It had been used as an oil closet, and stowed with cans of machine oil, the foul and fetid odor of which had saturated the porous wood lining the interior, so that its nauseating stench was added to the suffocating smell of steam.

The prisoners soon grew faint and sick, nor did the most violent vomiting give them relief.

"Great God!" gasped Jasper, in a feeble voice, "we are to be put to death! and what torture!"

"Courage, my friend," said Eugene, though he seemed to feel all the agonies of death, and knew that both must soon perish if kept in that horrible prison.

"Perkins," gasped the unfortunate Jasper, "they mean to murder us, and then to call it accident. If you survive and are ever in Savannah, find my mother—" Here the strength of the midshipman seemed to fail, but after a pause, he continued: "Find my mother and sister, give them my dearest love, and tell them my last breath was given for the Southern Confederacy."

"I swear to do it, Jasper," replied Eugene, "though it is certainly the intention to murder us both."

"Hurrah for Jeff! Davis and the Southern Confederacy! The South forever!" said Jasper, in a strong voice, as if he had rallied all his expiring power for a death defiance, and then said no more.

"Jasper! Jasper! dear friend!" exclaimed Eugene. But Jasper remained silent. Eugene groped about with his manacled hands until he found those of his friend, which feebly returned the pressure of his own.

"Poor boy," thought Eugene, "he is almost gone! He is dying. Gallant fellow, descendant of noble Sergeant Jasper, of the Revolution, and as unfortunate."

The iron frame and great physical strength of our hero were also

rapidly yielding to the infernal horrors of the dungeon, when the door of the cell was thrown open, and a gush of fresh air rushed in—not fresh like that upon deck, for the locality itself was confined, yet as light to darkness compared to the horrible-effluvium he had been breathing.

"I expect both are dead!" said a gruff and angry voice, as the speaker held a lantern aloft and peered into the cell. He was a bluff-faced, blue-eyed man, with shaggy black whiskers standing out from his rugged cheeks like "stern-sails," and the expression of his face at the moment was full of indignation.

"Ah, I see one is alive," he said in a hearty tone, as his eyes met those of Eugene. "Hold this light, blackie, while I lift him out. Steady on your pins; you must be made of iron and live-oak, my lad. There, sit down on that cask, and revive. Now let me see if this youngster is alive," he continued, as he lifted the limp and unconscious form of Jasper in his stout arms, and bore him into a current of air; "yes, he breathes, but I'd bet a year's pay against a snatch-block that I'd found him dead as an anchor-fluke five minutes later. Let the lantern down, blackie, and run tell the steward that Mr. Wing wants a glass of brandy. Scotch, you black lubber, as if your daddy, the devil, was after ye, tail up."

Eugene, seated upon a cask, and leaning against the bulkhead, instantly grew stronger, and as he glanced about him his eyes met those of Diaz, the Spaniard, who scowled with disappointed malice, and was about to turn away, when the bluff-faced man called out—

"See here, Spanisher, you and somebody we won't name, meant murder, and mean it yet."

"Captain Lucas ordered the door to be shut," replied Diaz, who seemed to shrink from this man, "to be shut for ten minutes, and I forgot—"

"And so kept these young fellows steaming and boiling for half an hour, you yellow-faced, hang-dog, cat-eyed hound," cried Mr. Wing, who was the first officer under Lucas Butler. "I have ears, you villain, and I can swear I heard Captain Butler tell you to forget to open the door. Look sharp, Diaz, or I'll wake you up." He then muttered: "you've met old Ralph Wing on the sea before, you dog, and mayhap it ain't too late to clap a rope around your neck yet, if I see fit."

"Captain Butler said the rebel officers deserved a little punishment—" began Diaz, evidently uneasy before the honest indignation of old Wing's blue eyes.

"A little punishment!" growled Wing, shaking his fist at the Spaniard. "Ah, blackie, so you have got back with the brandy. Open your mouth, my lad, and take a swallow of this. It will put life into a dead man, and you ain't more than two-thirds dead," said he, handling the reviving midshipman as tenderly as if he held an infant. "Feel better already, eh? I'm an icicle, lad, if you ought not to be at home chasing butterflies instead of cruising under the rebel rag—no offense, but we don't feel alike about that matter. Blackie, give the rest of the brandy to the other one."

Blackie, as Wing called the negro, was none other than Cyrus,

who at once gave the glass to his master, saying in an insolent tone :

"Thought I was free now, and nebber 'bliged to wait on him no more."

Eugene stared at his once faithful Cyrus as he thus spoke, but a sly wink from the negro reassured him. Cyrus evidently had a plot of his own, for he and Diaz exchanged a look of intelligence.

"Blackie!" cried Mr. Wing, "you'll wait on the ship's cat if I command ye. Free! you niggers will find what freedom means when more than half of ye are dog's-meat. You and that black-guard Spaniard had better not insult these prisoners."

"Ho! So Ralph Wing loves rebels!" snarled the harsh voice of Captain Butler, as he advanced. "What! the rebels out of the cell! By whose command?"

"By mine, sir," coolly replied Mr. Wing.

"By —, sir! I command on board this ship, sir!" stormed Lucas Butler. "I am captain of this ship, sir! I give orders, sir!"

"To murder?" demanded Mr. Wing.

Butler turned pale, as was revealed even by the gleam of the lantern, and glanced uneasily towards Diaz.

"No, that scoundrel did not betray you!" said Mr. Wing, interpreting his thoughts. "I overheard you tell him to forget to open the door of the dungeon until the job was done."

"I—I deny it. I—I—"

"I have witnesses, nor shall Lucas Butler dispute my word twice," exclaimed Mr. Wing determinedly, as he faced the cowardly bully.

"It is true that these prisoners are rebels—"

"Pirates, Mr. Wing, pirates."

"Not so declared by a jury, Lucas Butler, and if they were, what right have you to murder them, torture them, assassinate them? I shall report this matter to the commander of the fleet."

Lucas Butler, who had his private reasons for dreading the wrath of old Ralph Wing, as had Diaz, made no reply, though Cyrus afterwards told his master that he heard him grind his teeth together as he (Butler) turned away and left the spot.

Diaz also went away, in a sly, furtive manner, as if fearful lest Mr. Wing might stop him; but as slyly as the Spaniard stole away, old Wing was well aware of his departure, and growled to himself:

"Slip off, you hound; you and Butler will put your heads together to capsize Ralph Wing, but I have sailed with both of you, and know your tricks. Well, lads," he said, addressing the Confederates, "you've had a narrow escape, and owe your lives to this blackie. Hallo! where is he? Gone! But I can't say you owe him any gratitude, my lads, for he was laughing over the matter, and saying he was glad live rebels would be roasted. Then I inquired, and he told me what I had forgotten, that you were in the engine-room oil closet. That nigger hates ye, so look out for him, and Butler and Diaz hate you too. What for?"

The rough old seaman put this question so suddenly, that Eugene started with surprise.

"Say," continued Mr. Wing, emphatically, "Butler and Diaz hate

you, young man, more than they do this youngster, who is, mayhap, suffering for being in bad company. What does Butler hate you for?"

"There is a lady in the case."

"Ay, jealousy, eh? Then you had better keep both eyes wide open until you get out of this ship, my lad. I shall leave her as soon as she touches Boston wharves again. But what is your name?" he continued, as he raised the lantern to Eugene's face and gazed intently at him. "Can't say that I ever saw you till now, but there is something strangely familiar in your figure-head. What is your name?"

"Eugene Perkins, sir."

Ralph Wing uttered a quick, sharp "Ah!" and recoiled as if struck a sudden blow. The lantern fell from his hand, and was extinguished by the concussion of the fall.

A deep silence followed this incident, and Eugene was wondering why Mr. Wing neither moved nor spoke, when he heard him groan.

"You are sick, Mr. Wing?"

"Sick at heart, my lad," replied the old seaman, relighting the lantern. As the light shone upon his face, Eugene saw he was ghastly pale.

Mr. Wing seemed to make an effort, and again examined the features of the Confederate officer.

"Strangely like," he muttered, much to the astonishment of Eugene. "Say, my lad, was your father lost at sea?"

The question being asked, the old seaman seemed to await the reply with much anxiety.

"No, sir; he died when I was quite young, but he died in New Orleans," replied Eugene.

"Sure of that—know that to be a fact?"

"I am sure of it. His tomb is in the St. Louis cemetery of New Orleans, and bears an inscription which states that he died in that city."

"Was his name Eugene Perkins?"

"No, sir; his name was Richard."

"Ay, but you wasn't named Eugene after nobody, eh?"

"After an uncle," replied Eugene.

"I could have sworn it," muttered Mr. Wing, but he asked no more questions.

"I'll do what I can to make you comfortable, lads," he said. "We don't fight under the same flag—more's the pity, seeing that it took both North and South to make the old gridiron a respectable rag among nations; but we are fellow-countrymen for all that, and I say, do unto others as you'd be done by. The big wigs at Washington and Richmond will come to some understanding if they let the nigger alone, but if the nigger gets mixed in the fuss, look for old Cain and blue blazes. A sentry will be placed over you, just for form, and I think you'll fare better if transferred on board a man-of-war; but I'll leave you now, as I must see to your late crew. Lucas Butler is a savage, but we'll be even some day, and he'll get—" The remainder of the old seaman's remark was lost as he walked away.

"We have one friend at least," said Eugene.

"Yes, and so long as we are in this ship, a powerful one," replied Jasper, who had now quite recovered.

"Yet I am anxious to get out of this ship," said Eugene. "Anywhere but near Lucas Butler and his cut-throat Diaz."

"Mr. Wing evinced a decided curiosity as regards your family, but slighted me," said Jasper.

"As much to my surprise as to yours, Jasper," remarked Eugene; but here the communication was cut short by a peremptory:

"Silence! No communication between prisoners!" from a marine who made his appearance as sentry.

The prisoners, though heavily ironed, were so much relieved by their release from the oil closet, that they found their situation comparatively pleasant. They were still suffering from the effects of the dreadful malice of Butler, yet the liberty to inhale fresh air, to sit or lie down, or to stand erect, was felt to be a great privilege. Each was forced to restrict himself to his own thoughts, and those of Eugene dwelt much upon the fair girl whom he had left a fugitive from domestic tyranny. He thought much, also, of the unfortunate end of his career as a prize officer, the enmity of Lucas Butler, the probability of being treated as a pirate—all of which ruminations did not make a pleasant mental banquet.

CHAPTER X.

CAPTAIN FROTH, U. S. N.

It was not long before the movement of the engines of the Bay State told Eugene that the ship was nearing one of the blockading squadrons, and, after a time, a guard approached and commanded the two prisoners to follow them. Obeying this order with great difficulty, from the weight of their shackles, they were led into the cabin of the ship, where they found Captain Butler and two United States naval officers, one of whom wore the uniform and insignia of a captain.

Eugene was not surprised to see the malicious visage of Diaz in the background, that villain standing near Butler.

"Let the guard remain," said Butler. "These are desperate rascals, especially this elder one. Now, prisoners, it will be best for you to answer promptly and truthfully every question you are asked."

"We are Confederate officers, and as such not accustomed to lying," interrupted Eugene, darting a glance of contempt upon the bully, who ever endeavored to fashion his manners after those of his relative, B. F., now known over all Christendom as "The Beast!" *another li - d - lie*

"I claim the treatment due to a captured officer," continued

Eugene, addressing the two naval officers. "Before we surrendered, Captain Butler not merely promised, but swore—"

"Ya! ya! Burro!" roared the bully, smiting the table at which he sat. "That is neither here nor there. You are here to answer questions."

"I refuse to answer any questions that you may ask," said Eugene.

"So do I," cried Jasper, emphatically.

"Perhaps your rebel highness may deign to answer me," remarked the U. S. N. captain, with a sneer.

"Perhaps not," replied Eugene, curtly.

"Ah! Well, to begin," said the officer, tartly, "you are an officer of the rebel cruiser, pirate or what not, Sumter?"

"I am an officer of the Confederate war steamer Sumter," replied Eugene, proudly.

"Put that down, Cutts—or stay—what is your name?" demanded the captain, whom we will style Froth.

"Eugene Perkins."

"Put that down, Cutts," said Capt. Froth, playing gingerly with his whiskers. "Now state what you know about the Sumter, her force, armament, where you parted from her, her next destination, etc., etc."

"To all of which I refuse to reply," answered Eugene.

"As do I," chimed Jasper.

"Put that down, Cutts. I see that these rebels are contumacious," said Captain Froth to Butler.

"Damnably so, sir," said Butler; "but their crimes are as clear as the sun; and as they will be tried as pirates before a United States Court, there will be scores of witnesses. We have one here, Captain Froth, in the person of this honest sailor, Diaz, who shipped in the Sumter at New Orleans as a spy, and has luckily made his escape. But this fellow Perkins, is not merely a pirate and a rebel, both hanging matters, but a murderer."

"He has a villainous eye," remarked Captain Froth, sipping his wine affectedly.

"Yes, an atrocious eye," said Butler, who even then shrank from the calm courage of that dark and commanding eye. "Diaz had a tried comrade, one Spicer, who had shipped with him, and who was shot—brutally shot, sir—by this pirate, Perkins. We have another and valuable witness against him in one Cyrus, an American citizen of African descent, formerly a slave of Perkins—"

"Yes, we need not waste time with these fellows," said Captain Froth. "Hold on until night, Captain Butler, when the decision of the commander of the squadron will be made known."

"Conduct the prisoners to their dungeon," said Butler, and when Eugene and Jasper had departed, he continued, "You can now report Captain Froth. You understand my wishes in this matter?"

