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**OUTWARD BOUND;**

OR,

**YOUNG AMERICA AFLOAT**

\* \* \* \* \*

**CHAPTER I.**

THE IDEA SUGGESTED.

“There are no such peaches this side of New Jersey; and you can’t get them, for love or money, at the stores.  All we have to do is, to fill our pockets, and keep our mouths closed—­till the peaches are ripe enough to eat,” said Robert Shuffles, the older and the larger of two boys, who had just climbed over the high fence that surrounded the fine garden of Mr. Lowington.

“What will Baird say if he finds it out?” replied Isaac Monroe, his companion.

“Baird,” the gentleman thus irreverently alluded to, was the principal of the Brockway Academy, of which Shuffles and Monroe were pupils in the boarding department.

“What will he say when he finds out that the King of the Tonga Islands picks his teeth with a pitchfork?” added Shuffles, contemptuously.  “I don’t intend that he shall find it out? and he won’t, unless you tell him.”

“Of course, I shall not tell him.”

“Come along, then? it is nearly dark, and no one will see us.”

Shuffles led the way down the gravelled walk, till he came to a brook, on the bank of which stood the peach tree whose rich fruit had tempted the young gentlemen to invade the territory of Mr. Lowington with intent to plunder.

“There they are,” said the chief of the young marauders, as he paused behind a clump of quince bushes, and pointed at the coveted fruit.  “There’s no discount on them, and they are worth coming after.”

“Hark!” whispered Monroe.  “I heard a noise.”

“What was it?”

“I don’t know.  I’m afraid we shall be caught.”

“No danger; no one can see us from the house.”

“But I’m sure there’s some one near.  I heard something.”

“Nonsense!  It was only a dagger of the mind, such as Baird talks about,” answered Shuffles, as he crawled towards the peach tree.  “Come, Monroe, be quick, and fill your pockets.”

This peach tree was a choice variety, in whose cultivation the owner had been making an elaborate experiment.  Mr. Lowington had watched it and nursed it with the most assiduous care, and now it bore about a dozen remarkably large and beautiful peaches.  They were not quite ripe enough to be gathered, but Shuffles was confident that they would “mellow” in his trunk as well as on the tree.  The experiment of the cultivator had been a success, and he had already prepared, with much care and labor, a paper explanatory of the process, which he intended to read before the Pomological Society, exhibiting the fruit as the evidence of the practicability of his method.  To Mr. Lowington, therefore, the peaches had a value far beyond their intrinsic worth.

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Shuffles gathered a couple of the peaches, and urged his companion to use all possible haste in stripping the tree of its rich burden.

“Hallo, there!  What are you about?” shouted some one, who hastened to make his presence known to the plunderers.

Monroe began to retreat.

“Hold on!” interposed Shuffles.  “It’s no one but Harry Martyn.”

“He can tell of us just as well as anybody else.”

“If he does, he will catch it.”

“What are you doing?” demanded Harry Martyn,—­who was a nephew of Mr. Lowington, and lived with him,—­as he crossed the rustic bridge that spanned the brook.

“Don’t you see what I’m doing?” replied Shuffles, with an impudent coolness which confounded Harry.

“Stop that, Shuffles!” cried Harry, indignantly.  “My uncle wouldn’t take ten dollars apiece for those peaches.”

“That’s more than he’ll get for them,” added Shuffles, as he reached up and gathered another peach.

“Stop that, I tell you!” said Harry, angrily, as he stepped up, in a menacing attitude, before the reckless marauder.

“Shut up, Harry!  You know me, and when I get all these peaches, I’ve got something to say to you.”

Shuffles was about to gather another of the peaches, when Harry, his indignation overcoming his prudence, grasped his arm, and pulled him away from the tree.

“What do you mean, Harry Martyn?” exclaimed Shuffles, apparently astonished at the temerity of the youth.  “I can’t stop to lick you now; but I’ll do it within twenty-four hours.”

“Well, don’t you touch those peaches, then.”

“Yes, I will touch them.  I intend to have the whole of them; and if you say a word to your uncle or any one else about it, I’ll pulverize that head of yours.”

“No, you won’t!  You shall not have those peaches, anyhow,” replied the resolute little fellow, who was no match, physically, for Shuffles.

“If you open your mouth——­”

“Hallo!  Uncle Robert!  Help, help!  Thieves in the garden!” shouted Harry, who certainly had no defect of the lungs.

“Take that, you little monkey!” said Shuffles, angrily, as he struck the little fellow a heavy blow on the side of the head with his fist, which knocked him down.  “I’ll fix you the next, time I see you.”

Shuffles consulted his discretion rather than his valor, now that the alarm had been given, and retreated towards the place where he had entered garden.

“What’s the matter, Harry?” asked Mr. Lowington, as he rushed over the bridge, followed by the gardener and his assistants, just as Harry was picking himself up and rubbing his head.

“They were stealing your peaches, and I tried to stop them,” replied Harry.  “They have taken some of them now.”

Mr. Lowington glanced at the favorite tree, and his brow lowered with anger and vexation.  His paper before the “Pomological” could be illustrated by only nine peaches, instead of thirteen.

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“Who stole them, Harry?” demanded the disappointed fruit-grower.

The nephew hesitated a moment, and the question was repeated with more sternness.

“Robert Shuffles; Isaac Monroe was with him, but he didn’t take any of the peaches.”

“What is the matter with your head, Harry?” asked his uncle, when he observed him rubbing the place where the blow had fallen.

“Shuffles struck me and knocked me down, when I called out for you.”

“Did he?  Where is he now?”

“He and Monroe ran up the walk to the back of the garden.”

“That boy shall be taken care of,” continued Mr. Lowington, as he walked up the path towards the point where the marauders had entered.  “The Academy is fast becoming a nuisance to the neighborhood, because there is neither order nor discipline among the students.”

The thieves had escaped, and as it would be useless to follow them, Mr. Lowington went back to the house; but he was too much annoyed at the loss of his splendid peaches, which were to figure so prominently before the “Pomological,” to permit the matter to drop without further notice.

“Did he hurt you much, Harry?” asked Mr. Lowington as they entered the house.

“Not much, sir, though he gave me a pretty hard crack,” answered Harry.

“Did you see them when they came into the garden?”

“No, sir?  I was fixing my water-wheel in the brook, when I heard them at the tree.  I went up, and tried to prevent Shuffles from taking the peaches.  I caught hold of him, and pulled him away.  He said he couldn’t stop to lick me then, but he’d do it within twenty-four hours.  Then he hit me when I called for help.”

“The young scoundrel!  That boy is worse than a pestilence in any neighborhood.  Mr. Baird seems to have no control over him.”

Suddenly, and without any apparent reason, Mr. Lowington’s compressed lips and contracted brow relaxed, and his face wore its usual expression of dignified serenity.  Harry could not understand the cause of this sudden change; but his uncle’s anger had passed away.  The fact was, that Mr. Lowington happened to think, while his indignation prompted him to resort to the severest punishment for Shuffles, that he himself had been just such a boy as the plunderer of his cherished fruit.  At the age of fifteen he had been the pest of the town in which he resided.  His father was a very wealthy man, and resorted to many expedients to cure the boy of his vicious propensities.

Young Lowington had a taste for the sea, and his father finally procured a midshipman’s warrant for him to enter the navy.  The strict discipline of a ship of war proved to be the “one thing needful” for the reformation of the wild youth; and he not only became a steady young man, but a hard student and an accomplished officer.  The navy made a man of him, as it has of hundreds of the sons of rich men, demoralized by idleness and the absence of a reasonable ambition.

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When Mr. Lowington was thirty years old, his father died, leaving to each of his three children a quarter of a million; and he had resigned his position in the navy, in order to take care of his property, and to lead a more domestic life with his wife and daughter than the discipline of the service would permit.

He had taken up his residence in Brockway, the early home of his wife.  It was a large town on the sea shore, only a few miles from the metropolis of New England, thus combining all the advantages of a home in the city and in the country.  For several years he had been happy in his peaceful retirement.  But not wealth, nor even integrity and piety, can bar the door of the lofty mansion against the Destroyer of the race.  His wife died of an hereditary disease, which gave no indication of its presence till she had passed her thirtieth year.  Two years later, his daughter, just blooming into maturity, followed her mother down to the silent tomb, stricken in her freshness and beauty by the same insidious malady.

The husband and father was left desolate.  His purest and fondest hopes were blighted; but, while he was submissive to the will of the Father, who doeth all things well, he became gloomy and sad.  He was not seen to smile for a year after the death of his daughter, and it was three years before he had recovered even the outward semblance of his former cheerfulness.  He was rich, but alone in the world.  He continued to reside in the home which was endeared to him by the memories of his loved and lost ones.

When his wife’s sister died in poverty, leaving two children, he had taken them to his home, and had become a father to them.  Harry Martyn was a good boy, and Josephine Martyn was a good girl; but they were not his own children.  There was something wanting—­an aching void which they could not fill, though Mr. Lowington was to them all that could be asked or expected of a parent.

Mr. Lowington busied himself in various studies and experiments; but life had ceased to be what it was before the death of his wife and daughter.  He wanted more mental occupation; he felt the need of greater activity, and he was tempted to return to the navy, even after his absence of ten years from the service; but this step, for many reasons, was not practicable.  At the time when his garden was invaded by the vandal students from the Brockway Academy, he was still thinking what he could do to save himself from the inglorious life of ease he was leading, and, at the same time, serve his country and his race.

Shuffles had robbed his garden of some of his choicest fruit; had struck his nephew a severe blow on the head, and threatened to inflict still greater chastisement upon him in the future.  Mr. Lowington was justly indignant; and his own peace and the peace of the neighborhood demanded that the author of the mischief should be punished, especially as he was an old transgressor.  It was absolutely necessary that something should be done, and the retired naval officer was in the right frame of mind to do it.  Just then, when he was wrought up to the highest pitch of indignation, his anger vanished.  Shuffles at sixteen was the counterpart of himself at fifteen.

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This was certainly no reason why the hand of justice should be stayed.  Mr. Lowington did not intend to stay it, though the thought of his own juvenile depravity modified his view, and appeased his wrath.  He put on his hat and left the house.  He walked over to the Academy, and being shown to the office of the principal, he informed him of the depredations committed in his garden.

“Who did it, Mr. Lowington?” demanded the principal, with proper indignation in his tones and his looks.

“Shuffles.”

“I need not have asked.  That boy gives me more trouble than all the others put together,” added Mr. Baird, with an anxious expression.  “And yet what can I do with him?”

“Expel him,” replied Mr. Lowington, laconically.

“I don’t like to do that.”

“Why not?”

“It would be an injury to me.”

“Why so?”

“It would offend his father, who is a person of wealth and influence.  When Shuffles came to Brockway ten other boys came with him.  He was expelled from another institution, which so incensed his father that he induced the parents of ten others to take their sons out, and send them to me.  If I expel Shuffles, I shall lose about a dozen of my students, and I can’t afford to do that.”

“But must the neighborhood suffer from his depredations?”