"Certainly. To be ordered to convey the pirates to New York immediately, the recaptured prize to be placed in charge of your first officer. Ah, what is his name?"

"Ralph Wing."

"True; my memory in the matter of names is feeble, very—in faces, strong, very. You intimated that, ah, what's his name?"

"Ralph Wing."

"True. You intimated that he is inclined to favor rebel prisoners?"

"Decidedly, sir."

"Then he is half a rebel himself. They deserve hanging, nothing else more gentle than hanging. Still, as a friend, you know, we must watch public opinion—European opinion—and not be too severe upon our prisoners."

"Pirates deserve little mercy," put in Butler.

"True, especially rebel pirates. But I must return to my ship. Many thanks for your generous hospitality."

"No thanks, no thanks," blurted out the awkward Butler, attempting a bow. "Allow me to place a couple of baskets of champagne in your boat, Captain, and a few bottles of my extra French brandy. While I think of it, you like a fine cigar, and I will add a thousand regalias, a prime article."

"You overwhelm me, my dear sir!" exclaimed Captain Froth, grasping the hand of Butler. "But I will endeavor, in my small way, to reciprocate; you may count on my friendship. 'Immediate orders to sail for New York, with the pirates, and the command of the recaptured prize to be given to—' oh! what's-his-name?"

"Ralph Wing."

"True; no danger of my forgetting it, Captain;" and after a few more remarks, Captain Froth made his appearance upon deck, where he was met by Mr. Wing, who placed a letter in his hand, addressed to the commander of the fleet.

"Oblige me, Captain," said Mr. Wing, "by placing that in the hand of the commander yourself."

"Your name is?"

"Ralph Wing, sir."

"Oh! that is the person who was, or who is, owned by that strange name—"

"Sir!" demanded the astonished old sailor, drawing his powerful form erect, and bestowing a glance of fire upon the popinjay.

"Mr. Wing, you are wanted forward," said Butler.

With a deep growl of dissatisfaction, Mr. Wing turned upon his heel and hastened towards the bow, wondering what "that loud bag of gas meant by his remarks," and resolving to pull his nose at the first opportunity.

"So that is what's-his-name," said Captain Froth, "and he presumes to make me his mail-carrier." Here he held the letter at arm's length, and continued: "It has a decided aroma of tar and bilge-water. There, it slipped from my fingers, and the wind has carried it into the sea. The sharks will have to take care of it."

Captain Butler laughed hugely as he saw the letter fall into the sea, for he suspected that Mr. Wing had made a true statement of his brutality towards his prisoners.

"Good day, Captain Butler; my compliments to—have you written down his name, Cults? Good! What is it?"

"Ralph Wing, sir."

"True. Well, tell him his letter is all right."

This noble individual having left the Bay State, Butler retired to

his cabin, to await the orders of the commander of the fleet, and pluming himself with the hope that Eugene would be left in his hands.

"If he is," muttered he, scowling, "damn him, I'll murder him by inches before we see New York."

CHAPTER XI

MR. WING SPEAKS.

EUGENE and Jasper were returned to their horrible prison, and though the door was left open, their late inhalation of pure air seemed to have increased the agonies of their imprisonment. Hot, wet, steaming, and stifling, the cell was in every way adapted to gratify the inward malice of the brutal Butler, who, as he sipped his grog, and smoked his regalias, in his luxurious cabin, felt his comforts materially increased as he reflected upon the tortures of his captives.

Hours passed away before Butler received any tidings from Captain Froth, and the sun was scarcely an hour light when Butler was delighted by the reception of a missive from the commander of the squadron, granting all that he had asked.

The presence of Mr. Wing was immediately ordered, and when that gentleman appeared, Butler grinned maliciously and placed the orders before him.

The old sailor read them carefully, and his blue eyes flashed angrily as he finished their perusal. He gazed steadily into Butler's face.

"I un'erstand all this," he said, tartly. "I see what tack you are on, Captain Butler."

"Good! It is a pleasure for a commander to know that his subordinates need no instructions," snarled Butler, attempting the satirical.

"It may be less pleasant to you shortly after our arrival in New York. You mean foul play towards that black-eyed youngster, Perkins," replied Mr. Wing.

"Come," said Butler, wishing to evade that subject, "you growled like a bear when I made my appearance on the deck of the Bay State as her captain, and said that if you had had time, you would have resigned rather than sail with me. Now you are to make the return voyage as commander of another ship, of whose salvage you will have a large share, and you still growl. There is no pleasing such a man, and I shall not waste time in trying. You have read the orders, so hurry aboard the Bradford, and see that she weighs anchor immediately."

Butler assumed a very high and authoritative tone for he knew the Yankee fleet was near to enforce his orders; but Mr. Wing did

not hurry; on the contrary, he very deliberately drew a chair to the table on which Butler leaned his elbows, and sat down, as if he had no idea of being in a hurry.

Lucas Butler stared owlishly at him, and began to swear, as he bristled his red whiskers.

"Butler," said Mr. Wing, very calmly and in a low tone, "have you forgotten Jabez Hosmer?"

"Eh?"

"I say, have you forgotten a scoundrel named Jabez Hosmer? He lives in Boston, I have heard, though I have never met him since I was set adrift by him in an open boat, some fourteen years ago. You are very pale, Captain Butler. Take a little brandy."

Butler was pale, and as his complexion was naturally cadaverous, he must have been greatly frightened to turn any paler. Mr. Wing went on.

"Did you think that I had not recognized you, because I never referred nor alluded to the Silver Star?"

Butler groaned with terror, but made no reply. Indeed he could not, for his tongue clove to his teeth, and he breathed fast and heavily, as if he had run a long foot race and come in dead beat.

Mr. Wing pushed the decanter of brandy towards the trembling, almost fainting bully, and Butler tried to pour some into a glass, but his shaking hands pilt much upon the table, and as he carried the goblet to his lips, he emptied nearly half its contents upon his beard. Still, what he swallowed seemed to strengthen him, so that Mr. Wing smiled grimly, and said:

"I thought you were about to be swamped in a faint. Here, take some more."

Butler shook his head, and the old sailor continued:

"It was a bloody and murderous mutiny, that on board the Silver Star, and all to get the gold of the passengers. How did the papers report it? 'Ship Silver Star, from Chagres to Boston, over a million in gold dust, twelve passengers, fifteen seamen—foudered at sea—every soul lost except the captain and second mate—fearful calamity.' You read all that, didn't you?"

Butler nodded, still unable to reply in speech, and Mr. Wing resumed:

"I was first mate of her, and the mutineers set me adrift in a leaky yawl, in the midst of a gale that might have sunk a badly-manned ship. They didn't knock me on the head or cut my throat, nor make me walk a plank, as they did the passengers. You must remember the tall, gray-haired gentleman, father of a little girl—a little beauty, some three years old. The gentleman wasn't so old in years, mayhap, as he was in care and trouble—lost his wife, you know, in California—went there with his handsome wife to get rich. Got rich, but lost his wife; she died of Chagres fever, just before we sailed. He had her body aboard, you remember. Have you forgotten how he was bound to her coffin and tossed in the sea? I haven't, Lucas Butler. I can't. Can you?"

The pallid bully only replied with a groan, and a crazy plunge at the randy decanter.

"Don't take too much," said Mr. Wing, bluffly. "You'll be as drunk as a fool at that measure. Yes, the mutineers pitched the

gentleman and coffin, lashed together, into the sea, and their leader, who was Captain Jabez Hosmer, said to the poor gentleman, as he lashed him over the taffrail: 'You can take your wife with you, my hearty!' and as man and coffin were shoved over, I heard the gentleman cry: 'Great God, protect my child!' Have you forgotten that? I haven't. I can't. Can you? I suppose man and coffin went down into the sea, like lead, though I couldn't see, as I was lying near the binnacle, bound hand and foot. The thing was done—I mean the murder of the passengers—at night, but the man and coffin were thrown overboard on the next morning. Two days after they set me adrift, and for two days I drifted before the gale, d'ye see, until a barque, Portuguese, blown out of her course by the gale, picked me up. I was nigh dead when they got me, and it was a week before I could say a word; and when I did speak there wasn't a man on board that could understand English. So I was finally landed at some Portuguese port, and what with this and with that, why it was a matter of two years or more before my feet touched American soil. Then I heard that the Silver Star had foundered at sea, and a tight old yarn it was. But I was sick and had no money, and of course no friends, so I held my tongue and waited."

"Waited for what, Mr. Wing?" inquired Lucas Butler, quite respectfully, and very pale withal.

"To find Jabez Hosmer. But see," cried the old sailor suddenly, and rasping Butler's arm, "I know that you and Hosmer, and every man of the crew were equally dipped in that slaughter of the passengers. What became of the crew? I have never met a man of them since."

"They—they scattered, after scuttling the ship," stammered Butler, with a dash at the brandy.

"Yes, they scattered," replied Mr. Wing, grimly. "They scattered into the ocean. I said that I never met a man of the crew, and so I didn't. But there was a little girl aboard—the daughter of him that was lashed to the coffin. I met her."

"You did!" gasped Butler, wildly.

"I am sure of it."

"Then you did not speak to her?"

"No; I saw her flashing by in a carriage, and though three years had passed since I saw her screaming in your arms aboard the Silver Star, I knew her at once; but she was out of hail and sight in a minute, and I lost that clue. I lately learned that Jabez Hosmer lives in Boston, and what puzzles me is, that I never met him, no, knew where he was—perhaps because I was seldom in Boston, and there only for a short time."

"And now what are you going to propose?" said Butler, hesitatingly.

"Do you remember the name of that passenger—him of the coffin?"

"I? No—that is—"

"Lucas Butler, you are lying!" exclaimed Mr. Wing, more fiercely than he had yet spoken, and rising quickly. "His name!—speak it! His name—or I'll smash your ugly face with this decanter!"

"Don't strike! His name was Perkins, Eugene Perkins!" re-

plied Butler, crouching beneath the upraised arm of the angry seaman.

"Yes, the name of this youngster of the Sumter. Now see to it, Butler, that both of these young men are transferred to my care, aboard the Bradford."

"Aboard the Bradford! But my orders—"

"Act upon your own responsibility, sir. You and that popinjay Froth have been playing a fine game, and I mean to block it. Come, we have talked long enough. If I am to take charge of the recaptured prize, these two youngsters sail with me."

"But Mr. Wing! Mr. Wing!" cried Lucas, as the old man turned away, "we do not exactly understand each other. You do not mean to stir up that old forgotten affair—the Silver Star business I mean—when we reach New York?"

"That is my business," replied Mr. Wing. "Sometimes I can't sleep for thinking that it's my duty to avenge the dead. I have been too poor to fight in the matter against you and Hosmer, but the last mail we got brought me word that a brother of mine out West has lately died and left me a few thousands. Perhaps I may be satisfied if I find the daughter of that passenger, and help her a bit, if so she needs help, and likely she does, no doubt."

"Yes, let bygones be bygones," said Butler. "The two rebels shall sail with you, since you desire it, Mr. Wing. I am ready to do anything to oblige you, Mr. Wing."

"I know that. Very ready," replied the old sailor, as he left the cabin, at the moment Diaz entered.

Captain Butler, after a glance at the Spaniard, poured out a brimmin' glass of brandy, and pushed it towards him, saying:

"Drink, Diaz, and then we will have a talk."

"I drink no more while he lives!" said the Spaniard, shuddering and jerking his thumb towards the door of the cabin.

"You think that he recognizes you as one of the crew of the Silver Star," whispered Butler.

"I know it. I read it in his eye. I have been drinking all my life, or I'd not be a common sailor now. I'd be as rich as you or old Hosmer. I grin at my teeth when I remember that I once had a full third of all the gold we took from the Silver Star, and squandered it all. I drink no more while that man lives to shake a hangman's knot at me."

"Right, Diaz. He has recognized you, and me too, mind that. Come, let us pull this knot to pieces. We are in peril, great peril," said Butler, in a tremulous tone. "He means to open on us as soon as we reach New York."

"Then I'll put my knife into him on first chance," replied Diaz. "Yet—"

"Yet what?" asked Butler, as the Spaniard hesitated. "Put your knife into him deep. That's the best way."

"Try the point of yours on him, Captain Butler," growled Diaz, who knew that his commander would be very willing for him to undertake the dangerous game.

"But you used the word 'yet.'"

"Yes, and I meant to say that I have twice this day had a chance

to kill him," said Diaz. "Might have done it, and no man the wiser, but my heart failed me and my arm felt weak."

"No matter. He sails in command of the Bradford, and you shall accompany him."

"Very well, but not as a common hand."

"Of course not. I'll see to that; and I'll see to that instantly."

The conversation did not end here, but we will follow it no further at present.

Soon after, Mr. Wing, then aboard of the Bradford, was surprised to see the Bay State steaming rapidly towards the flag ship of the squadron.

"Some new deviltry," thought Mr. Wing, as he gazed landward. "Lucas Butler is cunning, but I am honest, and we shall see which is the better hand in this tug."

CHAPTER XII.

TURNING THE TABLES, ALL HANDS.

As Mr. Wing had received orders to weigh anchor as soon as ready, and as Eugene and Jasper were on board the Bradford, he resolved to lose no time in making sail. Thus, long before the Bay State had reached the flag ship, the Bradford was standing boldly out to sea, under full sail.

Eugene and Jasper found their situation on board the Bradford by no means uncomfortable, as Mr. Wing had ordered their irons to be taken off, and given them full liberty to move about the ship, their word being given not to attempt to escape.

Night closed in rapidly, and nothing was seen of the Bay State, until on the following morning, when she loomed up on the larboard quarter, at about two miles distant.