“I will talk with the boy; I will keep him in his room for a week.”

“I’m afraid the boy needs severer measures.  If this were the first, or even the third time, I would, not say so much.”

“My dear sir, what can I do?”

“The boy needs strict discipline.  If I were still in the navy, and had him aboard my ship, I could make a man of him.”

“I don’t think anything can be done.”

“Something must be done, Mr. Baird.  My garden shall not be robbed with impunity.”

“I will do what I can, Mr. Lowington.”

But the owner of the stolen fruit was by this time satisfied that nothing would be done.  The principal of the Brockway Academy had not force nor influence enough to control such a boy as Shuffles.  Mr. Lowington took his leave, determined to apply to another tribunal for the correction of the evil.  That night the peach thieves were arrested, and put in the lock-up.  The next day they were tried, found guilty, and sentenced to pay a fine and costs, which Mr. Baird promptly paid.  Within a week Mr. Lowington’s stable was burned to the ground.  Shuffles was seen near the building just before the fire broke out; but it could not be proved that he was the incendiary, though no one doubted the fact.  He was arrested, but discharged on the examination.

“You see how it is, Mr. Lowington,” said the principal of the Academy, as the two gentlemen met after the examination.  “It would have been better for you if you had not prosecuted the boy for stealing the peaches.”

“I don’t think so,” replied Mr. Lowington.  “I must do my duty, without regard to consequences; and you will pardon me if I say you ought to do the same.”

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“If I expel the boy he would burn the house over my head.”

“Then you think he burned my stable?”

“I don’t know; it cannot be proved that he did.”

“I have no doubt of the fact.  I have no ill will against the boy.  I only desire to protect myself and my neighbors from his depredations.”

“I think you were very unfortunate in the method you adopted, Mr. Lowington,” replied the principal of the Academy.  “It has reacted upon yourself.”

“Shall this boy steal my fruit and burn my buildings with impunity?” added Mr. Lowington, with considerable warmth.

“Certainly not.”

“I applied to you for redress, Mr. Baird.”

“I told you I would talk with the boy.”

“Such a reprobate as that needs something more than talk.”

“What would you do with him, sir?” demanded Mr. Baird, earnestly.

“I hardly know.  I should certainly have expelled him; but that, while it protects the Academy, does not benefit the boy.”

“It would only harden the boy.”

“Very likely; and his remaining will harden a dozen more by his influence.  Mr. Baird, I shall be obliged to take my nephew out of your institution,” added Mr. Lowington, seriously.

“Take him out?”

“I must, indeed.”

“Why so?” asked Mr. Baird, who was touched in a very tender place.

“Because I am not willing to keep him under the influence of such an example as this Shuffles sets for his companions.  As the matter now stands, the young rascal has more influence in the Academy than you have.  You cannot manage him, and you dare not expel him.  The boy knows this, and he will not leave his advantage unused.”

“I hope you won’t take Harry out of the school,” said Mr. Baird.

“I must.”

“Others may do the same.”

“I cannot help it; with my view of the matter, they can hardly do otherwise.”

“But you see, sir, what the effect of this step must be.”

“Mr. Baird, I must be frank with you.  You have declined to expel Shuffles, while you know that his influence is bad.  You asked me what you should do? and I told you.  Now, you prefer to retain Shuffles, but you must lose others.  Permit me to say that you should do your duty without regard to consequences.”

“I cannot afford to lose my scholars.”

“Your position is a difficult one.  I grant, Mr. Baird; but without discipline you can do nothing for yourself or the boys.”

Mr. Lowington went home, Harry was taken from the Academy, and a dozen parents and guardians followed the example of the advocate for discipline.  Mr. Baird was in despair.  The institution was falling to pieces for the want of discipline.  The principal had not the nerve to enforce order, even with the limited means within his reach.  He went to see Mr. Lowington and begged him to assist in stemming the tide which was setting against the Brockway Academy.  The retired naval officer became deeply interested in the subject of school discipline in general, especially in its connection with the education of rich men’s sons given to insubordination.  He pitied poor Mr. Baird in his perplexities, for he was a good man and an excellent teacher.

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In the mean time Shuffles grew worse instead of better.  Finding that he could have his own way, that the principal was no match for him, his influence for evil was stronger than Mr. Baird’s for good.  The worthy schoolmaster had finally resolved to expel his troublesome student, when Mr. Lowington one day surprised him by offering to buy out the Academy at a price far exceeding its value.  He gladly accepted the offer as the best solution of the problem, and the naval officer became principal of the Brockway Academy.

Mr. Lowington did not expel the refractory pupil at once.  He waited for an overt act; but Shuffles found the anaconda of authority tightening upon him.  He attempted to vindicate himself before his fellow-students by setting fire to a haystack on the marsh, belonging to the new principal.  A searching investigation followed, and Shuffles was convicted.  Mr. Lowington wrote to the boy’s father, announcing his expulsion.  Mr. Shuffles went to Brockway full of wrath, and threatened the new head of the institution with the loss of a large number of his scholars if he disgraced his son by expelling him.  If the boy had done wrong,—­and he supposed he had,—­let him be talked to; let him be confined to his room for a day or two; but he must not be expelled; it was a disgrace to the boy.

The principal was as firm as a rock, and Mr. Shuffles was calm when he found that threats were unavailing.  Mr. Lowington pointed out to his visitor the perils which lay in the path of his son.  Mr. Shuffles began to be reasonable, and dined with the principal.  A long and earnest consideration of the whole matter took place over the dessert.  The fiat of expulsion was revoked, and young Shuffles was turned over to the ex-naval officer, with full power to discipline him as he thought best.  Mr. Lowington had converted the father, and he hoped he should be able to convert the son.

After dinner, Mr. Shuffles went down the bay with his host in the yacht.  On the way they passed the school ship Massachusetts, to which boys are sentenced by the courts for crime and vagrancy, and on board of which they are disciplined and educated.  Mr. Lowington explained the institution to his guest.

“An excellent idea,” said Mr. Shuffles.

“It is just the place for your son,” replied Mr. Lowington.

“But it is for criminals.”

“Very true.”

“Robert is not a criminal.”

“If he is not now, he soon will be, if he continues in his present course.  If I had him on shipboard, I could make a man of him.”

“Then I wish you had him on shipboard.”

“Perhaps I may yet,” replied the principal, with a smile.  “I did not purchase the Academy with the intention of becoming a pedagogue, in the ordinary sense of the word.  I have no intention of remaining in it.”

“I hope you will.”

“I have been thinking of fitting up a vessel like the school ship, that rich men’s sons may have the benefit of such an institution without the necessity of committing a crime.  I could do more for the boys in a month on board ship than I could in a year at Brockway.”

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This was the first mention which Mr. Lowington made of his plan, though he had been considering it for several weeks.  Mr. Shuffles hoped that this idea of a nautical academy would be reduced to practice; for he now felt that it was just what his son needed.  The project was discussed during the rest of the trip.

The history of the scheme, from its inception, need not be followed in detail.  Many persons were consulted in regard to it; there were plenty to approve, and plenty to disapprove; but in October the keel of a four hundred ton ship was laid down.  The object of this marine institution was thoroughly explained, and before the ship was ready for launching there were applications for every berth on board of her.

The idea was exceedingly popular among the boys, all of whom were anxious to be students on board, especially as it was already hinted that the ship would visit Europe.  To parents it held out for their sons all the benefits of a sea voyage, with few of its disadvantages.  It would furnish healthy exercise and a vigorous constitution to its pupils.

In March of the following year the ship was at anchor in Brockway harbor, ready to receive her juvenile crew.

**CHAPTER II.**

THE YOUNG AMERICA.

With Mr. Lowington, the Academy Ship, which was the name he usually applied to the idea he had matured, and thus far carried into effect, was not a speculation; he did not intend to see how much money could be made by the scheme.  It was an experiment in the education of rich men’s sons, for only rich men could pay for scholarships in such an expensive institution.

The Brockway Academy was to be continued, under the management of a board of trustees.  An accomplished teacher had been selected by Mr. Lowington, and the school, under its present administration, was in a highly prosperous condition.  Only ten of its pupils had been transferred to the Academy Ship, for it required no little nerve on the part of parents to send their sons to school on the broad ocean, to battle with the elements, to endure the storms of the Atlantic, and to undergo the hardships which tender mothers supposed to be inseparably connected with a life on shipboard.

For six months Mr. Lowington had studied upon his plan, and it was hardly matured when the new ship came to anchor in Brockway harbor.  During this period he had visited the principal cities of the Northern States, those of the southern section being closed against his operations by the war of the rebellion then raging at the height of its fury.  He had interested his friends in his bold enterprise, and boys with, whom the experiment was to be inaugurated were gathered from all parts of the country.

The securing of the requisite number of pupils was the first success, and what he had regarded as the most difficult part of the enterprise.  More than half of them had been obtained before it was deemed prudent to lay the keel of the ship.  The details of the plan had been carefully considered during the winter, and when the ship was moored at Brockway, the organization of the school, its rules and regulations had all been written out.  The boys began to arrive about the first of March, and by the first of April all of them, eighty-seven in number, were on board.

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Mr. Lowington was naturally very anxious for the success of his experiment, and for months he had labored with unceasing diligence in perfecting his plan, and carrying it into operation.  In this occupation he had found the activity he needed; and he may not be blamed for believing, all the time, that he was laboring for his country and his race.

If it has been inferred from what has been said of Mr. Lowington, of his domestic afflictions, and of his views on the subject of discipline, that he was an austere, cold, and unsympathizing man, a wrong impression has been conveyed.  The boys of the Brockway Academy, when they came to know him, loved him as much as they respected him.  He was not the man needlessly to abridge the harmless enjoyment of youth, or to repress its innocent hilarity.  He watched the sports of the students with interest and pleasure, and encouraged them by all the means in his power.  He was fond of humor, enjoyed a harmless joke, and had a keen appreciation of juvenile wit.  He was a good companion for the boys, and when they understood him, he was always welcome to the play-ground.

The new ship had been duly christened Young America at the launching, by Miss Josey Martyn—­a name which was rapturously applauded by the boys.  She was one hundred and eighteen feet in length, and of about four hundred tons burden.  She had been built as strong as wood, iron, and copper could make her.  For a ship, she was small, which permitted her to be light sparred, so that her juvenile crew could handle her with the more ease.  She had a flush deck; that is, it was unbroken from stem to stern.  There was no cabin, poop, camboose, or other house on deck, and the eye had a clean range over the whole length of her.  There was a skylight between the fore and the main mast, and another between the main and mizzen masts, to afford light and air to the apartments below.  There were three openings in the deck by which entrance could be obtained to the interior of the ship:  the fore hatch, the main hatch, and the companion-way, the two former being used by the crew, and the latter by the officers.

The between-decks, which is the space included between the upper and the lower deck, was fitted up for the accommodation of the officers and crew.  Descending by the companion-way—­which in the Young America extended athwartships—­on the right, at the foot of the stairs, was the officers’ cabin, occupying the part of the ship nearest to the stern.  This apartment was twenty-eight feet long, by fifteen in breadth at the widest part, with four state rooms on each side.  The mizzen mast passed up through the middle of it.  This cabin was richly but plainly fitted up, and was furnished well enough for a drawing-room on shore.  It was for the use of the juvenile officers of the ship, fifteen in number, who were to hold their positions as rewards of merit.  The captain had a room to himself, while each of the other apartments was to accommodate two officers.

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On the left of the companion-way, descending the stairs, was the “old folks’ cabin,” as it was called by the students.  It was in the locality corresponding to that occupied by the ward room of a man-of-war.  Though the after cabin is the place of honor on board a ship, Mr. Lowington had selected the ward room for himself and the teachers, in preference to the after cabin, because it was next to the steerage, which was occupied by the larger portion of the pupils, and because the form of the ship did not contract the dimensions of the state rooms.  This cabin was twenty-two feet long and fifteen feet wide, with no waste room, as in the after cabin, caused by the rounding in of the ship’s counter.  On the sides were five state rooms, besides a pantry for the steward, and a dispensary for the surgeon.

The forward room on the starboard side was occupied by Mr. Lowington alone; the next on the same side by the chaplain and doctor; and each of the three on the port side by two of the teachers.  This cabin was elegantly finished and furnished, and the professors were delighted with its cheerful and pleasant aspect.

From the main cabin, as that of the “faculty” was called, were two doors, opening into the steerage, fifty-two feet in length by fifteen feet in width of clear space between the berths, which diminished to nine feet abreast of the foremast.  This apartment was eight feet high, and was lighted in part by a large skylight midway between the fore and main mast, and partly by bull’s eyes in the side of the ship.  There were seventy-two berths, placed in twelve rooms, opening from passage-ways, which extended athwartships from the main steerage, and were lighted by the bull’s eyes.  There were no doors to these dormitories, each of which contained six berths, in two tiers of three each.  It was intended that the six boys occupying one of these rooms should form a mess.  Between the gangways, or passages, were mess tables, which could be swung up against the partition when not in use.

The steerage was neatly and tastefully fitted up, and furnished, though not so elegantly as the cabins.  It was to be the school room, as well as the parlor and dining room of the boys, and it would compare favorably with such apartments in well-ordered academies on shore.  There was plenty of shelves, pouches, and lockers, under the lower berths, and beneath the bull’s eyes at the head of the main gangways, for clothing and books, and each boy had a place for every article which regulations allowed him to possess.

Forward of the foremast there were two large state rooms; that on the starboard side having four berths, for the boatswain, carpenter, sailmaker, and head steward; and the one on the port side with six, for the two cooks and the four under stewards, all of whom were men skilful and experienced in their several departments.  Forward of these was the kitchen, from which opened the lamp room, a triangular closet in the bow of the ship.  Mr. Lowington had taken the idea of locating the cooking apartment in the extreme forward part of the vessel from the Victoria and Albert, the steam yacht of the Queen of England.

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The hold beneath the berth deck contained the water tanks, bread room, chain lockers, and a multitude of store rooms for provisions, clothing, and supplies of every description needed on board during a long voyage.

The Young America was to be officered and manned by the students.  They were to work the ship, to make and take in sail, to reef, steer, and wash down decks, as well as study and recite their lessons.  They were to go aloft, stand watch, man the capstan, pull the boats; in short, to do everything required of seamen on board a ship.  Mr. Lowington was to lure them into the belief, while they were hauling tacks and sheets, halyards and braces, that they were not at work, but at play.  The labor required of them was an essential element in the plan, by which the boys were to obtain, the necessary physical exercise, and the discipline they so much needed.

By the first of April the last of the students had reported to the principal on board, and the professors, as the boys insisted upon calling them, had taken possession of their state rooms.  Though some of the pupils had been on board nearly a month, the organization of the ship had not been commenced; but classes had been formed in some of the studies, by the teachers, and the pupils recited every day.  The boatswain had instructed the boys in rowing, and some temporary regulations had been adopted for the eating and sleeping departments.  But not a boy had been allowed to go aloft, and nothing more than ordinary school discipline had been attempted.

The boys, as boys always are, were impatient at this delay.  They wanted to be bounding over the ocean—­to be on their way to some foreign port.  They were anxious to work, to climb the rigging, and stand at the wheel.  As yet they knew very little of the purposes of the principal, and had but a faint perception of the life they were to lead in the Academy Ship.  It was understood that the officers were to be selected for their merit, and that the ship, some time or other, was to cross the ocean; but beyond this, all was darkness and uncertainty.

“To-morrow will be the first day of April,” said George Wilton, as he walked the deck of the Young America with Richard Carnes, a dignified young gentleman of seventeen.  “Mr. Lowington said we should go to work on that day.”

“If he said so, then of course we shall go to work,” replied Carnes.

“I’m tired of waiting,” added Wilton.  “I think this is a stupid kind of life.  We are not even tied to a bell rope here.”

“You will get discipline enough as soon as the crew are organized.”

“I suppose we shall.  Do you think we shall go to sea to-morrow?”

“Go to sea to-morrow!” exclaimed Carnes.

“Shuffles said so.”

“How can we go to sea to-morrow?  The crew don’t know the mainmast from a handspike.  They couldn’t do anything with the ship now; they don’t know the ropes.”

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“You do, Carnes.”

“Well, I know something about a ship,” replied the dignified young gentleman, who had made one voyage up the Mediterranean with his uncle.

“I was pretty sure we should get out into blue water by to-morrow.”

“Nonsense!”

“Shuffles said so.”

“He is mistaken.”

“What are we going to do?”

“I don’t know?  I’m content to wait till orders come.”

“I don’t want to wait any longer,” added Wilton.

“What are you talking about, fellows?” asked Shuffles, joining them, as they walked forward.

“Didn’t you say we were going to sea to-morrow, Shuffles?” asked Wilton.

“Of course we are.”

“Who says so?” demanded Carnes.

“All the fellows say so.”

“It can’t be true.”

“Why not?  We are not going to stay here forever.”

“In my opinion, we shall stay here some weeks, if not some months,” added Carnes.

“What for?”

“To pursue our studies, in the first place, and to learn our duty as seamen, in the second.”

“I don’t believe I shall stay here a great while longer,” said Shuffles, with evident disgust.  “There’s no fun lying here.”

“You can’t help yourself,” added Wilton.

“Perhaps I can’t, but I can try,” said Shuffles, as he glanced towards the shore.

“All hands ahoy!” shouted Peaks, the boatswain, as his shrill whistle rang through the ship.

The boys had been taught the meaning of this call, and they gathered in the waist, eager to know what was to be required of them.

Mr. Lowington stood on the raised hatch over the main scuttle, where all the students could see him.  It was evident that he had some announcement to make, especially as the following day had been assigned for organizing the ship’s company.  The boys were silent, and their faces betrayed the curiosity which they felt.

“Young gentleman,” the principal began, “this ship will go into commission to-morrow.”

“Don’t know what you mean, sir,” said Paul Kendall as Mr. Lowington paused to observe the effect of his announcement.

“I did not suppose that many of you would understand the expression.  In the navy, a ship is said to go into commission when the captain takes his place on board, and the crew are organized for duty.  When this takes place, the ensign is hoisted.  To-morrow, at twelve o’clock, we shall display the colors at the peak.  With us, going into commission will only mean the organization of our school.  From that time, we shall observe the discipline of a man-of-war, so far as the ship and crew are concerned.”

“Shall we go to sea then?” asked Wilton.

“I think not,” replied Mr. Lowington, laughing.  “We shall not leave the harbor till every officer and seaman knows his duty.  You shall have enough to do to-morrow, young gentlemen.”

“When shall we be able to go to sea?”

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“I don’t know.  There are many ropes in the ship, and you have a great deal to learn before I shall be willing to trust you with the anchor at the cat-head.”

“What is the cat-head, sir?” asked Kendall

“Do you wish to go to sea without knowing what the cat-head is?” replied the principal.  “You shall know in due time.  To-morrow we shall select the officers, fifteen in number, who are to occupy the after cabin.”

This announcement created a decided sensation among the eighty-seven boys gathered in the waist, for the subject had been full of interest to them.  The after cabin had thus far been a sealed book; the door was locked, and they had not even seen the inside of the apartment.  They were curious to visit this cabin, and to know who were to occupy it.

“After the organization of the school, it is my intention to give these offices to those who obtain the highest number of merit marks, which will be given for good conduct, good lessons, and progress in seamanship.  The best boy, who is at the same time the best scholar and the best seaman, shall be captain.  We have no marks now by which to make the selection, and I intend to have you elect him the first time, reserving to myself the right to veto your choice if it is obviously an improper one.”

As Mr. Lowington uttered this last remark, he glanced, perhaps unconsciously, at Shuffles, who stood directly in front of him.

“Young gentlemen, the ballot will take place to-morrow morning, at nine o’clock.  I have given you this notice, that you may be able to consider the matter and, if you choose, to make nominations for the several offices,” continued the principal.

“What are the offices, sir?”

“The first and most important one, of course, is the captain.  The others are four lieutenants, four masters, two pursers, and four midshipmen.”

“What are they to do?” asked Kendall.

“I will not explain their duties now; it would require too much time.  I mentioned them in the order of their importance.  Now, young gentlemen, you should select your candidates for these offices by merit, not by favor.  I am aware that a few of you have been to sea, but probably none of you are competent to handle a ship; and your choice should be based mainly on good character and good conduct.  I hope I shall be able to approve the choice you may make.  You are dismissed now.”

“Three cheers for the principal!” shouted one of the boys.

“Silence, young gentleman!  Let me say now, that no expressions of approbation or disapprobation are to be allowed.”

The boys separated into groups, and immediately gave their attention to the important subject suggested to them by Mr. Lowington.  It must be acknowledged that violent symptoms of “log-rolling” began to be exhibited.  There were fifty, if not eighty-seven young men who wished to be captain, and sit at the head of the table in the after cabin.  Some of them went down into the steerage, and in five minutes there was a confused jabbering in every part of the ship.

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“For whom shall you vote, Wilton?” asked Shuffles in a group of half a dozen which had gathered around one of the mess tables.

“I don’t know? whom do you go for?” replied Wilton.

“I rather think I shall go for Bob Shuffles.  In my opinion, he is the best fellow on board,” replied the owner of that name.

“That’s modest,” laughed Wilton.

“Do you know of any fellow that would make a better captain than I should?”

“You don’t know the first thing about a ship.”

“What odds does that make?  I can learn as fast as anybody else.”

“Do you expect every fellow to vote for himself?” asked Howe, another of the group.

“Of course I don’t; I expect them to vote for me,” answered Shuffles, with great good-nature.

“You are rather cheeky, Shuffles.”

“What’s the use of mincing the matter?  Here we are, half a dozen of the best fellows in the ship.  We can’t all be captain; but one of us can be just as well as not.”

“That’s so,” added Howe, approvingly.  “But who shall that one be?”

“I am the one, without a doubt,” said Shuffles.