"I hoped to lose sight of her until off New York," remarked Mr. Wing to Eugene, as they recognized the steamer not long before sunrise, "and if luck befriends me, I will give her the slip yet."

"There goes a puff of smoke from her bows," said Eugene, as a bluish cloud rose suddenly from the deck of the steamer, and drifted to the leeward.

The sullen boom of the heavy gun immediately followed, and then a signal flag fluttered from the Bay State.

"Yes, and there's my orders to lay to," growled Mr. Wing, as he walked away to obey the signal.

The Bay State was soon alongside, and a yawl lowered from her, bore Captain Butler, Diaz, and a strong boat's crew to the Bradford.

Mr. Wing was near the gangway, awaiting orders, when Captain

Butler nodded to his boat's crew, and before the old sailor could attempt resistance, he was knocked down and heavily ironed.

"Now clap irons on those pirates!" said Butler, shaking his sword at Eugene and Jasper, who were standing near the mainmast, regarding the scene in astonishment. They offered no resistance, and again found themselves in fetters.

"What does this mean, Captain Butler?" demanded Mr. Wing, raising himself upon his elbow and gazing sternly at Butler. The old man's face was covered with blood, for the blow which had prostrated him had been struck upon his forehead with the butt of a pistol. His long gray hair was wet with blood, and his face ashy pale, yet his eyes were fierce and defiant.

"It means that you are arrested as a traitor and a sympathizer with rebels," snarled Butler. "You are a mutineer also."

"A mutineer! It sounds well to hear you call any man by that name," said Ralph Wing, struggling to his feet and confronting him.

"Damn you, take that!" roared Butler, striking the old man on the head with his sword. Ralph Wing threw up his fettered hands, and so deadened the blow, yet his wrists were badly wounded, and he sank to the deck, saying:

"Every dog has his day, and yours has been a long one, Butler; but the time will come for squaring accounts."

"I've made up my mind, Ralph Wing," replied Butler, whose suddenly awakened fears had goaded him to this desperate conduct. He then summoned all the crew of the Bradford, and informed them that Diaz was to take command in place of Ralph Wing.

"God help me now!" thought the old man, as he listened to the harsh and triumphant voice of his cruel enemy, "and God help these youngsters."

"Diaz will take good care of you, Ralph Wing," said Butler, as he bent over the wounded old man, "especially as he sailed with you in the Silver Star. Bully me in my own cabin, did you? Shake a decanter over my head at my own table, did you? You are a fool. You don't know Lucas Butler."

"I know you very well," replied the old man, undauntedly, and spitting in the ugly sneering face as it glared upon him, "and the devil will know you better."

Butler kicked him brutally, and then wiping his cadaverous visage, led Diaz aside, and whispered:

"The old rattlesnake is full of venom, you see."

"It is well for us that he rattled before he struck," replied Diaz. "We have him now, and will mash his head."

But although Butler was armed with all the absolute power of a sea-tyrant, he was to learn that American sailors had ideas of their own, and hated cruelty. Both he and Diaz recoiled in alarm as the entire crew of the Bradford suddenly rushed to the fallen man, raised him to his feet, and tore off his fetters.

"As true a seaman as ever shared his last crust with a comrade," cried a tall New Jersey man, wiping the blood from the old man's face, "and damn my eyes, lads, if we can stand by and see him kicked like a dog, eh?"

"Never!" chimed in the crew, as they stood firm y around Ralph

Wing. "He's no traitor." "He's a true heart!" "The kindest officer I ever sailed under."

"Mutiny!" roared Butler, as he and Diaz retreated from the increasing uproar.

"No mutiny," returned Ralph Wing, in a voice whose strength proved the astonishing vitality of the old seaman. "I was knocked down without provocation, and if there is any justice left in America, you, Lucas Butler, shall sweat iron for this outrage."

"Ay, fair treatment!" chimed in the crew. Meanwhile, all this disturbance had not been unobserved from the decks of the Bay State, and Butler felt his courage somewhat restored as he saw two boats, heavily laden with men, leave her side, while the steamer herself neared the Bradford, from which she had been drifting.

Eugene, though again in irons, still remained on deck, greatly interested in the progress of events; but a whispered remark from Cyrus, as he carelessly walked by them, drew his attention to a strange sail in the offing.

Now Cyrus, whose great eyes were ever rolling about him, and whose vision was as keen as that of a vulture, had observed this sail at early dawn, and having clambered to the mast-head, had regaled himself with a steady scrutiny of her rigging and general appearance.

Those aboard the Bay State and Bradford, having had their attention fixed upon their own affairs, had paid little heed to the distant stranger, from whose peak flaunted the stars and stripes.

But the stranger had gradually approached the vicinity of the recaptured prize and her convoy, until Cyrus had a vague suspicion that she was a steamer, though no smoke stack was visible. At the moment when he called the attention of the two Confederates to the sail, the officer in command of the decks of the Bay State, now within easy hail, bawled through his trumpet—

"Suspicious sail to the windward!"

"Where away?" cried Butler, whirling about, with his cowardly mind full of rebel cruisers. "Oh, there she is! Here, I must return to the Bay State. This is a mutiny, a regular mutiny. Wait till I get aboard my ship, and I'll bring these rascals to their senses. Order these two boats to return to their ship. This stranger must be looked to."

"I'd rather not remain on board, Captain Butler, until your authority with this crew is restored," said Diaz, who knew that he was no favorite there.

"Not a man of us will have a yellow-faced Dingo placed over us," roared the tall Jerseyman; a sentiment which was instantly echoed by the crew.

"I'll change the crew, Diaz; I'll change the crew as soon as we see who this stranger is," said Butler, hurrying over the ship's side. "Come on."

Once on board the Bay State, the bully felt more at ease, for he knew the fleetness of his ship, and at once gave orders to put on all steam.

"But shall we leave the Bradford?" asked the subordinate. "Oh, perhaps you mean to meet the stranger, and if she is a pirate, sink her."

"But—but she might sink us," stuttered Butler. "Won't she reply to any of our signals?"

"Not a rag, sir; and I think that very strange, as she has the look of a steamer," replied the officer, steadily regarding the stranger through his glass. "But, surely, no rebel cruiser dare venture in these latitudes."

"Curse 'em! That fellow, Semmes, will venture anywhere," said Butler.

"If it is the pirate, I think we are a match for him, sir. The Sumter is a mere shell, patched up, sir. We are not iron plated, but we are prepared for a rough fight, and with our strong crew, our heavy gun—"

"Mustn't think of it, sir. We have a great many—at least ten pirates aboard now. They might, you know, get loose during action. Besides, the crew is quite mutinous, and not to be trusted, I fear."

"It's the pirate, by Jove!" suddenly exclaimed the officer, as he saw the flag of stars and stripes give place to the defiant banner of the South. "He is within range of the Bradford, I guess."

But Lucas Butler had not remained to hear any more than these terrible words, "It's the pirate, by Jove!" but hurried to urge his engineers to pile on as much steam as the boilers of the Bay State could bear, and then headed the steamer straight for the shelter of the Yankee squadron, whose protecting guns he had left the night before.

"Our captain is a miserable coward!" was the muttered comment of the officer, as he saw the recaptured prize thus abandoned without a blow.

Plunging ahead under the heaviest pressure of steam her engines dared put on, the Bay State rapidly left the vicinity of the stranger, towards whom Butler strained his eyes, trembling lest he might be pursued, something give way, and he be captured.

"He has retaken the Bradford," he said, "at least he must be doing so now, for the ships are close together. Tell the engineers to crowd on steam—and I think we may shake out our ails."

Leaving the trembling bully to his headlong flight, let us return to the Bradford.

Mr. Wing, perceiving that the Bay State had left him to his fate, be what it might, and sincerely preferring to fall into Confederate hands rather than to remain under the knife of the cutthroat, Diaz, resumed the command of his ship amid the hearty cheers of his crew.

His first command was that the irons should be struck from his two prisoners, and Eugene was surprised at the unusual gentleness and solicitude which the old man evinced toward him. He was kind, very kind to Jasper, also, but towards Eugene he displayed all the love of a father.

"It looks like the boot is to be put upon t'other leg," remarked the old man. "You may soon be with your friends, my lads."

"If so, Mr. Wing, depend upon my word that your kindness shall be well repaid," said Eugene.

"Oh, I have no doubt of that, young man," quickly replied Mr. Wing; "but I would treat prisoners of war like men at all times."

I shall try to escape, however, as my duty bids me, lad. You see I have the ship staggering under all she'll bear, and unless that stranger is a steamer—"

"She appears to be of that build, yet I do not think she is the Sumter," said Eugene.

There! she changes her bunting, and declares herself an enemy of Uncle Sam," said Mr. Wing, whose glass had narrowly watched the stranger. "And there rises her smoke stack. Bah! we need not try to escape now."

The leeward smoke stack of the stranger was now erect, and black volumes of smoke began to pour from it.

"Still, I say it is not the Sumter," persisted Eugene. "Captain Semmes is off South America at this time, I am confident."

"If not the Sumter, she is not a Confederate, and there she speaks," replied Mr. Wing, as a puff of blue smoke darted from the bows of the stranger.

Sail was now shortened on the Bradford, and she lay to to await the solution of the mystery. The Bay State was now almost hull down in the horizon, she having been steaming like mad in a direction opposite to that held by the Bradford during her attempt to escape, and as the stranger steamed within a quarter of a mile of the Bradford, the Confederate flag at her peak was rapidly lowered, to be replaced by the flag of the United States.

"What does that mean?" ejaculated old Wing, rubbing his eyes. "She is confoundedly fond of changing her buntings."

"She's a Yankee, and I'd swear to it," said Jasper, in a sorrowful tone. "At all events, she is not the Sumter—wish she was."

"Well, she's putting off a boat," remarked Mr. Wing, "and we'll know what's which and which is what in a quarter of an hour, my lads."

"The officer in the stern sheets of the boat wears the uniform of the United States, and his boat's crew also. So I am satisfied about that," said Jasper.

Mr. Wing said n thing, but shook his head as if greatly puzzled, and in glancing about, saw Cyrus perched upon a coil of rope, grinning from ear to ear.

"What are you grinning at, sir?"

"I see a grinnin', sar."

"But at what, you rascal?"

"Dat massa Semmes a great man, sar, take him all round, sar."

But the stranger's boat was now within hail.

CHAPTER XIII.

"THE HERO OF THE DAY."

ALL uncertainty was soon set aside by the presence, on the deck of the *Brador*, of a grim-faced, lantern-jawed United States naval officer, who grinned a dim recognition of Mr. Wing, and said gleefully:

"Saved you from the pirate's clutches, did I? Scared the rebel off, eh? Lucky for you that old Ames was so cute."

"Don't exactly understand, Cap'n Ames," remarked Mr. Wing, as he recognized an old acquaintance in this officer. "Glad to see you, Captain, but don't understand what you mean by scaring off the pirate—must say, though, that you scared off as big a villain of a pirate as ever broke sea-biscuit."

"I knew it, I knew it," cried Captain Ames, rubbing his long hands together in a paroxysm of delight, and addressing his lieutenant, "Trust me for fooling the smartest rebel that ever escaped hemp."

"We thought you were a Confederate cruiser," said Mr. Wing, still much bewildered by the antics of the captain.

"He did, too, but I can't see why he smelt a rat in time to save his bacon. Didn't mean to have him escape."

"Him? Who?" cried Mr. Wing.

"Why Semmes, the pirate. I am sent out especially to catch the rebel dog."

"Did you think that steamer was the *Sumter*," asked Mr. Wing, grinning largely.

"Of course, and it is, ain't it?"

"No, sir; that is the *Bay State*, steam transport, United States Navy, under command of Lucas Butler, who is now crowding on all steam, thinking you are the *Sumter*."

"And this ship?" exclaimed old Ames, staring at the speaker.

"Is the *Abby Bradford*, late prize of the *Sumter*, recaptured by the *Bay State*."

"Why—why," stammered Captain Ames, "when I spied you this morning, I was sure you were crowding sail to escape from the steamer."

"That's true, but not because she was believed to be the *Sumter*," replied Mr. Wing.

"Then I saw you forced to lay to, saw you boarded, and I was sure you were in the hands of the pirate. I kept the United States flag up to let you know that he was near, and afterwards I hoisted the rebel flag, to tempt the supposed pirate within range of my guns. Damn him, I'd blow him to Jerusalem in three shakes."

Old Ames looked very fierce as he wound up, but the truth was that he believed the *Bay State* the *Sumter*, and had not had the least

idea of approaching the pirate he was sent to catch. He was much mortified in learning his error, though he concealed his chagrin in a fit of boisterous mirth over the fright of Lucas Butler.

"I'll crowd on steam right in his wake, the coward," said Ames. "The *Adger* is faster than the *Bay State*, and I'll scare the lily-livered rascal until his eyes pop out. Good day, Mr. Wing, good day. Very glad it was a mistake."

"So in I," muttered Mr. Wing, as this great warrior of the deep left the ship. "I hope that both you and Butler may fall into the hands of Semmes. Well, lads, you see you are prisoners yet; but don't be downhearted about it, for so long as you give me your parole, you shall be treated as passengers."

"And when we withdraw our parole," asked Eugene.

"Then I must do my duty, lads, and see that you do not give me the slip."

"You are right, Mr. Wing, and here is my hand in pledge that I will not attempt to escape until I shall have given you fair warning," said Eugene.

"And mine follows that pledge," cried Jasper, as he extended his hand.