“I don’t see it,” interposed Monroe, shaking his head; and he was the young gentleman who had assisted the aspirant for the captaincy to rob Mr. Lowington’s favorite peach tree.

“What have you got to say about it, Ike Monroe?  Do you expect us to go for you?”

“I didn’t say so.”

“That’s what you meant.”

“I’ve just as much right to the place as you have, Bob Shuffles.”

“Do you think you could make the fellows stand round as I can?  But hold on; fellows, don’t let us fight about it.  We are just the best six fellows on board, and if we have a mind to do so, we can have this thing all our own way,” continued Shuffles.

“I don’t see how,” said Philip Sanborn.

“Don’t you know how the politicians manage these things?”

“I don’t.”

“I’ll tell you, then.”

“But the principal said we must go according to merit, and elect the fellows who were the best fitted for the offices,” interposed Howe.

“Exactly so; that’s just what we are going to do.  I’m going to be captain; can you tell me of any better fellow for the place?” demanded Shuffles, who, putting aside the jesting manner in which he had commenced the discussion, now assumed an earnest and impudent tone.

“Didn’t you hear what Lowington said when he wound up his speech?” asked Wilton.

“What?”

“About vetoing our choice if it was not a proper one.”

“What of it?” asked Shuffles, innocently.

“Don’t you think he would veto you?”

“Me!  Not he!  Lowington knows that I’m smart; I was too smart for him once, and he knows it.  He won’t veto me.  We have been the best of friends lately.”

“I don’t believe he’ll have a chance to veto you,” said Wilton.

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“What do you mean?”

“I don’t believe you will be elected.”

“I know I shall, if we manage it right.  Let us look at it,” continued Shuffles, as he took a pencil from his pocket.  “Got a piece of paper?”

Monroe gave him a piece of paper, and the wire-puller began to make his calculations.

“Eighty-seven votes,” said he, writing the number on the paper.  “Necessary to a choice, forty-four.  Here are six votes to start with.”

“For whom?” asked Monroe.

“For me, for captain, first, and for each of the others for whatever place he wants; say for Wilton for first lieutenant; Howe for second, Sanborn for third, Monroe for fourth, and Adler for first master.  What do you say to that, fellows?”

As with the political “slate,” there was some difference of opinion in regard to the minor officers, even after Shuffles’ claim to the captaincy had been conceded But this disposition of the spoils was finally agreed to.

“Now we want thirty-eight more votes,” Shuffles proceeded.

“Just so; and you might as well attempt to jump over the main royal yard as to get them,” added Adler, who, having been assigned to the office lowest in rank, was least satisfied with the “slate.”

“Hold on; we haven’t done yet.  There are nine more offices.  Now we will pick out some good fellow that will work for us, for each of these places; then we will promise him six votes if he will go our ticket, and do what he can for us.”

“That will give us only fifteen votes,” said Adler.

“I think that will be doing very well to start with.  Then you five fellows can electioneer for me, and I’ll do the same for you.”

“I think we have made one mistake,” added Sanborn.  “Most of the fellows will go for Carnes for captain.  He is an old salt, and has more influence than any other student in the ship.  We ought to offer him some place.”

“Make him purser, if you like,” said Shuffles, contemptuously.

“That won’t go down.  Make him first lieutenant.”

“And shove me out?” demanded Wilton, indignantly.  “I don’t see it!”

“Nor I,” added Shuffles.  “I won’t vote for Carnes, any how.  He’s a snob and a flunky.”

It was useless to resist the fiat of the chief wire-puller; the ticket remained as it had been originally prepared; and the young gentlemen proceeded to distribute the rest of the offices.

**CHAPTER III.**

THE ENSIGN AT THE PEAK.

The students on board of the Young America were between the ages of fourteen and seventeen.  By the regulations, no boy under fourteen or over seventeen could be admitted, and they averaged about fifteen.  They had, therefore, reached the years of discretion.  Among them were a great many who were disposed to be wild boys, and not a few who had found it difficult to remain in similar institutions on shore.  They were not criminal or depraved, but simply wild; with a tendency to break through reasonable restraint; with a taste for mad pranks, and a contempt for authority.

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Of this class, who were a trial and a torment to the teachers of the ordinary high schools and academies, the larger proportion would have scorned to steal, or commit any wanton outrage upon the persons or property of others.  There were many high-minded, noble-hearted young men, who could not tamely submit to authority, and were prone to insubordination, and who only needed the right kind of discipline to make them earnest and faithful men and useful citizens.  There were few, if any, dunces or blockheads among them, for a life on shipboard had no attractions for such boys.  They were, almost without an exception, wide-awake, bold, daring fellows, who had a taste for stirring events; fellows who wanted to climb the Rocky Mountains, visit the North Pole, and explore the Mammoth Cave.  They were full of fun and mischief and it would have been easy at any time to get up a party among them to march the principal’s cow into the parlor of the Academy; to climb to the belfry on a winter’s night, and fill the inverted bell with water, where it would freeze solid before morning; or to convey the occupants of the hen-coop to the recitation room.

It was Mr. Lowington’s task to repress the mischief in these boys, to keep them occupied with work and play, and to develop their moral and mental capacities.  He had doubtless taken a heavy load upon himself but he felt that he was to labor for his race and his country.  At least one half of his students were too wild to attend the ordinary public or private schools, or to profit by them if admitted.  With such material, his work could not be a sinecure.  But he had a taste for it, and he gave his whole heart and soul to the performance of his duties.

When the students were gathered on board the Young America, they were mostly strangers to him, though he had communicated personally or by letter with the parents of all of them.  He had read and listened to the stories of their pranks and peccadilloes, but when they came together, he hardly knew one from another, and was not prejudiced against any individual by the terrible accounts of him related by parents, guardians, or teachers.  He purposed to give them the opportunity to select their own officers at first, in order to win a more cheerful obedience from them, and because the students knew each other better than he knew them.

After the announcement of the principal that the voting would commence on the following morning, nothing else was talked of on board.  The qualifications of various members of the school were discussed by groups of excited voters; and we must do them the justice to say that most of them considered the matter unselfishly and with a single eye to the public good.  Perhaps it is a little remarkable that not a single student, outside of the little group of wire-pullers that gathered in the steerage, thought of Shuffles for the position of captain; and the “log-rollers” were likely to have up-hill work in electing themselves to the six principal offices.  But they went to work, and labored very diligently till bed-time in carrying their point.

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While none thought of Shuffles in connection with the highest position, many mentioned the dignified young gentleman, who had made one voyage up the Mediterranean—­Richard Carnes.  He had been on board a fortnight, and had won and retained the respect of all his companions.

Before the little band of wire-pullers in the steerage had made up the “slate” to suit their minds, the crowd on deck had agreed upon Richard Carnes for captain, and were busy in discussing the qualifications of others for the subordinate offices, when the log-rollers separated, and went to work upon their mission.

“How are you going to vote for captain, Kendall?” said Wilton, stopping up to the young gentleman who had proposed so many questions to the principal, and who had been so honest in confessing his ignorance of nautical matters.

“For Carnes, of course.”

“Humph!  I wouldn’t vote for him,” sneered the wire-puller.

“Why not?”

“He’s too stiff; he’ll put on airs, and be a tyrant over us.”

“No, he won’t.”

“You see if he don’t.  I say, Kendall, are you up for any office?” continued Wilton, with a certain appearance of slyness which the straightforward young gentleman did not exactly like.

“Am I?”

“Yes, you.  Wouldn’t you like a room in the after cabin?”

“Perhaps I would,” answered Kendall, thoughtfully; and the place was certainly very inviting to him.

“They say the after cabin is a perfect little palace.”

“I dare say it is.”

“You can just as well go in there, if you like.”

“I don’t see how that can be.  I don’t think I’m fit to be an officer.  I am from Cincinnati, and I never saw a ship till I came east three weeks ago.”

“None of the fellows know anything about a ship.  All of us will have to learn.”

“Carnes knows all about one.”

“No, he don’t.  He made one voyage, and knows just enough to talk salt.  He’s a good fellow enough, but he isn’t fit for captain.  If you want to be an officer, Kendall, and have a berth in the after cabin, you can, just as well as not.”

“Well, I would like such a place; I can’t deny it; but I don’t think the fellows will go for me.”

“They will, if you say so.”

“If I say so!  I’m not going to ask them to vote for me,” replied Kendall, warmly; for he was no politician and had a vein of modesty in his composition.

“You needn’t say a word to any one.  If you will go for our ticket, it will be all right.  Half a dozen of us have talked this matter over, and we have concluded that you would be the best fellow for second master.”

“Have you?” asked Kendall, who could not help being gratified to learn that even half a dozen of his companions had thought him worthy to be an officer of so high a rank as second master.  “I’m very much obliged to you.”

“All you have to do, is to go for our ticket.”

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“What do you mean by your ticket?” demanded Kendall, who was rather confused by the technical terms of the wire-puller.

Wilton explained that his little party had selected a candidate for each of the offices; and if all the fellows agreed to it, there would be fifteen votes for their ticket, to begin with.

“Well, what is your ticket?” demanded Kendall, impatiently.  “If they are all good fellows, I will go for them.  Of course you mean to vote for Carnes for captain.”

“Not exactly,” replied Wilton, with evident disgust.  “We shall put up a better fellow than he is for captain.”

“Why, all the boys are going for him,” added Kendall, astonished to find there were any who did not believe in Carnes.

“No, they are not.”

“I thought they were.”

“He will not be elected, and you need not throw your vote away upon him, because, if you don’t want a place in the after cabin, there are plenty of fellows who do,” added the wire-puller, with apparent indifference.

“But I do want it.”

“Then all you have to do, is to go for our ticket.”

“I think Carnes will make the best captain.”

“Very well; if you think so, you have a right to your own opinion.  I haven’t any mortgage on it.”

“Whom are you going to run for captain?”

“It’s no use to talk any more about it, if you are going for Carnes,” replied Wilton, as he turned to move away.

The wire-puller was playing a part.  Paul Kendall was a noble little fellow, and was already a great favorite on board, not only with the boys, but with the principal and the professors.  Wilton knew that he had a great deal of influence, and it was important to secure him for their ticket.  If he could tell others that Kendall was going for their men, it would induce many to join their party.  The “favorite,” though he was an honest, noble-hearted fellow, was still human, and a berth in the after cabin was a strong temptation to him.

“I’m not going to say I’ll vote for a fellow till I know who he is,” added Kendall.  “If he’s the right person, perhaps I’ll go for him, though I wanted to see Carnes captain.”

“Carnes can’t be elected, I tell you.  We are going against him.”

“Whom are you going for, then?”

“For Bob Shuffles,” replied Wilton, desperately, for he did not wish to mention his candidate till he had won the assent of his companion.

“Shuffles!” exclaimed Kendall, with something like horror mingled with his astonishment; “I shall not go for him, anyhow.”

“Why not?”

“I don’t think he is the right person for the place.”

“I do; he’s a first-rate fellow—­none of your milk and water chaps, that swallow camels and strain at gnats.”