"Ah! what a pity that we can't all pull together under the same colors!" exclaimed Ralph Wing, as he shook hands heartily; "but every man to his liking. Now there goes the *Adger*, in full chase after Butler—one coward scaring another. But it leaves us free, and now for a jolly voyage to New York—"

"And a damp dungeon after," said Jasper.

"Your risk, my lad. I am sorry for you, but I must do my duty," replied Mr. Wing, "and just now it is my duty to invite you both in to the cabin, to take in a little ballast, in the shape of grog."

Thus the honest and humane old seaman did all in his power to render his prisoners comfortable, and the time passed quite pleasantly with them. Far different the lot of the unfortunate Confederate prisoners on board the *Bay State*. The cowardly commander of that steamer had not ceased to crowd on steam until he ran her bows under the lee of the flag ship of the blockading squadron, at the mouth of the Mississippi. Old Ames had pressed him closely, flying the "rebel" colors at his peak, and occasionally blazing away with bank charges, until Butler was drenched with the sweat of terror.

The chase continued all day, and it was almost night when Ames suddenly changed his course, leaving Butler in sight of the blockading fleet, while he steered towards the open sea.

Night had set in before Butler had spread the important news that the pirate, Semmes, had chased him (after a tough fight, in which the larboard engine of the *Bay State* had been injured,) right into the centre of the Yankee fleet. Rockets, blue-lights, and signal guns then enlivened the night, and the whole blockading squadron weighed anchor, and bolted seaward, determined to annihilate the rebel pirate, yet keeping well in sight of each other.

Of course they found no "pirate," as the *Sumter*, at that time, was sweeping the tropic sea of Yankee craft, and carrying ruin to the plethoric pockets of many a palm-singing descendant of the saintly Pilgrims.

It was, therefore, two days more before Butler again headed his ship for New York, and under the firm belief that the Bradford and all on board had fallen into "rebel hands," for Captain Ames had not solved the mystery.

Butler rejoiced that Ralph Wing, being a captive, could not reach New York before he did, and, probably, not for months, as Semmes sometimes landed his numerous prisoners upon the South American coast, leaving them to make their way homeward as best they could.

But the bully regaled his ruffian instincts, during the voyage to New York, by inventing and carrying out every devilish annoyance imaginable against the prisoners. First, he had their heads shaved; then he allowed them only bilge-water to drink; then he starved them systematically; then had them fed on salt meat and salt fish, and deprived them of water for twelve hours, etc., etc., until five of his ten captives were well nigh dead, and by the time he cast anchor in New York harbor, two of the five had been thrown overboard, dead, or more correctly, murdered.

It was a fair and beautiful morning when the Bay State steamed up the glorious expanse of New York harbor, and as she cast anchor not far from Bedloe's Island, her guns answered the salute from the Yankee forts.

Captain Butler rubbed his hands, in an exuberance of delight, as he anticipated the dinners, the suppers, the public receptions in store for him among the hero-worshipping denizens of the Manhattan metropolis. He counted upon his baggy-tipped fingers these fetes.

"Of course, when it is known that I fought the rebel, Semmes, the merchants will give me a public dinner at the Astor. I must have a speech ready; hope Ben. F. is in town. Then the Marine Insurance Companies will give me a dinner—say supper—I'd rather have it a supper, at the Fifth Avenue—another speech, of course—that's the devil of it. Then the Union men will get up a public ovation, say at the St. Nicholas—another speech—don't that part of the business. Cousin Ben. F., now, he can gas—all gab and enticements, like a frog. Then old Greeley and Bennett, and Raymond, and Beecher, and so on, will want another public ovation—guess I'd select the Metropolitan—another dinner—speech. I must hunt up some starved lawyer to scratch me off a dozen, as our Congressmen do at Washington—*an other dinner*

"Hello! yonder is the Abby Bradford," cried his lieutenant, pointing to a ship being towed towards a dockyard.

"Eh! what?" almost screamed Butler, wheeling upon the speaker, and then letting his glance follow the man's gesture.

"The Abby Bradford! So it is!" gasped Butler, as he read the letters upon a white flag fluttering over her stern. In fact, she was covered with flags—Yankee flags all over—a recaptured prize, taken from the rebel pirate, Sumter. Thousands were gazing at her, as the towboat steamed her slowly towards the dockyard, for repairs, and thousands were shouting, because the great, the immense, and the all-powerful Yankee navy, with its thousands of great guns, its hundreds of armed ships and steamers, its tens of thousands of sailors and marines, aided by the so-called neutrality of Europe,

had succeeded in saving one contemptible ship from the terrible Sumter.

"They are cheering you, sir," said the officer, touching his hat, as an excursion steamboat passed near by, loaded with Loyal Leaguers, going to have a picnic, because one Yankee ship had escaped Raphael Semmes. *Peck & a d — spitfire (man?)*

"Thanks, my friends! thanks!" bellowed Butler, as he waved his hat to the loyal asses. "I am ever ready to die if my death can serve my country!"

"Three cheers for Butler!" roared the Loyal Leaguers, and in a moment more the steamboat had thundered by.

"I wonder how the Bradford escaped from the pirates," said Butler. "Guess she slipped away when he chased us—fought us, I mean."

He felt somewhat uneasy as to the future of Ralph Wing, but so many years had passed since the affair of the Silver Star, no witnesses living, except trusty Diaz and Hosmer, that it appeared really absurd to fear Ralph Wing. Besides, he intended to have Wing arrested instantly for mutiny.

It was not long before the Bay State was boarded by a bevy of newspaper reporters, who clustered around the great Butler as if he were the Czar. A feeble-eyed, beefy-faced reporter of the New York Tribune made himself spokesman, and after he had sucked Butler as dry as a squeezed lemon, he said:

"Yes, sir, your name is now the name of the world. Not only America and Horace Greeley will delight to honor the name of Lucas Butler, but the Queen of Madagascar will join in singing a grand psalm of praise."

"It was a pity that the two rebel pirate officers escaped from the Bradford," said a flat-nosed Herald reporter behind Butler.

"Eh? What? What did you say, sir?" demanded Butler, whirling around as if on a pivot. "Did those two young pirates escape?"

"Fact, sir," said the Herald reporter, feeling his importance rise vastly in being addressed by the "hero of the day."

"The rebel pirates were on their parole until the day before the Bradford arrived in New York harbor, when they threw up their parole, and Captain Wing had them vigilantly guarded."

"Didn't put 'em in double irons, as I would," growled Butler, savagely. "But I have an account to settle with that traitor, Ralph Wing."

"No, he didn't iron them, and they managed to steal a boat from the davits and escape. But they had help."

"Help? Of course they had help, and from Ralph Wing," snarled Butler.

"No; from the cook of the vessel, a negro named Cyrus," replied the man of the Herald, defiantly.

"A regular rascal, that Cyrus," swore the enraged Butler. "And no tidings of the pirates since, eh?"

"Not a word, though it is believed they landed on the Jersey shore, and may now be in New York."

By this time many boats loaded with the curious had arrived, and the decks of the Bay State were thronged with visitors, all eager to

pay their flattering devotions to Lucas Butler, "the hero of the day, the man who beat off the pirate Semmes!"

Butler retired to his cabin, that he might receive the worshippers in grand state, and a sentinel on guard being placed at the head of the companion way, grim and fierce, with sword and bayonet, gave the affair that peculiar hue of military despotism and pomp, now so dear to the Mongrel party.

Party after party entered the cabin, where sat Butler in royal state, and licked his boots, and went away to brag of the good lick they had of those heroic boots.

But, after a time, there entered a gentleman in citizen's dress, but with the air of a detective of the police. He moved softly, he glanced warily, he had the eye of a cat, and the start of a rat about him. He eyed Butler for a second, and then imperceptibly got behind him. Nobody could swear that he was seen to get there, yet he was there, and waited until Butler had finished his acceptance of a public dinner at the Astor, tendered by the "merchants of New York," when he leaned his sharp face over Butler's left shoulder, and whispered in his ear:

"Retire with me into your state-room. I have a warrant from the United States Marshal to arrest you, Lucas Butler, for mutiny, piracy, and murder on the high seas, as found in the case of the Silver Star!"

CHAPTER XIV.

IN BOSTON AGAIN.

BUT it is necessary that we should leave Captain Lucas Butler, as well as sundry others, for a time, and look after the welfare of a certain beautiful young lady introduced several chapters back, and most ungallantly dropped into complete oblivion.

On the day following the escape of Miss Florence, the worthy household of the Hosmers of Winthrop street was in a state of ferment. Although the very eyes of Captain Jabez Hosmer had seen Florence carried away in a carriage, both he and his very much better half firmly believed that she would return by night. Both, therefore, practiced the overwhelming scolding wherewith they were to crush the "wretched ungrateful."

But night did not restore the fugitive, and Mrs. Jabez was forced to attend that "flag presentation to the Fifth" without Florence, and her first inquiry, upon her return from said flag presentation, was in a high and anxious key, thus:

"Has the minx returned? Has she? Don't say no!"

But the down-trodden domestic of the Hosmer dynasty was forced to reply:

"No, mem; she hen't ben seen, and we all hez arrived at the conclusion as like she don't mean to come back."

"Hush! you trash! She shall come back! Where is the captain?" yelled the virago.

"He's consolin of the bridegroom as was not to be," replied the down-trodden, grinning behind a dust brush. "He's with Cap'n Butler in the settin' room, and they're drinkin' punch."

Mrs. Jabez burst in upon the captain and her brother in a fury of termagant impatience: "Oh, this is nice! Here you are a swillin' rum instead of stirring up the police. Yes, instead of stirring up the police, you're a stirring up rum and sugar—"

"And water, my dear," put in Captain Jabez.

"Precious little water, Jabez Hosmer. Now do you and Lucas first leave here, and don't either of you show your faces until that minx is with you. hard and fast."

"Wait till morning, my love," began the captain.

"I won't wait! They'll go and get married."

"Bah!" said the captain, vainly trying to cross his short legs. "If so be as how they mean to get spliced on short notice, they are spliced already; and there's an end."

"Oh, I wish I was a man!" cried Mrs. Jabez, slapping her hands fiercely.

"So do I, my dear," said the captain.

"You do, you wretch! Yes, because then I wouldn't be your wife, you villain, but take that!" and here the irate dame grasped the pitcher of ice-water at the captain's elbow, and dashed the contents upon his head.

Captain Jabez sprang to his feet with a shuddering roar, and as he was by no means a hen-pecked husband when aroused, he seized the dame by the ears and thrust her headlong from the room, both bellowing with rage. Jabez then turned the key in the lock, and turning himself to his brother-in-law, said:

"Now, then, what do you think of that?"

"Served her right, Jabez. Police! What do you want with the police, eh?" replied Butler.

"Nothing. I hate 'em. We'll just make a night of it, since the old lady is contankerous—she wouldn't let me sleep a wink."

"For lecturing, eh?"

"Right! She can talk all night, and scold in her sleep."

"What did you marry her for?"

Captain Jabez stared at his brother-in-law after this question, as if staggered; but at length he replied:

"I didn't marry her. She married me; but you needn't grin, Lucas. You put her on the scent, and she got me. Sometimes," said the captain, fiercely, and displaying his old piratical spirit by the glare of his eyes, "sometimes, d'ye know, I think I ought to wring your neck for betraying me to your sister in the business we know of, and what keeps me from it?"

"I'll tell you," replied Lucas, moving so as to place the wide table between him and the old slaver. "If you hurt me, Molly would see you hanged in a jiffy. I ain't bold and bully-like—never

was, Jabez, and there's few men that I ain't afraid of, and that you know, but you ain't one of the men that I am afraid of."

"I'd better be," growled Jabez, "and you'd better not go too far, you and your sister—mind that. But here's good liquor, and I ain't ready to fall out just yet."

"Just yet! When I am to understand that you intend to fall out some day, eh?" demanded Lucas.

"Never you mind. Better you attend more to your own business," replied Jabez, in a surly tone.

Lucas eyed him narrowly, but let his eyes fall as Jabez glared at him angrily.

"Hum!" said Jabez. "I think I am one of the men you are afraid of."

"I leave in the morning in command of the Bay State, so we won't quarrel," replied Lucas. "You are in a bad humor."

"Yes, I am. Everything threatens something. I feel uneasy. You'd better go while I don't do nothing but growl."

"Well, growl, and I'll smoke," replied Lucas, unwilling to retreat.

Jabez half sprang towards him, but instantly sank back into his chair, muttering:

"Not just yet. Wait a bit."

On the following morning Captain Lucas Butler left the Hosmer mansion rather heavy by the head, and with a decided inclination to cross his legs by jerks, kick his toes against his heels, step very high over bits of paper, and walk through lamp-posts—in short, Captain Butler was almost blind drunk.

But he managed to reach his ship, just as she was about to sail without him, and retired for a ten hours' nap into his cabin.

Captain Hosmer, however, could not be made drunk, and when he issued from his alcove, soon after the departure of his lovely brother-in-law, and before the beautiful Mrs. Jabez had awaked from her vexed slumbers, he pronounced his head "as clear as a bell." The captain was very busy all that morning in cross-examining the coachman, and his sharp inquiries at length detected that Miss Florence had taken refuge in Roxbury. Therefore to Roxbury hurried the captain, sure of capturing the fugitive.

He failed totally. He could not find the slightest clue. He raved and cursed to his heart's content, and was on his way back to Boston, when just as his fat foot was upon a carriage step, somebody touched him on the arm.

"Eh?" said Jabez, whirling around. But he no sooner set eyes upon the old hag who had touched him, than he cried out, as he tumbled headlong into the carriage:

"The devil in petticoats! Drive on! Drive on!"