Kendall had some decided objections to Shuffles, and he positively refused to vote for him, even to obtain the coveted position in the after cabin.  Wilton argued the matter with much skill and cunning; but his logic and his eloquence were both wasted.

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“Well, if you won’t go for Shuffles, you must be content with your place in the steerage,” added Wilton.

“I won’t go for him, any how,” said Kendall, firmly.

“You are making a mistake.”

“I don’t think so.  I’m bound to vote for the best fellow, and I’m sure Shuffles isn’t the right one.”

“See here, Kendall; don’t say a word to the others that I spoke to you of this little matter.  I thought you would go with us, or I shouldn’t have said anything to you.”

“Not say anything?  Why not?”

“Because it will be better to keep still.”

“I shall not do anything of the kind.  You have got up a plan to defeat Carnes, by giving the offices to fellows who will vote against him.  You wish me to keep still, while you carry out your plan.  I can see through a cord of wood, when there’s a hole big enough.”

“I mentioned this thing to you in confidence.”

“You didn’t say a word about confidence; and I didn’t promise to keep still.  I won’t keep still.  I think it is a mean trick to buy up the votes of the fellows, and I’ll blow the whole thing higher than a kite.”

“You’ll catch it if you do,” said Wilton, in a threatening tone.

“Catch what?” demanded Kendall, with a very pretty exhibition of dignity.

“Bob Shuffles will give it to you.”

“Give what to me?”

“Give you the biggest licking you ever had in your life,” answered Wilton, angrily, “You are so stupid, you can’t understand anything.”

“I think I can understand the licking, when if comes.  That’s a game that two can play at.”

“What do you mean, you little bantam?  Do you think you can whip Bob Shuffles?”

“I had no idea of whipping him; and I have no idea of his whipping me, either.”

Kendall was spunky.  Wilton could make nothing of him by threats or persuasion; and he turned away from him to seek a more promising field of labor.  Kendall took off his cap, scratched his head as he reflected upon the event which had just transpired, and made up his mind that it was an insult to an independent elector to attempt to buy his vote with the paltry consideration of an office.  He was sorry that he had been even tempted by the proposition of the wire-pullers, and thankful that his sense of honor and decency had prompted him to decline it when asked to vote for an improper person.  True to his promise, he made all haste to expose the conspiracy, as he regarded it, against Carnes.

When the students turned in that night, the wire-pullers had found a sufficient number of candidates for all the offices on the terms set forth in the compact, each of whom had promised to use his influence for the entire ticket.  Shuffles had made a very pretty calculation, to the effect that each of the fifteen candidates could influence at least two votes besides his own for the ticket, which would inevitably elect it.  But during all this time Paul Kendall had been laboring like a Trojan for Carnes, and had induced his friends to do the same.

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At nine-o’clock in the morning, the polls were opened for the election of officers.  A box was placed on the fife-rail, at the mainmast, in which the ballots were deposited, under the inspection of Professor Mapps.

“Have all the students voted?” called the professor, when the voting was suspended.  “If so, I declare the poll closed.”

It was a moment of intense excitement on the spar deck of the Young America when Mr. Lowington stood up on the hatch to announce the vote.  There was a pleasant smile upon his face, which indicated that it would not be his painful duty to veto the choice of the independent electors.

“Young gentlemen, your balloting appears to have been conducted with entire fairness,” said he, “and I will proceed to declare the result.  Whole number of votes, eighty-seven; necessary to a choice, forty-four.  Paul Kendall has five; Charles Gordon has seven; Robert Shuffles has twenty-two; Richard Carnes has fifty-three, and is elected captain of the Young America for the succeeding three months.”

The party who had worked and voted for Carnes applauded the result most lustily, and gave three cheers for the new captain, which, on this exciting occasion, were not objected to by the principal.  Shuffles’s jaw dropped down, and his lip quivered with angry emotion.

“That little whipper-snapper of a Kendall did that,” said Wilton, in a low tone, to the disappointed candidate.  “I was afraid of this when I saw him blowing about the deck.”

“I’ll settle it with him when I get a good chance,” growled Shuffles, as he went to the rail and looked over into the water, in order to conceal his disappointment and chagrin.

“Young gentlemen will bring in their votes for first lieutenant,” said Professor Mapps, as he placed the box on the fife-rail again.

The boys marched around the mainmast, and deposited their ballots for the second officer, as they had done before.  The friends of Shuffles rallied again, hoping that something might yet come of the compact they had made with him, and gave him their votes for first lieutenant, though, in his chagrin, he declared that he would not accept the position.  Fortunately for him, he was not called upon to do so; for Charles Gordon was elected by a very large majority.  As the election proceeded, it became evident that there was no office for Shuffles.  Paul Kendall was elected fourth lieutenant and the announcement of the vote was greeted by even more hearty applause than had been bestowed upon the captain.

At the conclusion of the balloting, Shuffles found that not a single one of the wire-pullers, or of the candidates nominated by them, had been elected.  The attempt to bribe the independent voters, by giving them office, had been a signal failure; and it is to be hoped that Young America, when fully developed, will stick to his principles.

“Captain Richard Carnes,” said Mr. Lowington, as he stepped upon the hatch, after the voting had been concluded.

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The young gentleman thus addressed came forward, blushing beneath the honors which had been bestowed upon him.  The principal took his hand.

“Captain Carnes, I congratulate you upon your election to the highest office in the gift of your companions; and I congratulate your fellow-students also upon having so good a young man to handle the ship.  You have been modest, and they have been wise.  I congratulate you both.  Young gentlemen, I am satisfied that your captain will be just, courteous, and gentlemanly, in his relations with you; and I hope you will yield a willing and cheerful obedience to his orders, and to those of all your superiors.  Let me say that this business is not a farce; it is not mere boys’ play; for as soon as the officers and crew are fully trained and instructed, all ship duty will be carried on without assistance from me or others.  When necessary, I shall advise the captain what to do, but I shall not do it myself; neither shall I needlessly interfere with the discipline of the ship.

“This is the last time an election of officers will be permitted, for it is liable to many objections, not the least of which are the bribery and corruption by which some have attempted to obtain office.”

Mr. Lowington looked at Shuffles, as though he knew all about the method to which he had resorted to secure an election; but we are quite sure that Paul Kendall had never lisped a word of it to him, or to any of the instructors.

“On the first day of July, young gentlemen, all the offices will be vacant; and they will be awarded strictly in accordance with the marks you may obtain.  There will be no veto upon the result of the merit roll.  These places, therefore, are open to all.  We have no aristocracy on board.  Every student in the ship is a candidate for the captaincy.  Now, if the officers elect will follow me to the after cabin, I will install them into their new positions; after which I will proceed to organize the crew.”

The door of the after cabin, which had hitherto been a mystery to all the boys, was unlocked by the head steward, and Mr. Lowington, followed by the officers, entered.  The students on deck were ordered forward, and were not even permitted to look down the companion-way, for the principal intended to keep the after cabin exclusively for the officers; and no one not entitled to admission was to be allowed to cross its threshold.  He believed that this mystery, and this rigid adherence to the division line between officers and crew, would promote the discipline of the ship, and enhance the value of the offices—­the prizes for good conduct, and general fidelity to duty.

“Captain Carnes, this is your state room,” continued Mr. Lowington, opening the door of the room farthest forward on the starboard side.  “As the commander of the ship you are entitled to an apartment by yourself.”

“Thank you, sir,” replied the captain, as he stepped into the room.

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“You will find on the hooks your uniform as captain.  There are three suits, from which you will select one that fits you.”

Captain Carnes entered and closed the door.  If he did not feel like a king, he ought to have felt so.

Mr. Lowington then gave the next room to the first and second lieutenants, who were to occupy it together; and they were also directed to clothe themselves in the uniforms deposited there for their use.  The third state room was given to the third and fourth lieutenants, and the fourth to the first and second midshipmen.  The forward room of the port side was assigned to the first and second masters; the next to the third and fourth; the third to the two pursers, and the last to the third and fourth midshipmen.

In a short time the officers came out of their rooms clothed in their uniforms, which consisted of a blue frock coat, with brass buttons, and blue pants.  The cap was of the same material, with a gold band around it.  Thus far the uniforms were all alike; but there were distinguishing insignia to indicate the rank of each.  All the officers had shoulder-straps, by which their positions were designated.  The captain had two anchors; the first lieutenant had one anchor, with four stars, one above, one below, and one on each side; the second lieutenant had the anchor with three stars—­none above; the third lieutenant, one star on each side of the anchor; and the fourth lieutenant one star below the anchor.  The captain also wore five narrow gold bands on each of his coat sleeves; the first lieutenant four, and so on, the fourth wearing but one band.

The shoulder-straps of the masters contained no anchor; only the stars, one for each grade, the first master having four stars; the fourth only one.  The rank of the pursers was indicated by the outline of a parallelogram for the second, and two of the same figure, one within the other, for the first.  The straps of the midshipmen contained gilt numbers, from one to four, designating their grade.

The officers presented a very elegant and dashing appearance in their new uniform; and if some of them did not feel a little vain, it was because they were less human than boys usually are.

“What are we to do, sir?” asked Kendall of the principal, after the uniforms had been duly criticised.

“Nothing, at present.”

“Nothing!  Why, I feel like a counterfeit gold dollar, in this rig, when I know no more about a ship than I do about the inside of the moon.”

“You will learn in due time.  You will go on deck now, young gentlemen; and remember that, as officers, you are not to be familiar with the crew while you are on duty.”

“Can’t we speak to them?” asked Kendall, who was not disposed to be so exclusive as naval discipline required him to be.

“Not while you are on duty, except when it is necessary to do so.  We will now assign the berths in the steerage to the crew.”

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As the boys came on board, they had taken the berths as they pleased.  Shuffles had selected a room, and invited his “cronies” to occupy the bunks it contained with him.  The berths were now to be distributed by lot.  Professor Mapps had provided seventy-two slips of paper, on each of which he had written a number.  The boys were mustered into line, and drew out these numbers from the package.  As each student drew his slip, the purser wrote down his name in a book, with the number he had drawn.

In the steerage, each berth had its own number, which was also applied to a locker, and a seat at one of the mess tables.  When the drawing was completed each student had his berth, his clothes locker, and his seat at meals.  Many of them were extremely dissatisfied when they found that they had been separated from their “cronies;” but the principal was firm, and would not allow a single change to be made.

By this time it was twelve o’clock, and Boatswain Peaks piped all hands to muster.  The ensign was hoisted, and saluted with three cheers, in which all hands, young and old, joined.  When this ceremony was finished, the crew were piped to dinner, and the officers went to their cabin, where the steward had set the table for them for the first time.  They dined like lords, though upon the same fare as their companions in the steerage.

**CHAPTER IV.**

OFFICERS AND SEAMEN.

After dinner the organization of the crew was continued.  All hands were “piped to muster,” and by this time most of those who had been disaffected at the drawing of berths had recovered their natural equanimity, and all were intensely interested in the arrangement of the details.  None of the boys knew what was coming, and their curiosity kept them in a continuous state of excitement.

“All who have drawn even numbers will take the starboard side of the ship,” said Mr. Lowington from his perch on the hatch.  “All who have drawn odd numbers will take the port side.”

“This is the starboard side, my lads,” added Mr. Fluxion, the instructor in mathematics—­who, like the principal, had been a naval officer,—­as he pointed to the right, looking forward.

Some had already forgotten their numbers, and there was considerable confusion before the order could be obeyed.

“Young gentlemen, the books will be opened to-day; and a student who forgets his number again will lose a mark,” said Mr. Lowington.  “Are they all in their places, Mr. Fluxion?”

“They are, sir,” replied the instructor, who had just counted them.

“Young gentlemen, you are thus divided into two equal parts—­the starboard and the port watches.  Now form a straight line, toe the crack, and call your numbers in order, beginning with the starboard watch.”

The boys eagerly followed this direction, though some assistance was required from the instructors in repressing their superfluous enthusiasm.

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“Very well,” continued Mr. Lowington, when the students were formed in two lines.  “Every boy in the starboard watch whose number is divisible by four, step forward one pace.  Number three in the port watch, do the same.  Mr. Mapps, oblige me by seeing that every alternate boy in the line steps forward.”

“The line is formed, sir,” replied the instructor, when he had carried out the direction of the principal.

“Each watch is now divided into two parts—­the first and second parts, as they will be called.  Now, young gentlemen, the clothing will be distributed, and each student will put on his uniform at once.”

The four lines were then marched down into the steerage, each under the charge of an instructor, to a particular locality, where the head steward and his assistants had deposited the clothing for each watch and quarter watch.  The uniform consisted of blue seaman’s pants and a heavy flannel shirt or frock, such as is worn in the United States navy.  To each student the following articles were served out:—­

1 pea-jacket. 1 blue cloth jacket. 1 pair blue cloth pants. 1 pair blue satinet pants. 1 blue cap. 1 straw hat, of coarse, sewed straw. 1 Panama hat, bound. 2 knit woollen shirts. 2 pair knit woollen drawers. 2 white frocks. 2 pair white duck pants. 4 pair socks. 2 pair shoes. 2 black silk neck-handkerchiefs.

These articles were given to the boys, and they were required to put on the every-day uniform; after which they were directed to arrange the rest of the clothing in the lockers belonging to them.  The contractor who had furnished the goods was present with four tailors, to attend to the fitting of the clothes, which were all numbered according to the size.  In a short time the students began to come out of their rooms, clothed in their new rig.  They looked intensely “salt,” and there was no end to the jokes and smart things that were said on this interesting occasion.  Even Shuffles hardly knew himself in his new dress.

The frock had a broad rolling collar, in each corner of which was worked an anchor in white.  The black silk neck-handkerchief was worn under the collar, and not many of the boys had acquired the art of tying the regular sailor’s knot.  Boatswain Peaks not only stood up as a model for them, but he adjusted the “neck gear” for many of them.  Bitts, the carpenter, and Leech, the sailmaker, who were also old sailors, cheerfully rendered a valet’s assistance to such as needed help.

Agreeably to the directions of Mr. Lowington, the shore suits of the students were done up in bundles, each marked with the owner’s name, and the head steward took them to Mr. Lowington’s house for storage.

Rigged out in their “sea togs,” the students began to feel salt, as well as to look salt.  Some of them tried to imitate the rolling gait of the boatswain when they walked, and some of them began to exhibit an alarming tendency to indulge in sea slang.

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“There, my hearty, you look like a sailor now,” said Peaks, when he had rolled over the collar and tied the square knot in the handkerchief of Wilton.

“Shiver my timbers, but I feel like one,” laughed the embryo seaman.

“What’s that, young gentleman?” demanded Mr. Lowington, who happened to be within hearing; “what did you say?”

“I said I felt like a sailor, sir.”

“What was the expression you used?”

“I only said shiver my timbers, sir.”

“You stole that expression from a yellow-covered novel.  Did you ever hear Mr. Peaks, who has been a sailor all his lifetime, use such language?”

“I’ll be bound he never did,” added Peaks.

“No, sir.  I don’t know that I ever did.”

“Some sailors do use such expressions; but it is gross affectation for these young gentlemen, who never saw a blue wave, to indulge in them.  If you please, Wilton, you will not use such language.  It is simply ridiculous.  Mr. Peaks, you will pipe all hands to muster again.”

The shrill whistle of the boatswain sounded through the ship, and the boys tumbled up the ladders, eager to learn what was to be done next.  As they formed in lines, they presented a novel and picturesque appearance in their jaunty uniform.  Most of them had already learned to wear their caps canted over on one side, and not a few of them, perhaps as much from necessity as because it was a sailor’s habit, hitched up their trousers, and thrust their hands deep down into the side pockets.

The students were again formed in watches and quarter watches, each of which classes and sub-classes was indicated on the uniforms.  All the starboard watch wore a small silver star on the right arm, above the elbow, and the port watch the same emblem on the left arm.  The first part of each watch had a figure 1, under the star, and the second part a figure 2 in the same position.

The rest of the day was spent in the organization for ship’s duty, which was far from completed when the sun went down.  The next day every boy was kept so busy that he had no time to grumble.  The instructors attended to the lessons in the steerage with one watch, while the other was on deck acquiring seamanship.  In the course of the month, as the boys learned their duties, and the capabilities of each were ascertained, they were assigned to their stations in the various evolutions required in working the vessel.

Boatswain Peaks had taught the boys, a few at a time, how to set a sail, reef and furl it.  They had been gradually accustomed to going aloft, until the giddy height of the main royal did not appall them, and they could lay out on the yards without thinking of the empty space beneath them.  By the first of June, all the petty officers had been appointed, and every student had his station billet.  When the order was given to unmoor ship, to make sail, or to furl the sails, every one knew where to go and what to do.  The station billets were cards on which the various evolutions of the ship had been printed in a column on the left, while the particular duty of the owner of the card was written against it.  The card was kept by the student, and he was expected to learn its contents so that he could take his place without stopping to consult it, when an order was given.  Here is a specimen of the cards:—­

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+------------------------------------------------------
---+
|PORT WATCH, NO 21, WILLIAM FOSTER, |
|Second Part. *Captain of the Forecastle.* |
+----------------------+----------------------------------+
|REEFING. |Head Bowlines. |
|TACKING OR WEARING. |Forecastle. Let go head bowlines. |
| | Let go and shorten in foretack |
| | and belay it. |
|GETTING UNDER WAY. |Head Bowlines. Downhauls and |
| | head-sheets. |
|ANCHORING. |Head Bowlines, Sheets and Tacks. |
| | Downhauls. |
|LOOSING SAILS. |Foretopmast Staysail. |
|FURLING. |Head Bowlines and Downhauls, |
| | Staysail. |
|MOORING AND UNMOORING.|Forecastle. |
|BOAT. |Professor’s Barge, stroke-oar. |
|MESS. |No. 11. |
+----------------------+----------------------------------+
/pre>

The crew had been in training a month before an attempt
was made to set more than one sail at once; but by
this time the officers knew the orders, having practised
every day since the organization. The petty officers
had been appointed, and had, to some extent, become
familiar with their duties.

The boys still continued to wonder when the Young
America would go on a cruise, for they were very anxious
to see the blue water, and to roll on the great waves
of the Atlantic; but they were so constantly occupied
with ship’s duty and their studies, that the
time did not hang heavily on their hands. Two
months of constant practice had made tolerable seamen
of them, and the discipline of the ship went on regularly.
The young officers, as Mr. Lowington had promised,
began to conduct the evolutions and give the orders.

On the 1st day of June, after breakfast, the students
were thrown into a fever of excitement by an unusual
order, and they ventured to hope that the ship was
to leave her moorings.

“Mr. Gordon, you will pipe all hands to muster,”
said Captain Carnes to the first lieutenant.

“Pass the word for the boatswain,” added
Gordon to one of the midshipmen, who stood near him.

This call was answered, not by Peaks, who no longer
performed the duties of boatswain, but by one of the
students, who had been appointed to this position.

“Pipe all hands to muster, boatswain,”
said the first lieutenant, as the petty officer touched
his cap to him.

“All hands on deck, ahoy!” shouted the
boatswain, as he piped the call.

This was an unusual order for that time of day, the
forenoon being appropriated to study for each watch
in turn; and those who were below hastened on deck
to ascertain what was to be done.

“All hands, stations for loosing sail!”
piped the boatswain, when ordered to do so by Gordon.

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The first lieutenant was in charge of the ship, under
the direction of the captain. The second lieutenant
stood on the forecastle, where he was attended by
the boatswain. The third lieutenant was in the
waist, and the fourth on the quarter deck, near the
mizzenmast. These were the stations of the officers
whenever all hands were called. Mr. Lowington
and the instructors stood near the companion-way, watching
with interest this first attempt to make sail all
over the ship.

“Lay aloft, sail-loosers!” shouted Gordon;
and his order was repeated by the officers at their
several stations.

The little tars who belonged on the topsail and top-gallant
yards sprang up the rigging like so many cats, excited
beyond measure by the scene of activity around them.

“Lower yardmen in the chains!” continued
Gordon and his order was passed, along by the officers.
“Aloft, lower yardmen!”

In a moment the crew were in their places; the studding-sail
booms were triced up with the usual system, so that
the sails could be reached.

“Lay out!” continued the first lieutenant;
and the boys walked out on the foot-ropes to their
stations on the yards. “Loose!”

The ropes by which the sails were secured to the yards
were removed at this order, and the topmen held the
sails in their places.

“All ready on the forecastle, sir,” reported
Foster, who was captain of that part of the ship.

“All ready in the foretop.”

“All ready in the maintop.”

“All ready in the mizzentop,” reported
the several captains of the tops, in their proper
order.

These reports were passed to the first lieutenant
in charge of the deck, by his subordinates.

“Let fall!” shouted Gordon, highly excited;
and the sails dropped from the yard. “Overhaul
your rigging aloft! Man sheets and halyards!
Sheets home, and hoist away!”

These orders were passed from mouth to mouth among
the officers, and return reports made, according to
the strict discipline of the navy. They were
promptly executed by the crew, though of course not
without some blunders; and the Young America was covered
with her cloud of canvas. Mr. Lowington commended
the officers and crew for the promptness and skill
they had displayed in their first concerted attempt
at making sail. He then directed Captain Carnes
to furl. Both evolutions were then repeated,
until a proficiency satisfactory for one day was attained.

“Not going to sea, after all,” said Shuffles,
when the crew were dismissed from muster.

“No,” replied Wilton. “I’m
tired of lying here, and if we don’t go to sea
soon, I shall take myself off.”

“I’m with you.”

“I thought we were going to have some fun on
board, but we don’t do anything but study and
shake out topsails.”

“Do you know how you stand on marks, Wilton?”
asked Shuffles.

“No; not very high, though.”

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“Don’t you think you shall get into the
cabin next term?”