But the old woman whom he had so vociferously styled the "devil in petticoats," displayed more agility than could have been expected from her appearance, and scrambled into the vehicle after him, slamming the door behind her, and huddling her distorted form upon the seat by his side.

The driver, who had heard the command to drive on, being in a hurry to return to Boston, where a party awaited him, had whipped

up his horses and driven away rapidly, thus bearing away a double fare unconsciously.

"What do you mean, woman?" cried the captain, cowering in a corner and glaring at his unwelcome companion, whose one eye loomed at him triumphantly.

"Is this the treatment for a devoted old mother?" said the old woman. "Oh yes, you know me. I've got out."

"Got out!"

"Yes; they've had me in a lunatic asylum these fourteen years, Jabez. Don't pretend now what ain't so, Jabez. You know me."

"Spose I do, 'spose I do, what then?" stammered the captain.

"I'm yer mother, Poll Hosmer, the woman that found you wrapped in soiled flannel, a wee bit of a famished babe, a nobody's child, and raised ye till you played the ungrateful and ran away," whined the old woman.

Her whining gave courage to the captain, and he began to bluster:

"I know nothing about you, woman. I'll have you arrested as a vagrant. What! am I, a wealthy and respected man of Boston, to be intruded upon by a hag just loose from a lunatic asylum? Come, I'll soon fix this business."

"Put me out, Jabez, and straight I go to the police to tell about the Silver Star."

"Eh? you won't!" exclaimed Jabez, shrinking into his corner again, and trembling.

"Try me, that's all. And about Eugene Perkins, too," snapped the old woman.

"Oh, I was right," groaned Jabez. "I suspected you were in the next room when Lucas Butler told it to Molly."

"Yes, and that's the reason I was slapped into a mad house, Jabez," interrupted the old woman fiercely. "It riles my innards when I think of it. I hadn't been in Boston for many a long year after you ran away, when I heard you was getting rich, and I thought, mayhap, like you'd be glad to see me, the old woman as picked you up out of the gutter, and took care of ye."

"Beat me to a jelly every day," muttered the captain.

"So I wandered back to Boston, but afore I could speak with ye, and just after I heard Lucas Butler urging Molly to make you marry her, I was grabbed for a mad woman and slapped into a lunatic asylum, where I couldn't prove that I was not mad. Your gold did that."

"Well, 'spose it did. What do you want?" growled Jabez, who had not had time to resolve what to do, though he thought of strangling the hag then and there.

"I want money, Jabez. I love to eat and drink the nicest and the best."

"I know that—you always did—and gave me the bones and the shells, and the scraps," said the captain. "But you want more than these. I see that in your face. What is it?"

"I want to live with you, Jabez."

"To live with me! Molly would—"

"No she wouldn't," interrupted the old woman, with angry vehemence. I can manage Molly, mind that. Let her dare crook

her finger at me, and I'll soon send her about her business. Besides, I can be of use to you. Don't you hate her?"

"Can't say I love her."

"I know it. Wouldn't you like to find the gal?"

"The girl! What girl?"

"Florence, your adopted daughter."

"You must be the devil!" roared the captain, staring at the hag, whose one eye was blazing with cunning. "Do you know where she is?"

"Of course I do."

"You do. Then tell me quick."

"That's to be talked over, Jabez; considerably talked over, my son. You never was a grateful fellow, you know. Now, though you ben't my true son, I raised ye, and I like you better than any other living thing, and I'll do all I can to smooth things for ye, Jabez, but there must be a return. Money in hand, money secured for the future, a home in your house, which would be positive, you know, and the best to eat and drink—liquor, and that the best, at my call, eh?"

The ex-slaver and present deacon mused over this extensive proposition for several minutes. He by no means liked the prospect, for his youthful experience of Poll Hosmer had taught him that the old woman was decidedly aggressive in her disposition.

"Gad!" thought the captain, grinning, "she and Mo'ly will have a high old time of it, won't they? They'll be Greek and Turk. So much the better. I hope they'll tear each other into ribbons. Besides, if this old woman annoys me, I'll slip a spider into her pudding, in short order."

"Well, what do you say, Jabez?" asked the old woman, whose keen eye had narrowly watched him.

"I agree," replied the captain.

"Money in hand, Jabez," said Poll, extending her skinny and wrinkled palm.

Captain Hosmer drew forth his pocket-book rather slowly, and counted out three fifty dollar bills into the skinny palm, but the skinny palm remained open, and Poll shook her head.

"What? more! There, I've made it five hundred—not a cent more until you tell me where I can find the girl."

"Very well," replied Poll, raising the bills to her wrinkled lips, and kissing each heartily. "Haven't had any money, except coppers, for fourteen years, you see. Now, Jabez, one good turn deserves another. Do you know a Mrs. Tibbetts, a Mrs. Samuel Tibbetts, widow of a sea-captain that was?"

"I used to. What of her?"

"The gal is with her. Just stop the carriage, and I'll tell the driver where to go."

Not much more than half an hour after this conversation, as Florence and Mrs. Tibbetts were quietly seated in the sitting-room of the kind old lady, the door of the room was opened by old Poll, who said:

"I wasn't half so mad as ye thought, you see. Here's company for the young lady," and in shuffled Captain Hosmer, accompanied by two constables.

"Oh, you run away! Take her, officers."

"Stay!" cried Mrs. Tibbetts, rising very calmly, while poor Florence trembled with surprise. "Captain Hosmer is not the father of this young lady, and as she has no near relation or relative living, so far as is known, she has a right to choose her guardian."

"That's so," said the constables, much moved by the beauty of Florence, and her evident disgust of the captain.

CHAPTER XV.

THE OLD CRONE.

NEITHER the threats nor the persuasions of Jabez could intimidate or move Florence, who firmly declared that she would never enter his house again, and that she intended to appeal to the protection of the law.

Now, Jabez Hosmer had a superstitious horror of the law, and the thought of being called upon and cross-examined in a court of justice concerning his right to control Florence, made his hair bristle with terror. "There is no divining what might leak out," thought he; so he beat a hasty retreat, resolved to consult Mrs. Jabez forthwith.

Old Poll stuck to him with a crab-like clutch until both were again seated in the carriage, when she released his sleeve and said, contemptuously—

"You ain't going to give her up that easy—that is, if she is of any use to you, Jabez?"

"Time was when I wouldn't, but—"

"Oh yes, but. And a great deal of good 'but' will do you. If I was Jabez Hosmer, and wanted the gal, I'd have her, anyhow."

"Anyhow? And how?"

"Kidnap her!" snapped old Poll. "You can't say you haven't had plenty of practice at that."

"Them was niggers," said Jabez. "Besides, I was in Africa, and this is Boston, and she's white."

"Niggers! And ain't that all in your favor?" cried old Poll, who was well posted in the matter. "Boston is better for the nigger than the white folks, I guess. Africa! Drat me, Jabez, Boston is New Africa. Now, if you kill a nigger in Boston, it is a hanging matter; but if you kidnap a white gal, or swindle a white man, or kill a white baby, why tain't worth speaking of. It's all in your favor that the girl is white, for if she was black, I'd say let her alone. But the question is, do you want her?"

"Well, I've had her so long, and then if she goes wandering around, something unpleasant might be found out."

"What did you save her for? You need not stare, Jabez. I know all about it. Why didn't you chuck her into the sea with her daddy and that coffin!"

"Don't talk so loud! Well, I can't say why I didn't—almost wish I had now. Never could make her love me. Think she might, if Moll hadn't hated her from the start."

"What for?"

"Just naturally. But there's my house," said the captain, as the carriage halted after a rapid drive. "Just make up your mind for a time with Molly."

"You'll see," replied old Poll, scrambling out after Jabez, and hooking her claw-like fingers to his sleeve. "You live in a proper fine house, my son. Remember that I am your mother, Jabez, and give me my right position in society. I am naturally select."

"Very," remarked the vexed captain, grimly, as he saw the vulture face of Mrs. Jabez appear at the window, stare for a second, and then disappear to dart out at the front door.

"No tramps admitted to this house!" screamed Mrs. Jabez. "Captain Hosmer, I am astonished at you. How dare you bring such a vagabond-looking old hag to my door! Hanging on your arm, too! Get out!"

"You two may fight it out!" replied the captain. "That's Molly!"

"I know her, and I guess she ought to know me," said old Poll, as she let loose the captain's arm and scrambled up the stone steps until she thrust her hideous visage into the scarcely so handsome face of the astounded Mrs. Jabez.

"You'd make me to home, won't ye, Molly? You know me, don't ye? I am your own dear mother."

"Oh Lord! if she ain't living yet!" cried Mrs. Jabez, reeling back into the house.

"Of course I am. I ain't no ghost," said old Poll, following her closely. "Ain't it as good as a play? Ha'n't seen me for nigh twenty-five years, hev ye, and ain't ye all glad to see the old woman? Got powerful up in the world since you used to wash sailors' breeches for a living, Molly. Nice house, finest I ever was in. Come in, Jabez, and let's kill the fatted calf, if you hev such a critter loose."

Mrs. Jabez stared at this one-eyed old hag, who was really her mother, and had not a word to say. Mrs. Jabez was overwhelmed, but not with joy.

"Where's Lucas Butler, your half-brother, Moll? Is he in town? Be glad to see him. Been in the Lunatic Asylum, thanks to Jabez and you, Molly, eh? But let's all be chatty and chirk, and comfortable." So saying, this queer old woman walked into the parlor, and proceeded to make herself "chatty and chirk, and comfortable."

"D'd you hunt her up?" demanded Mrs. Jabez, in a furious whisper, of Jabez.

"No, she caught me. But humor her, humor her. She told me where to find Florence."

"She did! Well, I can put up with the half crazy old fool for a while for that. But why didn't you fetch the minx? Let's go right after her."

"She won't come. She talks about law, and courts, and guardians."

"I'll have her back or die!" screamed Mrs. Jabez. "She shall marry Lucas."

"Yes," said old Poll, joining in the conversation, "I like that spirit—that is, if she can be of any use. But Molly, I sorter guess your uds will fit me, eh? This dress don't become the real mother of Mrs. and the adopted mother of Jabez Hosmer. Come, treat me as you ought to do, and I'll have the gal here in less than a week."

Mrs. Jabez yielded to the force of circumstances, and thus old Poll was comfortably domiciled in the house of the Hosmers.

The three now bent all their energies to one purpose, the capture of Florence.

Poll insisted that the matter should be left in her hands, but neither Jabez nor his wife could await the operations of another; and thus the three had each a plan, or a dozen plans against the young lady. But weeks and months passed without beholding Miss Florence torn from the shelter she had selected. The young lady seldom ventured from the house, even by day, and never at night. A private watchman, by the advice of Messrs. Kimbrough & Wynn, the agents of Eugene, nightly held guard around the house of Mrs. Tibbets.

Thus the three dragons saw no way to snatch off their coveted prize, unless they took the citadel by storm, a proceeding too dangerous to be thought of.

"Wait," advised old Poll, "I am hatching an egg, and the chick will swallow this little grain of corn. Wait."

So all waited. But Captain Hosmer now began to find much to keep him from sleeping. Every paper was glaring with the deeds of the Sumter—all marine Boston was aghast. One weak Confederate cruiser defied all the Yankee navy. Immense sums were subscribed by ship owners and marine insurance companies for rewards and attempts to capture the "rebel pirate."

The "rebel pirate," serene and daring, baffled every Yankee effort, and the gallant Sumter, illy adapted as she was, swept the South American coast, and then dashing boldly across the broad Atlantic, captured prizes upon the bosom of the classic Mediterranean.

Jabez Hosmer grew more and more savage, as he read the loss of this and then of that ship, of which he was either part or whole owner. Thousands and tens of thousands of dollars were being sliced from his wealth. He cursed every "rebel" on land and sea, almost forgot Florence, and became so very "touchy," that even old Poll and his wife were cautious in addressing him. His old piratical moods returned upon him, and upon the slightest cause he would hurl a chair, or a shovel, or a lamp, or anything at hand, at the head of wife, adopted mother, or domestic.

Rumor, as it ever does, painted facts with mammoth exaggeration, and thus there were times when Jabez Hosmer heard that every ship in which he owned a dollar had been sunk or burned, or run ashore by "the pirate Semmes." In fact, the "rebel pirate" spoiled the rest and poisoned the food of all Yankeeedom. Editors went wild in suggesting plans to catch him, preachers invented new

curses in damning him, and Abe Lincoln felt sick whenever he heard of him.

But a huge flea, in the shape of a telegram from Lucas Butler, suddenly sprang into the ear of Jabez Hosmer, and for a moment made him think of something else than the Sumter.

The telegram read as follows :

"I am in limbo. Silver Star. Ralph Wing alive. Come!"

Very laconic ; only ten words, for Lucas was economical just then, but Jabez Hosmer understood the whole affair as well as if Lucas had said what he thought, viz. : "I am arrested for murder, mutiny, and piracy on board the Silver Star. Ralph Wing, who was our first mate, is alive, and is prosecuting. Now you were as deep in as I, so you had better help me through, or you'll swing with me!"

Jabez translated the brief telegram in that manner, and stared at it with dizzy eyes for full ten minutes.

"I've been looking for this," he muttered. "I've felt it coming ever since I saw that young Eugene Perkins—ever since I heard of him. Ralph Wing! Why we set him adrift in a gale of wind that threatened to founder the Star, and here he turns up after fourteen years' silence. Me and Lucas know all ; Molly and old Poll knew some—not much ; Diaz, he knows all, but he's with us, because we keep him in money ; Florence, she can't remember anything ; Ralph Wing! He saw, he opposed, he fought. Why didn't I slice his windpipe, and make all secure?"