“I know I shall not. I haven’t tried
for anything.”

“On the first of next month, you know, new officers
will be appointed, and I suppose the crew will be
messed over again.”

“I don’t care, I’m getting tired
of this thing, I had a better time at the Academy
before we came on board.”

“There isn’t much chance for any sport.
Hardly a fellow has been allowed to go on shore since
we joined the ship.”

“Well get up a mutiny, if things don’t
improve.”

“I was thinking of that very thing myself,”
said Shuffles, in a low tone.

“A mutiny!” exclaimed Wilton, who had
used the word in jest.

“Just for fum, you know,” laughed Shuffles.

“You don’t mean any such thing?”

“Not yet, of course.”

“Do you at any time?”

“We want something more exciting than this kind
of a life. Here we are, kept down and treated
like common sailors. We have to touch our caps
and make our manners to Dick Carnes and the rest of
the flunkies in the after cabin. My father pays
as much for me as Dick Carnes’ father does for
him, and I don’t think it is fair that he should
live in the cabin and I in the steerage.”

“If you get marks enough, you can have a berth
in the cabin,” replied Wilton.

“Marks! Confound the marks! I’m
not a baby. Do you think a fellow seventeen years
old is going to be put up or put down by marks?”
said Shuffles.

“I thought you had been working for a place
in the cabin.”

“So I have, but I don’t expect to get
it. I never studied so hard in my life, and I
believe I haven’t had a bad mark since I came
on board, Lowington thinks I have reformed,”
laughed Shuffles. “And so I have.”

“What do you want to get up a mutiny for, then?”

“I shall not, if I get a decent position; if
I don’t, I’m going in for some fun.”

“But do you really think of getting up a mutiny?”
asked Wilton, curiously.

“I was thinking the other day what a fine thing
it would be if our fellows had the ship all to themselves.”

“What could we do with her?”

“Go on a cruise in her.”

“We couldn’t handle her; there is hardly
a fellow on board that knows anything about navigation.”

“Of course, I don’t mean to do anything
yet a while; not this year, perhaps. One of these
days, if we stay on board, we shall know all about
a ship. Fifteen or twenty of the fellows are studying
navigation. We are going to Europe some time
or other. When we do, we can take the ship, and
go it on our own hook.”

“I don’t believe you mean anything of
the kind, Bob Shuffles.”

“I’ve been thinking about it, anyhow.
We can lock Lowington and the rest of the old folks
into their cabin while they are at dinner; and there
are enough of us to handle Peaks and Bitts.”

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“I think you are crazy, Shuffles.”

“We should have a high old time if we could
get possession of the ship. We wont say a word
about it yet.”

“I think you had better not.”

“We might go round Cape Horn into the Pacific,
and have a splendid time among the beautiful islands
of the South Sea.”

“Of course all the fellows wouldn’t join
you.”

“We could put those ashore somewhere who did
not agree with us.”

“You know the penalty of mutiny on the high
seas.”

“Bah!” said Shuffles, contemptuously.
“It would be nothing but it lark.
No one would think of hanging us, or even sending
us to prison for it.
My father is rich enough to get me out of any scrape.”

“So is mine; but I don’t think it would
be quite safe to go into a mutiny.”

“Not yet, my dear fellow. You can think
it over.”

“But I’m tired of this kind of a life.
I liked it first rate in the beginning. Do you
think Lowington really intends to go to sea with the
ship?”

“I know he does.”

“If he don’t go pretty soon, I shall run
away, and go to sea in earnest.”

“Don’t say a word about the mutiny at
present, Wilton. By and by, if things go right,
or if they don’t go right, we may want to take
some stock in such an enterprise.”

“I don’t see it yet, but of course I shall
keep still.”

It is doubtful whether even so daring a young man
as Shuffles, who had the temerity to do almost anything,
seriously contemplated getting up a mutiny. Very
likely his untamed and vicious imagination had revelled
in such an enterprise; had pictured the delights of
the rover’s life at sea; but a boy of ordinary
common sense could hardly think of engaging in such
a mad scheme.

The last week of June, with which month ended the
first school term on board of the Young America, was
devoted to examinations and reviews in all the studies
for which extra marks were given. On the last
day the instructors made up the merit lists, and on
the morning of the 1st of July all hands were mustered,
and the result declared. Most of the officers,
all of whom had studied with unremitting diligence
in order to retain their positions, were reinstated
in their offices. The third lieutenant, however,
fell out, having failed in his reviews, and to the
astonishment of all, Robert Shuffles was found to be
entitled to the place. The first and second lieutenants
exchanged ranks, and Paul Kendall fell to the position
of second master. Three of the tenants of the
after cabin were compelled to move into the steerage,
and three of the crew were transferred to the officers’
quarters.

Many were disappointed, and perhaps some were disheartened,
for the competition had been a severe struggle; and
as much depended upon natural ability as upon energy
and perseverance. But the Young America was a
world by herself. She had all the elements of
society within her wooden walls, and success and failure
there followed the same rules as in the great world
of which she was an epitome.

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After the officers had been duly installed in their
positions, the petty offices were given to those having
the highest number of marks among the crew. It
was certainly democratic for the late third lieutenant
to become captain of the foretop, and for a second
master to become coxswain of the professors’
barge; but these young gentlemen, though disappointed,
submitted with a good grace to their misfortune.

The student having the highest number of marks among
the crew was allowed to have the first choice of berths
in the steerage; the one having the next highest number
had the second choice, and so on, until all the numbers
had been appropriated. At the conclusion of the
reorganization, Mr. Lowington made a speech, “comforting
the mourners,” and reminding all the students
that, on the 1st of October, there would be another
distribution of the places of honor. He hoped
those who had failed to attain what they aspired to
reach would not be discouraged, for, after all, they
had been gaining knowledge, and thus the real end
of the school had been reached.

“How about the mutiny?” said Wilton to
the new third lieutenant, when both were off duty
in the evening.

“It won’t pay just now,” replied
Shuffles, with great good humor.

“I suppose not,” sneered Wilton, who had
not even won a petty office. “What would
Lowington say if he knew the third lieutenant talked
of getting up a mutiny on board?”

“What would he say?” repeated Shuffles,
who was as much surprised at the high rank he had
gained as his companion had been.

“Yes; what would he say if I should tell him
of it?”

“He would say you were a mean pup for telling
tales out of school; at least, he ought to say so,
and I think he would. Lowington is a pretty good
fellow, after all.”

“No doubt he is, now you are third lieutenant.”

“You needn’t snuff at it, Wilton.
If you want a place, why don’t you sail in,
and get one. Just look out for your marks; that’s
all you have to do.”

“Marks! I thought a fellow seventeen years
old was not to be put up or put down by marks,”
said Wilton, bitterly.

“That depends somewhat upon whether you get
in or out,” laughed Shuffles.

“I suppose you and Paul Kendall will be fast
friends now,” added the discontented student.

“Kendall behaves very well, and has treated
me first rate since I went into the cabin.”

“I suppose if I want to run away, you will stop
me now.”

“If you are going to do that, you musn’t
tell me of it, now I’m an officer,” replied
Shuffles, as he turned on his heel, and walked aft.

Wilton was disgusted, and felt that he had lost his
best friend, now that Shuffles had worked his way
into the cabin.

**CHAPTER V.**

OUR FELLOWS.

“I would like leave of absence for to-morrow,
Mr. Pelham,” said Wilton, as he touched his
cap to the first lieutenant of the Young America, on
the day before the Fourth of July.

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“I am sorry to inform you, Wilton, that no leave
of absence will be granted to-morrow,” replied
Pelham in accordance with the instructions given him
by the captain, who, in turn, had received his orders
from the principal.

“No leave!” exclaimed Wilton, his jaw
dropping down.

“Such are the orders.”

“I have always been in the habit of celebrating
the Fourth of July,” replied Wilton. “Are
we to stay on board the ship, and mope all day?”

“I presume the day will be celebrated on board
in a proper manner,” added the first lieutenant.

“On board! What can a fellow do here?
We might as well go to bed, and sleep off the day.”

“No words are necessary, Wilton,” replied
Pelham as he turned and walked away.

“That’s a good one!” added Wilton,
to the group of boys who had come with him to the
mainmast, to request the same favor, if the spokesman
was permitted to go on shore and celebrate the day.

“Not to celebrate!” exclaimed Monroe,
with something like horror in his tones and looks.

“Work on the Fourth of July!” chimed in
Adler.

“I won’t stand it, for one!” said
Wilton.

“Nor I, for another,” added Monroe.

So said half a dozen others.

“Well, what are you going to do about it?”
demanded Adler. “Here we are, and we can’t
get ashore.”

“Perhaps we can,” said Wilton, as he led
the way to a retired part of the deck, where they
could talk without being overheard. “Did
any one ever hear of such a thing as keeping the fellows
on board on the Fourth of July? Why, every little
Greek in the city yonder has his liberty on that day;
and we are to be cooped up here like a parcel of sick
chickens! I suppose we shall have to recite history
and French, and shake out topsails, as usual.”

“It’s outrageous. I don’t believe
the fellows will stand it,” added Adler, who
did not know how bad the case was, until it had been
rehearsed by Wilton, who, in the absence of Shuffles,
had become the leader of a certain clique on board,
given to taking opposite views.

“But I don’t see what we can do,”
said Monroe.

“We will do something. I won’t stand
it. If I stay on board the ship to-morrow, it
will be as a prisoner,” answered Wilton.

“It’s a hard case; but what can we do
about it?” asked Sanborn.

“Suppose we go to Lowington, and state the case
to him,” suggested Adler.

“What’s the use of that? Of course
the first lieutenant spoke by the card. He had
his orders to say what he did, and I’m sure they
came from Lowington.”

“There can be no doubt of that; but it would
be better to have it from him.”

“I’m willing to ask Lowington for the
day, if the fellows want me to do so; but it won’t
do any more good than it would to bark at the mainmast,”
continued Wilton. “I have an idea in my
head, if the fellows will stand by me,” he added,
in a lower tone, as he looked over the rail at the
swinging boom, to which the boats in constant use were
made fast.

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“What is it?” asked Monroe, eagerly.

“Keep shady, for a while. How many fellows
can we muster?”

“I don’t know.”

“Well, don’t stir the matter yet.
Here comes Lowington and we will talk to him first.
Come, fellows, let’s make a dive at him.”

Wilton, attended by his companions, walked up to the
principal, as he was going forward. Touching
his cap respectfully, as the discipline of the ship
required, he opened the case.

“Mr. Lowington, some of the students would like
to go on shore to-morrow, to celebrate the Fourth.
Can’t we have liberty?”

“You know the rule; you should apply to the
first lieutenant for leave of absence,” replied
Mr. Lowington.

“We have, sir, and been refused.”

“Then there is nothing more to be said.
The first lieutenant speaks with authority.”

“I beg your pardon, sir, but are we to stay
on board all day to-morrow?”

“That is certainly the arrangement, Wilton.”

“Some of us would like to celebrate the day,
sir, and we think it is rather hard to be obliged
to do duty on the Fourth of July.”