The ex-slaver was now fully aroused. The cruel glare of the eye before which hundreds of kidnapped negroes had trembled when he traded in negroes with Boston gold, again blazed as it had not blazed for years ; for Jabez was thinking how to silence Ralph Wing forever.

"You can't bribe Ralph Wing if he is the same man he used to be," mused Jabez. "There is but one way to silence him—knock him on the head. I never meant to do anything more in that line, but it seems I must. A man can't be honest in this world, looks like. Here I settled down, quit the business, joined the church, became a deacon, and meant to enjoy my earnings, when up starts a fellow I thought at the bottom of the sea these fourteen years, and makes me think of murder. It's hard, it's really hard. But Lucas must be cleared in some way, or I'm in for it too."

Captain Hosmer was soon in New York. He did not immediately call upon Captain Butler, whose influence in friends and gold still kept him out of the "Tombs," though in a cloud ; but Lucas felt more easy when a secret note informed him that Jabez Hosmer, the same daring Hosmer of old, was in New York, and at work.

A few days after he received a visit from Jabez, who looked ten years older than when he saw him in Boston.

"We are safe now, Lucas," said the captain. "That fellow won't trouble us again."

"Is he dead?" whispered Butler, eagerly.

"Dead as a fried clam," replied Hosmer.

"Did you see him laid out? Did you see him after he was dead?"

"I saw him enticed on board a yacht, and I went with the craft. I saw him knocked on the head and pitched overboard, at least a hundred miles from land."

"Day or night?" asked Butler.

"Night—stormy. Where's Diaz?"

"He escaped immediately after the arrest," replied Butler, regarding the captain narrowly, "and I have not heard of him since. But you look wild like."

"Do I? Well, if you had had the trouble that I had to get rid of Ralph Wing, you'd look wild too. Besides, I had to engage fellows to do the business, and I don't feel safe. I am going back to Boston, wind up my affairs, and leave the country," said Hosmer. "You'll be freed to-day or to-morrow, and you'd better leave America."

"Jabez," said Butler, suspiciously, "you are not sure that Ralph Wing is dead?"

"Truth! I ain't. We, me and three others, pitched him overboard, dead, as we thought, but as soon as he touched water he struck out from the yacht, and we saw him swimming until the darkness shut him in. We sailed all around the spot, as high as we could judge, until the morning, but we never saw him after."

"Then he is food for sharks," said Butler. "A hundred miles from land, and badly hurt."

"Yes, stabbed and knocked in the head," remarked Jabez wiping his forehead.

"Then he is dead," observed Butler.

The old slaver shook his head.

"It will take me all of a year to wind up my affairs," said he, in a gloomy tone, "if that pirate don't wind them up for me, and then I shall leave this part of the world."

"Where will you go?"

"That's not exactly settled to my mind, but I'm going," replied the captain, departing.

"I think he is going mad," mused Butler.

A few days after, Butler was released from an arrest, as no one appeared against him. The affair was hushed up, as the "weak invention of the enemy;" he had a round of feasts, and, leaving New York, presented himself to his lovely sister in Boston. He was not agreeably surprised to find his mother, old Poll, still alive, though that aged female pretended that she was delighted to find that "son Lucas" was overjoyed to see her.

Meanwhile, old Ralph Wing, who seemed born for bad luck, having been tumbled into the sea, had swum to a floating spar, unseen by his would-be murderers, and after drifting a night and a day, had been picked up by a whale ; outwaded bound for a cruise of three years.

"Every dog will have his day," thought Ralph.

CHAPTER XVI.

DESTRUCTION OF THE HATTERAS.

WERE we to follow the cruise of the Sumter, her exploits alone, minutely narrated, would fill a large volume, nor are we now writing her history, but merely a few of the many romantic incidents connected with her career. Let it suffice to say that she swept the seas, a terror and a besom of destruction to the commerce of Yankeeedom, until March, 1862, when her shattered condition caused her to be laid up.

For seven months she had defied the mighty Yankee nation, having captured during that brief period no less than eighteen vessels, and inflicted upon the enemy over a million dollars of damage.

This great success, gained by an old privateer, hastily patched up into a war vessel, barely seaworthy, shows what a power the Confederate States would have been upon the ocean had they possessed the rights of a belligerent nation, or had they been recognized as a nation by short-sighted Europe.

Eugene and Jasper, with the faithful Cyrus, having escaped from the Abby Bradford, lost no time in hastening to Canada, whence they hoped to make good their escape to England, where chance might aid them in joining the Confederate cruiser.

But months passed before they were again under the flag of the Confederacy, and before that time the Sumter had finished her career. The victorious banner of the gallant Semmes was not, however, to sink from the admiration of the world. While the standard of the South was represented by the stars and bars, he had upheld it untarnished, unconquered, upon the ocean; and when that standard changed its style, Raphael Semmes, as Admiral and Commander of the Alabama, made the pure white banner of the Confederacy, and its starry cross of blue, glancing upon a blood-red field, a greater terror to Yankeeedom than had been the Sumter.

In a tale like ours, we cannot relate how this second scourge of the Yankee marine escaped the Argus-like vigilance of the Yankee spies and officials in England, nor follow her, as she made the naval prowess of the United States a jest for more than two years, during which time she snatched from her gigantic and ubiquitous foe no less than sixty-four valuable merchant ships, with their cargoes, and inflicted damages and expenses upon the United States to be estimated by millions of dollars.

There need be given no more positive proof of the chivalric daring of her commander than his exploit in sinking the United States gunboat Hatteras, off Galveston, in 1863. We see him in a solitary, light-armed vessel, boldly sailing close to a blockaded port, in search, not of an unarméd prize, but of an armed squadron, which it was his deliberate purpose to attack and destroy. He did not find

the squadron, or, doubtless, still more laurels would have been added to his fame, for his success was almost marvelous in all that he undertook for the honor of his flag. But he is discovered by the enemy, and a vessel not as fleet, but as powerful as his own, steams out to meet him.

The ships near each other boldly until words can be exchanged. A few words pass from ship to ship amid the obscurity of the night, and then a voice thunders out:

"This is the Confederate ship Alabama!" and the night is illumined by the flash of her starboard battery. The Hatteras replies with flame and iron, and the conflict begins. So close are the ships together, that the sharp crack of the rifle and pistol is added to the roar of the cannon and the shriek of the shell.

The fierce contest is not long. The Hatteras is soon on fire in her flues, her engines crippled, her pumps demolished, and, within thirteen minutes from the first shot, she fires guns from the starboard, in token of surrender. Within five minutes after Semmes has removed every living man from the decks of the vanquished enemy, the Hatteras sinks beneath the sea.

Eugene, Jasper, and Cyrus were conspicuous in this brilliant defiance and defeat of the enemy, and remained with the Alabama during her subsequent cruises. But we cannot enumerate the victories of the gallant ship. We leave that to the historian, and return to our story.

It was in 1864 that Eugene received a letter from Messrs. Kimbrough & Wynn, agents, conveying the unwelcome intelligence that Miss Florence had disappeared. Said this letter:

"* * * "We have no doubt that the young lady has been abducted. Her friend, Mrs. Tibbette, died last month, and Miss Florence was compelled to find another home, as the property of the old lady was claimed by distant relatives. Therefore the young lady, in her distress, was forced to use the means you had left at her disposal in our hands, and purchased a small cottage on the outskirts of Roxbury. She used to call upon us once a week to inquire for letters from you, and as she failed to do so last week and this week, Mr. Kimbrough drove out to her cottage yesterday. Imagine his surprise in finding it empty and plundered.

"We then took the affair into our hands, and have used every means to clear up the mystery. The result of our investigations, thus far, may be summed up as follows:

"Miss Florence's enemies were the Hosmers, and a profligate fellow, one Lucas Butler. The Hosmers and Lucas Butler have also suddenly disappeared from Boston. They sailed in the Playfair, which weighed anchor at daylight on Monday, the day after the disappearance of the young lady. The Hosmers and Butler have sold all their property in Boston, and with it, turned into gold, bid farewell to all their acquaintances, declaring their intention to settle in England. The ship Playfair was owned by Jabez Hosmer.

"We have, therefore, concluded that the young lady was abducted by the act or connivance of the Hosmers and Butler, and is now on board the Playfair. Why the Hosmers and Butler have sold all their property and quit this country we do not know.

"We must add that your uncle, Colonel Eugene Perkins, of England, arrived this morning, and immediately called on us. He was very eager to see Miss Florence, and upon hearing of her mysterious disappearance,

ance and its attendant circumstances, became greatly agitated, turned to a gentleman who had accompanied him to our office, and exclaimed: 'Mr. Wing, the villains have carried her off! We must pursue,' and then, with a hasty bow to us, hurried away, in eager conversation with his companion, whom we had recognized as Mr. Ralph Wing, formerly of the merchant service. We have since learned that your uncle and Mr. Wing have left for New York. This is all we can write at present. We will advise you as soon as we learn more.

"With great esteem, your true friends and servants,

"KIMBROUGH & WYNN."

"And I," mused Eugene, as he crushed the letter in his hands. "and I am powerless to rescue her. Lost! What chance, what hope is there that I shall ever see her again?"

"Sail ho!" cried the lookout, and in an instant every eye on board the Alabama (then off the coast of France) was turned towards the stranger, scarcely visible in the westward.

CHAPTER XVII.

RALPH WING.

The Alabama was at once headed towards the stranger, and at her best speed. The stranger made no effort to avoid the cruiser, but altering her course, stood towards her. This proceeding rapidly decreased the distance between them, and it was soon seen by those of the Alabama that the stranger was a steam-yacht, flying English colors.

"It is a beautiful craft," remarked Eugene to his brother officers, "though small."

"She was built for speed and ocean sailing," said First Lieutenant Kell. "I can now make out the name on the flag at her mast-head—'Florence.'"

"The Florence and Alabama exchanged signals, steamed within hail, lay drifting upon the steady roll of the sea, and the former lowered a boat, which boat reached the Alabama, and remained alongside while two of those in it ascended to the deck of the Alabama.

The taller of the two, yet not the elder, though his hair was as white as frost, spoke a few words to Captain Semmes, and then with him descended to the captain's cabin. His companion, however, clad in a semi-uniform of the English navy, and wearing a cutlass, did not leave the deck, but flashed a pair of very sharp blue eyes about him, until they met those of Cyrus, who was staring at him as if half amazed, half terrified.

The officer smiled, and Cyrus, forgetful of his naval discipline, began a series of leaps, tumblings, and capers, which aroused Eugene from his sad reverie, and caused him to look towards the

person to whom the negro was directing all this monkey jubilation.

"Ralph Wing!" exclaimed Eugene, bounding towards him with extended hands.

"Ay, my lad, what's left of him," replied the old sailor, as he heartily shook hands with his young friend. "You've changed for the better, my lad, since you gave me the slip in New York harbor in '61. Then you were as slim as a topmast, and as smooth-faced as a girl, except a scrub on your upper lip. Now you are a man, by Jove! and worth three of your former build. But where is t'other youngster? Ah, here you are," continued he, greeting Jasper cordially.

"But how is ye, massa?" said Cyrus, unable longer to restrain himself, and thrusting his woolly head forward.

"Oh, I am jolly," replied Mr. Wing. "You freed my two prisoners, you rascal. I thought you hated them like sharks, and you were tricking me, you dog. But I forgive ye, b'ackie."

"Tanks, massa," grinned Cyrus. "I 'tended for 'pologize fust portunity, for lockin' you up in the sto' room arter I put somethin' in the pot what made every man ob the Bradford go to sleep dat night. Ki yi! it was fun, Massa Wing, to hear you smashin' outen dar while we was gettin' de boat loose!"

"I've been in a worse place than that since then," said Mr. Wing, turning to Eugene. "I don't suppose you know anything about it. You see, my lad, I had a bitter hold on that villain, Captain Lucas Butler, and on his cut-throat Spaniard, Diaz, besides one and the same matter on a grand old pirate living in Boston, named Jabez Hosmer."

"Well, I intended to keelhaul those three scoundrels as soon as I arrived in New York, which I did two days before Butler steamed in on board the Bay State. I began with him, and got the lawyers and constables, etc., after him, and the hound was arrested on my oath that he had been a pirate. I do not know how the matter would have ended if I hadn't played the ass. Maybe he'd got clear, for he had money and position. But, however that might have scudded, I was fool enough to forget that I was bearding a dangerous man in Jabez Hosmer, and instead of suspectin' a knife at my throat every minute, I was ass enough to accept an invitation to take a sail off New York harbor with three men who suddenly became very intimate with me. Mind you, I say three men, but there was another aboard I didn't suspect, hid in the bows, a regular devil in a fight. Well, we had a pleasant sail of it all one afternoon, and the night after, and all the next day, going almost straight out to sea, until I began to growl a little, and insist on going back. We headed for land soon after nightfall, and a dark night it was—never saw a darker. I turned into my bunk, satisfied, and was soon asleep. I can't say how long I slept, but I was awake by a thundering blow which just missed my head and struck the side of my bunk. I opened my eyes and saw Jabez Hosmer standing over me with an axe raised for another blow. There was a lamp standing near, and the light fell right squarely upon his face, so I knew him at once. Down came the axe again before I could scramble out of bed, but I deadened the blow by holding up the pillow between me and Hos-

mer, and managed to gain my feet and grapple with him. I believe I might have mastered him, though he was always a powerful fighter, for I knew I was struggling for life; but just as I got him down, and was throttling him, the three men sprang upon me, and one of them stabbed me in the back as they pulled me off of Hosmer. Hosmer then got on his feet and gave me a rap on the head with the blunt of the axe, and after that I never knew what happened until I found myself sinking and struggling in the sea. The villains thought me dead, I suppose, and pitched me overboard. The coldness of the water revived me, and I, ever a good swimmer, struck out for my life, though it was so dark that I could not see twenty feet around me.

"After swimming until I was almost ready to sink, my hands touched a floating spar, and I grabbed it as a drowning man would. I floated for hours, I suppose, for daylight came and saw me there, clinging to the spar and tossed mercilessly on the waves. Maybe the water stopped the bleeding from the stab in my back and the wound in my head—anyhow, I didn't bleed much. After the sun rose I lost my senses, from pain I suppose, and when I came to, I was in a hammock on board a whaler, the Ospray. You may be sure I stared around for a long time before my wits got hold of the ropes. The first thing I knew was that I was so weak that I could not raise my hand to my head. But my hands were crossed and tied together at my wrists. I tried to open my mouth, but found that my jaws were lashed, so that I couldn't open them. Of course I could only wait and think. I thought a great deal, but that didn't raise the fog. Well, I haven't time to tell you all we said—not high; but the short of it was, that they had picked me up clinging to the spar, maybe a day or two after Hosmer pitched me overboard, and that I had never regained my senses until I found myself about to be flung to the sharks, sewed up in my hammock, and so I had been crazy, you may say, for nearly three weeks, and as weak as a baby. About a month after that I was able to go on deck, for I had a very slow recovery; that stab in the back was the worst trouble. I learned that the Ospray was out for a three years' trading and whaling voyage, unless she got filled with oil sooner, and bound for the Pacific.

"It so happened that we met no ships homeward bound before we rounded Cape Horn, and as I liked the ship, and the first mate died, and the captain offered me the berth, I just staid with the Ospray till she made her return voyage. But I did not return to the United States in her. You see we fell in with a British brig, bound from Rio Janeiro to Liverpool, and her captain being an old acquaintance of mine, persuaded me to sail with him as first mate, he having lost both his mates by yellow fever. Well, so I reached Liverpool, and I hadn't been there a week when I met a man whom I thought was drowned a matter of seventeen years ago. I looked at him a mighty long time, my lad, before I'd believe my eyes, and followed him around the streets until he wheeled upon me, just slewed round, as mad as the devil, no doubt, though he didn't show it, and said:

"My good man, you've been following me for some time. What

do you want?" and he took out his pocket-book, for I had a rough dress on; been discharging cargo, you see.

"Says I, touching my tarpaulin, 'Excuse an old sailor for steering in your wake, but ain't your name Eugene Perkins?'"

"What!" cried our hero, in great wonder. "You asked the stranger that?"

"Belay a bit, my lad," continued Mr. Wing. 'Yes,' says he, cool as an icicle on a rudder post, 'that is my name.' 'Did you ever sail on a ship, California packet, named the Silver Star?' says I. 'I did,' says he, in a sad voice. 'What of it?' 'I was her first mate,' says I, 'and I saw you lashed to a coffin and tossed overboard.' He didn't say a word for a minute or more, but stared at me just as you do now, my lad. Then he grappled me by the arm and hailed a carriage. 'Get in,' says he, in a thick voice, 'get in. We will not say a word until we are in the house.'

"Was it—was he my uncle?" interrupted Eugene.

"Wait, my lad," said Mr. Wing, very deliberately filling his mouth with tobacco. "He nor me said not a word until the carriage hove to alongside of as fine a house as I ever want to see, and he never let loose my sleeve until he had me in a fine room and into a chair like a throne.

"Now," says he, 'my dear sir, tell me all that you wish to tell,' and I told him."

"But what did you tell him?" asked Eugene.

"I told him so much, my lad, that I can't repeat it now, and yet I wasn't ten minutes in doing of it. I told him so much that he clasped his hands and fell upon his knees and prayed."

"My uncle did?"

"I haven't once said that he was your uncle, lad. I said his name was Eugene Perkins," replied the old sailor.

"But that is my uncle's name, and he lives near Liverpool," urged Eugene.

"No doubt of that, but Perkins is a common name, and Eugene is not so rare, is it? But wait, my lad, for impatience creates bile, and bile is worse than bilge-water in your grog. He prayed a while, and then he hugged me, and then he cried like a boy. So did I, my lad, as for that," said Ralph Wing, clearing his moist eyes with his sleeve. "So we both left on the next steamship for America. We left the steamer at Halifax, and took the cars to Boston as soon as possible; but the disappointment met us ship in the chops, like a northeaster in the teeth.

"The Hosmer crowd had left, every par and ratlin' of 'em, and that rascal Butler, too. But that was not the worst of it, d'ye see. The young lady, Miss Florence, was gone."

"Yes, you learned that at the office of Messrs. Kimbrough & Wynn, and on the same day you and my uncle left Boston for New York," said Eugene.

"Eh? Who told you that?" said Mr. Wing, greatly surprised in his turn.

"No matter. But where did you leave him?" asked Eugene, greatly enjoying the surprise of the old sailor.

"Oh, then, there are some things which you don't know, my lad," replied Mr. Wing, triumphantly. "Well, we went to New York, and

there your uncle—since you will have him to be your uncle—bought a steam yacht; you see her yonder, and ain't she a beauty? Mr. Perkins named her Florence, in honor of the missing young lady—"

"And then you made sail to look for the Playfair," said Eugene.

"Eh? Well, how you learned the name of the ship the rascals ran away in, beats me. Ah, you sly dog, you have had a mail, eh? That's it. Well, you are right; we made sail—"

"And is my uncle on board the Florence?" exclaimed Eugene, turning his eyes on the yacht, eagerly.

"No; he's just behind you, lad," replied Mr. Wing.

Eugene turned, and the next instant saw him clasped in the embrace of Ralph Wing's white-haired companion, who, with Admiral Semmes, had left the cabin and come upon deck.

The white-haired gentleman was Eugene Perkins, sr., who had been lashed to his wife's coffin seventeen years before, and cast into the sea.

CHAPTER XVIII.

UNCLE AND NEPHEW.

"You are surprised to see me," said Colonel Perkins, "but I have two greater surprises in store for you. Admiral Semmes, will you please surprise him first?"

"Certainly," replied the warm-hearted commander, as he placed a folded paper in Eugene's hand. "This paper, Mr. Perkins, is your commission as commander of the steam-yacht Florence, now lying alongside. Under this commission, you have full authority from me, as Admiral of the Navy of the Confederate States, to capture and destroy all ships bearing the flag of the United States, or which shall, upon careful examination, prove to be the property of citizens of the United States. Your rank is that of commander, and will no doubt be confirmed, hereafter, by the authorities at Richmond. Be prudent—brave and enterprising I know you are. Good fortune and steady promotion attend you, my young friend."

"You should be commander, Mr. Wing," said Eugene. "It does not look well to see gray hairs ordered about by young men."

"You may let my hair alone, my lad," replied Ralph Wing, with one of his grim smiles. "For you won't have the luck to order me around. Now, don't look stiff, my lad, for if we were to sail under the old flag, d'ye see, I'd lief as not be your first officer; but I have grown gray under the stars and stripes, and don't approve of some things, d'ye see, and—but we'll talk about this on board the Florence."

Eugene had received his instructions from the Admiral, and after returning the salute of the Alabama, commanded the Florence to be steered for the Spanish coast. As he did so, he was surprised to see Ralph Wing appear at his side in citizen's dress.

"Can't fight under that flag," said the old man, pointing at the Confederate flag, floating proudly above them—"least ways, not against the stars and stripes. I'm a passenger now, or your prisoner, lad, as you like. If we overhaul the Playfair, I'll fight under anything that flutters, to have a crack at Lucas Butler, d'ye see; but I can't, not caring a straw for politics, forget that I fought under my flag when I was a boy, and lost this finger, d'ye see, when the Essex was taken."

"No matter, my dear friend," replied Eugene, who honored the feelings of the staunch old sailor. "You are our guest, and at liberty to do as you please. Mr. Jasper will act as my lieutenant."

"Aye, so all's right," said Mr. Wing. "Well, we are now well under sail and steam, and I know that your uncle has something to say to you in the cabin—"

"Yes; he has that other surprise in store for me," interrupted Eugene, as they walked away to the cabin, leaving Mr. Jasper in command of the deck.

They found Colonel Perkins seated at a table, with refreshments before him, refreshments long strangers to Eugene, for the fare of the Alabama was ever short and common, owing to her "hawk-like" cruises.

"I have been waiting for you, my son," said Colonel Perkins, who always used this affectionate term in addressing Eugene. "Sit down and taste of a few luxuries—you also, friend Wing—while I explain to you something of the past."

"You have heard me say that I lost a dearly beloved wife and child many years ago, though I have never told you the details of that loss," began he, as Eugene sat at the table. "You know, too, that after the death of your parents I became your guardian, for, although not a very near relative, I was the closest of kin you possessed. But it is not probable that I would have adopted you as my son, had I not lost my child. About twenty-three years ago, with my mind fired by the accounts published of the vast amount of gold to be easily gained in California, I went to that country. My wife, a native of England, as well as myself, accompanied me. After much toil and suffering, I succeeded in amassing a large fortune, and resolved to return to England. The hardships of our life in California had seriously injured the health of my wife, and she died at Chagres while I was waiting the arrival of a ship in which to make the voyage direct to England."

"I will not pause now," said he, with a deep sigh, "to describe my great grief in losing so dear a companion. I determined to carry her body with me, that it might rest in English ground, and therefore had a coffin prepared. The body having been placed therein, the coffin was placed in an oblong box, lined with cork, over which was smeared a thick coating of wax. Little did I think that my tenderness for the dead would be the means of preserving my life for many weeks after. With this sad memento of my loss, and my little daughter, a child about four years of age, together with nearly a million of dollars in gold, I embarked in 1847 on the ship Silver Star, bound for Liverpool, and commanded by Jabez Hosmer."

Here Eugene started so violently that Colonel Perkins allowed a

mournful smile to play over his features for a moment, and then continued :

"Yes, you know the man, and had you been more explicit in that letter in which you asked my consent to your marriage with the young lady of whom you wrote so affectionately, I would have at once proceeded to Boston upon the very search in which I am now engaged. Had you mentioned that her name was Florence, and that the name of her adopted father was Jabez Hosmer, a retired sea-captain, I would have suspected what I now know, thanks to our friend, Ralph Wing, that Florence, your betrothed, was my daughter."

"The great sum of money which I embarked, added to the gold owned by the other passengers, amounted to nearly two millions, or at least to a million and a half of dollars, and determined Jabez Hosmer and Lucas Butler to attempt to possess it, no matter what lives stood in the way. They succeeded in corrupting the whole ship's company, except Ralph Wing, and made the attack at midnight, when the ship was in mid-ocean. I cannot detail the bloody horrors of that dreadful night," said Colonel Perkins, for a moment covering his face with his hands. "I will only say that every man of the ten passengers was butchered and thrown into the sea. I was attacked while asleep, and bound to my wife's coffin. I was thus left until morning, because the two wretches who were to toss me overboard found the task too difficult, and as they saw their comrades busy in sharing the treasure, left me until Hosmer discovered me on the following morning. He then ordered me to be carried upon deck, where I saw Ralph Wing, bound hand and foot, loudly upbraiding the mutineers. While I was imploring the villains to spare my child, who was struggling in Butler's arms, I was cast overboard, lashed to the coffin. The box, in falling, fell across a floating spar, and was thus retained in one position, and prevented from rolling over and over; in which event I would have been drowned. The ship was under full sail, and a fleet craft, so that I was soon left far astern; but as long as I was within hearing distance, I heard the jeering shouts of Hosmer and his crew. The great buoyancy of the box saved my life, for I was picked up by a Spanish ship before night, and was afterwards told by her captain that the box, in falling, had struck an iron spike of the spar, which, having penetrated the box, held it securely all that day. Misfortune continued to attend me, for before we could reach Spain we were wrecked upon the Spanish coast, and many months passed before I could reach England, and there I learned that the Silver Star had foundered at sea, with all on board. I deemed this a providential punishment of the villains, and made no inquiries, for the loss of my dear wife and child nearly drove me mad. When I was picked up by the Spanish ship, the box containing the coffin was hoisted upon deck, and at my request permitted to remain aboard. When we were wrecked on the coast of Spain, it was cast ashore by the waves, and I had it buried. But not long after I returned to England I had it disinterred and conveyed to the burying ground of my family, and there, after all its wanderings, it now rests."

"After that I turned my attention to business, to occupy my mind, and although I cared little to amass wealth, wealth flowed

upon me. A relation died, and I became a rich heir. I used this wealth in business, and greater wealth followed. You, my son, about that time visited England, and my heart found something to love. You would not abandon America for England, and returned to your own country, while I continued to bury my sorrows amid the excitement of business. Thus years passed away, until many weeks ago Ralph Wing met me, and told me that he believed my daughter was alive. We hastened to Boston, and as I knew your agents, Messrs. Kimbrough & Wynn, my former correspondents, we called there to learn what we could of Hosmer and Butler, and there we learned the name of your betrothed, and of her strange disappearance. I at once surmised that the young lady was my child, and that Hosmer and Butler had carried her off. After hasty inquiries among the shipping, we hastened to New York, where I purchased and secretly armed this steam yacht, and put to sea with a strong crew, resolved to scour the seas, if necessary, seeking for the Playfair, which we accidentally learned was bound for some Spanish port. I have been so fortunate as to meet you, and as Admiral Semmes has furnished you with a letter of marque, we may, as a Confederate cruiser, attack the Playfair at sea, should we be so fortunate as to meet her."

While the Florence seeks for her desired prey, we will place ourselves on board the Playfair.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE PLAYFAIR.

The Playfair was an elegant clipper ship, large, spacious in cabin, new, strong, swift, and fully prepared in every respect for her voyage. Of the many vessels or shares of vessels owned by Hosmer in 1861, she was now, in 1864, his sole remaining ship.

Jabez Hosmer had entrusted to Lucas Butler the task of shipping the crew, and Lucas Butler had placed the task upon Diaz. Thus there was scarcely a man of that crew that was not an old acquaintance of the Spaniard.

The friends of Florence were correct in concluding that she had been abducted by Hosmer's command, for the helpless girl was torn from her modest cottage home at midnight, by a band of ruffians, led by Diaz. She was immediately gagged and taken aboard the Playfair, where she found Mrs. Jabez and the wild old Poll Hosmer ready to greet her with taunts, jeers, and even blows.

"You hussy!" was the greeting of the gentle Mrs. Jabez, as she thrust the unfortunate girl into a dark state-room. "You are in my power again, and when you leave it, you shall leave it to be the wife of my brother."

Days and weeks passed on, and poor Florence knew little of what was going on outside of her narrow prison. A pale-faced, dark-eyed woman, who seemed dumb, for she never spoke, attended to all her wants, and often one of her four tormentors would jeer at her through the lattice of her state-room door.

A few days after the sailing of the *Playfair*, Diaz led Butler aside and said:

"Something has come over the old skipper. He will stand in the bows for an hour at a time, muttering and mumbling like a monkey. What's the matter?"

"He's queer, that's all," replied Butler.

"Queer! say mad, and you'll be at the truth," said Diaz.

"Mad? no, hardly that," replied Butler.

"Yes, fully that. Yesterday he stood gazing astern for a matter of three hours, and kept repeating, half aloud, 'He didn't sink—he didn't sink!' What does he mean, eh? And then he is up and down the shrouds, with the glass, spying about as if looking for the Flying Dutchman. But that is not what I wanted to talk about. Why can't we, you and me, play the game of the *Silver Star* over again?"

"Ah!" said Butler, sharply, and staring at the speaker, "I have my mother and sister aboard!"

"Don't you love them?" sneered the Spaniard. "But we needn't hurt them. There is much treasure aboard—"

"Yes, and much of it is already mine," interrupted Butler, with an uneasy glance at his companion.

"Not the half—not quarter," replied Diaz. "You can retain what you own, and share with us the rest."

"You may do as you please with the young lady," said Diaz.

"As for the stewardess, pitch her overboard, and as for the other two, you needn't know what becomes of them."

"Why didn't you go and do it, Diaz, and knock me on the head, too?" asked Butler.

"Because you have always been a friend to me, Captain Butler," promptly replied the Spaniard. "After I squandered all I got by the *Silver Star*, you gave me money, and always stood by me."

Diaz then moved away, leaving Butler to his reflections. The affair did not please Lucas, for he had agreed with his mother and sister to dose Hosmer with an eternal sleep, as soon as they should be safe ashore, and then to have all his treasure for themselves. If Diaz put his scheme in execution, all the coveted gold would be scattered. Butler trembled as he thought how easily the Spaniard could throw him into the sea. He had feigned to enter into the plot that he might overturn it, and resolved to inform old Hosmer.

He did so, and the eyes of the ex-slaver glared with rage, but there was no fear in his face. Since he had felt the familiar swell of the sea beneath him, Jabez Hosmer had ceased to be the quiet, retired sea-captain. His language and bearing had become those of a pirate, and the revelation made by Butler aroused all his old fierceness.

"The Spanish hound!" he growled, as he thrust his hand into his pocket, and clutched the handle of his repeater: "can't fix my flint,

now that I have a hint. As for the crew—bah! I've quelled a mutiny more than once. Come, let's go on deck."

Hosmer, followed by Butler, having gone on deck, walked to the forward part of the ship, where Diaz was engaged in conversation with the ship's crew. On seeing Hosmer approaching, the sailors moved away, as if intent upon performing some duty just assigned to them by Diaz, who turned and said to Hosmer, in an easy and familiar tone:

"Captain, some of these lubbers pretend to be sailors, and yet have to be shown how to splice a rope."

"Or how to get up a mutiny!" roared Hosmer, drawing his repeater, and discharging it into the throat of the Spaniard before he could suspect an attack.

Diaz fell heavily, not dead, but dying, and flashed his glance, full of scorn and hate, upon the eyes of Butler.

"Now, dogs!" shouted Hosmer, brandishing a pistol in each hand, and scowling at the surprised sailors, "you meant to murder us, did ye? I've had it tried on me when you were whelps! Who is ready to die? Let him face me! Ah, you hounds! you don't know me yet."

The sailors shrank from the fierce and infuriated old ruffian. Probably not one of them had ever shed blood, though so easily corrupted by the dead Spaniard, and now that their leader had fallen, they cowered before the terrible rage of this ferocious and daring man, who, though old, was strong, armed and eager to take life. There was a sail in the offing, too, and they feared lest that sail might prove to be a stronger ship than the *Playfair*, and discern the deed, if they killed the captain.

Thus promptly did Jabez Hosmer put down the intended mutiny; and having done so, he and Butler returned to the aft deck, to talk the matter over. While conversing, they discovered smoke accompanying a sail in the offing.

"Maybe she's afire," said Butler.

"More like she is that rascally rebel, Semmes," cried Hosmer, whose mind dwelt continually upon his many losses.

"That is not the Alabama," said Butler.

He had hardly spoken when the stranger fired a gun; whereupon Hosmer ran up the flag of Spain, the papers of the ship declaring her to be the property of Spanish merchants.

The stranger continued to approach, and fired another gun, the ball of which flew past the *Playfair*, and plunged into the sea under her bows. This was a hint not to be misunderstood, and the *Playfair* was hove to.

"What ship is that?" cried a voice from the steam yacht, as she ran alongside, so closely that a biscuit might have been tossed from her deck to that of the *Playfair*.

At that instant, and before Hosmer could form his reply in Spanish, a man on the deck of the stranger threw his hat high in the air and shouted:

"Lucas Butler, by Jupiter!"

"Ralph Wing!" exclaimed Hosmer; and without further speech, he rushed from the deck into his cabin.

The *Florence*, for such was the stranger, was instantly steamed

against the Playfair, the bowsprits of the two vessels were lashed together by the seamen of the Florence, and a strong body of men, led by Eugene and Ralph Wing, scrambled up the high sides of the Playfair, to the astonishment of the ship's crew.

Butler, who had recognized both leaders, was overcome by terror, and unable to fly until he saw Ralph Wing rushing aft with his cutlass upraised. Most cowards, when forced into a corner, will fight desperately, and thus it was with Butler. He knew he had no mercy to expect from Wing nor from Eugene, so he took deliberate aim with his repeater at Ralph and fired. The old sailor reeled, staggering red, and then sprang on, almost within sword's sweep of the enemy, who then fired again, missed his aim, and was instantly cut down by Wing.

"Every dog has his day, and you've seen your last," cried the sailor, raising his cutlass to finish his work.

"Mercy! Spare my life!" screamed the prostrate and bleeding coward.

"Not I," replied Ralph Wing, as he saw Butler cock his repeater for a murderous shot; and with these words he thrust his cutlass through Butler's breast, pinning him to the deck.

With a horrible groan, and a roll of his ugly eyes, the villainous Butler stiffened his long limbs in a shudder of a only, and gasped his last. Casting a glance of disgust at his dead enemy, Ralph withdrew his cutlass and hastened into the cabin, where Jabez Hosmer was waiting with the fierceness of a lion, amid smoke and flame, for the desperate villain, when he fled from the deck, had fired the cabin, resolved that his treasure should perish with him. He was busy at work when Eugene bounded into the cabin. So rapid had been the movements of the old pirate, that the bedding of every state-room, except in that of the imprisoned Florence, was in flames. Mrs. Jabez and old Poll, terror-stricken and screaming, fled from the cabin, passing Eugene as he entered, and took refuge upon deck.

"Rascal!" shouted Eugene, who was followed by several of his crew. "What have you done with Florence?"

Hosmer, in reply, discharged a shot at the speaker, and then rushed upon him with a cutlass, yelling a hoarse defiance. Eugene met him firmly, and they had exchanged a few rapid blows, when a scream from one of the state-rooms, in which he had distinguished the words, "Eugene! Eugene! save me!" caught his attention, and leaving Hosmer to his followers, he rushed to the spot whence the cry had been heard. The cabin was already murky with smoke, yet he could readily perceive the door of the imprisoned girl, and dashing it open, he was instantly in the embrace of his betrothed. He did not pause long, though he staid long enough to exchange more than one clinging kiss of love, but bore her towards the companion-way, meeting Ralph Wing, and was soon upon deck.

Hosmer was always a dangerous man in a fray, but when battling to sell his forfeited life, he was terrible. The followers of Eugene were tough and resolute Englishmen, but Hosmer had made strife and bloodshed a pastime in his youth and middle age. Reckless of his own life, he slashed his heavy blade right and left, up and down, forcing his assailants towards the companion-way, and prostrating more than one. It was at this moment that he was encountered by

as bold a man as himself, old Ralph Wing, cool, active, and confident.

"Now, Hosmer," cried Ralph, as he met him and dealt him a severe slash across the face.

Hosmer had no breath to waste in words, and replied by returning the blow. The men were equally matched, for though Hosmer was somewhat exhausted from his desperate fighting, he had received no wound except the slash in the face; but Ralph Wing was bleeding profusely from the bullet wound made in his shoulder by Butler.

"Put out the fire, men!" shouted Ralph, as his friends clustered near to strike at Hosmer. The command was immediately obeyed, while the two combatants fought on. Hosmer was forcing Wing backward, striking hard and fast, when Colonel Perkins, sword in hand, sprang from the bottom step of the companion-way, crying:

"Ralph! Ralph! if that is Hosmer, let me face him!"

"No, Colonel Perkins, I am his man!"

On hearing this name, Hosmer turned his eyes towards the merchant, and Ralph Wing thrust forward fiercely, so that his cutlass pierced Hosmer's throat, the fury of the lunge darting the broad blade through his bull-like neck, almost to the hilt of the sword. Hosmer struck ferociously at random, bending the air wildly, but Ralph grappled with him instantly and hurled him to the floor, where the old pirate lay exhausted and dying.

"Hosmer," said Colonel Perkins, bending over the gasping man, "I have no doubt that Florence is my child, yet I would hear from your lips your dying assertion."

"If you are Eugene Perkins," replied the dying man, hoarsely, for his throat was full of blood, "who was thrown into the sea from aboard the Silver Star, Florence is your daughter."

A gush of blood checked his further utterance, and turning his face to the floor, he gasped once or twice, and died.

The exertions of Eugene's crew soon extinguished the flames in the state-rooms, so that Hosmer's desperate purpose was frustrated. All the treasure of Hosmer and Butler was removed to the steam yacht, where Colonel Perkins, Eugene, and Wing consulted concerning the future of the Playfair. Colonel Perkins asked that the ship should not be burned.

"We have no men to spare for a prize crew," said Eugene, "and if we had, it is not probable that the ship could make a Confederate port. Neither can we bond her, for there is no competent person on her to give bond."

"My son," replied Colonel Perkins, whose arm encircled the slender waist of his recovered daughter, "my child has told me that there have been times when the wife of the monsieur Hosmer has been kind to her. Therefore, for that kindness, I ask that the Playfair be allowed to proceed to any port the widow may desire. Two of her crew understand navigation, and, under their command, the ship can make a harbor in France or Spain. I have wealth enough without claiming the ship to replace what Hosmer stole."

Eugene declined all opposition to the wishes of his uncle, especially as the dark eyes of Florence seconded those wishes; and within an hour, the Playfair, flying the American colors, had parted company with the Florence, bearing with her Mrs. Jabez, old Poll, and the

mutinous crew. The pale-faced stewardess, at her earnest desire remained with Florence, to whom she had become much attached.

The vessels parted company not long after three o'clock in the afternoon, and as long as they remained within hail, old Poll and Mrs. Jabez screamed their curses upon the Florence and all aboard. The ships were about ten miles apart, when great volumes of smoke were seen to rise from the Playfair.

"She is burning!" cried Eugene, as he sprang to command the course of the Florence to be changed.

Such was the fact. The flames kindled by Hosmer had not been, as was supposed, totally extinguished, and long before the Florence could steam within helping distance, the whole ship, hull, masts, rigging, and spars, was enveloped in devouring flames. The boats of the Florence rescued a few of the crew from the waves in which they had sought refuge from the flames; but old Poll and Mrs. Jabez perished miserably in the cabin, where they were last seen, endeavoring to haul a heavy trunk towards the companion-way. By night not a vestige of the Playfair remained, except a few charred spars and fragments, which the waves tossed about as if in mockery.

CONCLUSION.

Our story has now reached its goal. We will not follow the fortunes of the Alabama until her career was ended by an unequal fight off Cherbourg. We all know that she sank, and that not a spar remained as a trophy for her iron-clad antagonist.

Eugene, after the destruction of the Playfair, directed his course for England, where he arrived safe. Soon after his arrival he learned that the famous Alabama was no more, and that her commander was seeking another ship. Delays, vexations, and disappointments denied the gallant Semmes his yearning, and thus months flew by, during which time Eugene became the husband of the lovely Florence, to the great delight of old Ralph Wing.

The close of the war in 1865, and the fall of the cause of the South, ended, perhaps for ever, the victories of THE CONFEDERATE FLAG ON THE OCEAN.

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