“I intend to have the day celebrated in a proper
manner. I have made preparations for a gala day
on board.”

“If you please, sir, we would rather go on shore.”

“I am very sorry, for your sake, that I shall
be unable to reverse the answer of the first lieutenant.
If I permit one or a dozen to go ashore, I cannot
refuse any, and all must go. I think the boys
will be satisfied with the arrangements I have made
for the day.”

“I never was kept in school on the Fourth of
July before, sir,” growled Wilton.

“Then this will be a new event in your experience,”
answered Mr. Lowington, coldly, as he turned from
the petitioners, and went forward.

There were a great many wild boys on board of the
Young America, and it was morally impossible for the
whole crew to attend the celebration in the city,
without more or less of them getting into a scrape.
They had been kept on board for two months, and not
allowed to go on shore, except under the supervision
of one of the instructors; and to let any considerable
number of them loose on such a day as the Fourth of
July, would only be courting trouble, for they would
be all the more disorderly after the long period of
restraint.

Mr. Lowington did not willingly deprive the boys of
any innocent gratification. He had faithfully
considered the matter of celebrating the day, and
taken the advice of the instructors on the subject.
It had been proposed to procure a band of music, and
visit the city in a body, under the usual discipline;
but there were many difficulties attending such a
plan. The boys were all the sons of rich men,
and most of them were abundantly supplied with pocket
money. As it would be impossible to prevent the
escape of some of them from the procession, in the
crowded streets, it was feared that their money would
prove to be “the root of all evil.”
The project had finally been abandoned; and, as a substitute,
a programme for a celebration on board had been arranged,
for there the students would be entirely under the
control of the instructors, who would check all excesses.
It was anticipated that a few discontented spirits
would grumble, but no rebellion was expected.

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Wilton and his companions were dissatisfied, and disposed
to be rash. They felt that they had been harshly
and cruelly denied a reasonable privilege. The
subject of celebrating the Fourth had been under consideration
for a long time among the boys, and it had been generally
believed that all hands would be permitted to go on
shore, with perfect liberty, on that day; and many
of them had already arranged their plans for the occasion.

“Well, what do you think now?” said Wilton,
as Mr. Lowington walked forward.

“I think it’s too bad,” replied
Adler. “It is meaner than dirt to make
us stay on board on the Fourth of July.”

“But I don’t see how we are going to help
ourselves,” added Monroe, looking at Wilton
for a solution of this difficult problem.

“I do.”

“How?”

“Keep still; don’t say a word here,”
continued Wilton. “Scatter, now, and I
will be on the top-gallant forecastle in a few minutes.”

Wilton strolled about the deck a short time, and then
went to the place of meeting, where he was soon joined
by the rest of the discontented pupils.

“How many fellows can we muster?” asked
he, when his associates in mischief had again gathered
around him.

“I know at least a dozen, who are up to anything,”
replied Monroe; “but some of them are in the
other watch. What are you going to do?”

“I’ll tell you: There are the professors’
barge and the third cutter at the swinging boom.
We will drop into them when the instructors go down
to supper, and make for the shore. All the rest
of the boats are at the davits; and before they can
get them into the water, we shall be out of their
reach. What do you think of that for a plan!”

“I think it is a first-rate one. But hadn’t
we better wait till the instructors turn in?”
suggested Adler.

“No; the boats will all be hoisted up to the
davits at sunset. We must do it while the professors
are at supper, or not at all. We want eight oars
for the barge, and six for the third cutter; that makes
fourteen fellows. Can we raise as many as that?”

“Yes, I think we can; we will try, at any rate.”

“But you must look out, or some fellow will
blow the whole thing,” added Wilton. “Mind
whom you speak to.”

The trustworthiness of the various students was canvassed,
and it was decided what ones should be invited to
join the enterprise. The discontented boys separated,
and went to work with great caution to obtain the
needed recruits. Unfortunately, in such a crowd
of young men, there are always enough to engage in
any mischievous plot, and it is quite likely that
twice as many as were wanted could have been obtained
to man the boats in the runaway expedition.

Wilton missed Shuffles very much in arranging the
details of the present enterprise. While at the
Brockway Academy, they had plotted mischief so often
that each seemed to be necessary to the other.
But Shuffles had reformed; he was now third lieutenant
of the ship, and it was not safe to suggest a conspiracy
to him, for he would attempt to gain favor with the
principal by exposing or defeating it.

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Yet Shuffles was so bold in thought, and so daring
in execution, that Wilton could hardly abandon the
hope of obtaining his assistance; besides, the third
lieutenant would be officer of the deck when the professors
went to supper, and might wink at their departure in
the boats, if he did not actually help them off.

“Would you say anything to Shuffles?”
asked Wilton, still in doubt, of Monroe, as they happened
to meet again in the waist.

“To Shuffles!” exclaimed Monroe, in an
energetic whisper.

“I mean so.”

“Certainly not. I should as soon think
of speaking to Lowington himself.”

“But Shuffles may join us. He is always
in for a good time.”

“Why, you ninny, he is third lieutenant of the
ship.”

“No matter if he is. I think Shuffles would
like to join us.”

“Nonsense! He has been in office only three
days, and it would break him. He would be degraded
to the steerage,” replied Monroe, who could
not help thinking that Wilton was beside himself in
proposing such a thing, and that the enterprise was
doomed to failure in such incompetent hands.

“If he won’t join us, perhaps he will
help us off. He is officer of the deck, you know,
in the second dog watch.”

“I know he is; but don’t you open your
mouth to him. If you do, I’ll back out
at once.”

“Back out?”

“Yes, back out. I believe you are crazy.
Why don’t you go to Captain Carnes, and done
with it?” said Monroe, with energy.

“I haven’t any hold on Carnes, and I have
on Shuffles.”

“What do you mean?” asked the prudent
conspirator, curiously.

“If Shuffles won’t join us, he won’t
blow on us, you may depend upon that. He wouldn’t
dare to do it. I could break him before sundown,
if I chose,” said Wilton, with conscious power.

“That alters the case.”

“Of course, I shouldn’t think of saying
anything to him, if I did not know what I was talking
about. I have him where the hair is short, and
he knows it, as well as I do.”

“What is it, Wilton?”

“No matter what it is. When a thing is
told me in confidence, I keep it to myself; but if
he turns traitor to his cronies, he must look out for
breakers. He knows what it is.”

“Well, if you can get him, he will be a first-rate
fellow to have.”

“I think I can get him. Here he comes;
you keep out of the way, and I will see how deep the
water is.”

Monroe went forward to find a student to whom he had
been deputed to speak in the interest of the enterprise
leaving Wilton to grapple with the old lion of mischief,
whose teeth, however, seemed to have been worn out
in the cause.

“What’s up, Wilton?” demanded the
third lieutenant who was now off duty, and therefore
allowed to speak to the crew, though it was a privilege
of which the officers seldom availed themselves.

“Who said anything was up?” asked Wilton.

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“You look as though you meant something.
What were you and Ike Monroe talking about just now?”
continued Shuffles. “About me, I’ll
be bound, for you kept looking at me, as though you
meant something.”

“What makes you think so? Have you heard
anything?” asked Wilton, fearful that the plot
had leaked out.

“Not a word? I only judged by your looks.”

“I suppose if anything was up, you wouldn’t
have anything to do with it now.”

“Most decidedly, I should not. I like my
present position too well to fall out of it.
I’m going to be captain next term, if I can fetch
it any way in the world.”

“You mean to be a flunky, just like the rest
of them. You are not the same fellow you used
to be.”

“Yes, I am.”

“You are getting too big for your boots.”

“You wrong me, Wilton. I’m just as
good a fellow as I ever was. I think I’m
the best fellow in the ship, and for that reason I
want to be captain. I’m ahead of Carnes
so far on marks this month.”

“Well, if you want to be the head flunky, I
hope you’ll get it. We are not going ashore
to-morrow, they say,” added Wilton, changing
the topic to get nearer to the business of the hour.

“So Pelham told me.”

“Are you willing to stay on board and study,
and do ship’s duty, on the Fourth of July?”

“We are going to celebrate.”

“How?”

“I’m sure I don’t know.”

“We shall celebrate to-morrow just as we do
every day—­as close prisoners on board the
ship. I, for one, don’t like it, and I won’t
stand it.”

“Won’t you?” laughed Shuffles.

“When I say I won’t, I mean so.”

“O, you do—­do you?”

“You better believe I do,” added Wilton,
shaking his head resolutely.

“What are you going to do?”

“I’m going ashore, by hook or by crook.”

“Better not get into any scrape.”

“You say that as one of the flunkies.”

“Well, you had better not say anything to me,
for I shall have to do my duty as an officer.
Don’t say anything to me, and then I shall not
know anything about it.”

“Humph!” sneered Wilton, not pleased with
this non-committal policy.

“I don’t want to do anything mean with
any of our fellows; so don’t say a word to me.
I shall do my duty as an officer, as I promised to
do when I was made third lieutenant.”

“Do you mean to say you will stop me, Shuffles,
if you see me going?” demanded Wilton.

“I do mean so; I promised faithfully to do my
duty as an officer, and I shall do it.”

“See here, Bob Shuffles; you needn’t talk
to me in that manner. I knew the ship’s
cable from a pint of milk, and you can’t come
the flunky over me.”

“I’m going to do just as you would do
if you were in my place. I won’t hear a
word about any of your plans.”

“But will you interfere with them?”

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“If it is my duty to do so, I shall. I
intend to obey orders; and if I have the deck, I shall
keep things straight, whatever happens.”

“Lowington don’t know you as well as I
do.”

“No matter if he don’t; he shall have
no fault to find with me this term, if I can help
it.”

“It’s no use for me to mince the matter
with you, Bob Shuffles. We understand each other
too well for that. Something’s up.”

Shuffles turned on his heel, and was about to walk
away.

“Hold on a minute, Shuffles,” continued
Wilton. “I won’t tell you what’s
up, but I’ll tell you this; if you interfere
with what I do, or with what the fellows with me do,
I’ll tell Lowington about the mutiny—­I
will, as sure as your name is Bob Shuffles. Do
you understand me?”

“Well, I do; and it seems to me that sounds
very much like a threat.”

“Call it what you like. If you turn traitor
to our fellows, you must stand the racket of it.
You are not a saint just yet, and those that live
in glass houses musn’t throw stones.”

“I believe I haven’t played false to any
of our fellows. If I don’t choose to get
into any scrape with them, I have a right to keep out.
That’s all I’ve got to say.”

“But what are you going to do, Shuffles?
Our fellows will want to know.”

“I’m going to do my duty,” replied
the third lieutenant as he walked away, regardless
of the efforts of his companion to detain him.

Shuffles was experiencing the truth of the old maxim,
that honesty is the best policy. It is to be
regretted that his present devotion to duty had no
higher incentive than mere policy; but it may be hoped
of those who do their duty from low motives, that
they may gather inspiration even from their politic
fidelity to obey its behests from higher motives.
The third lieutenant of the Young America intended
to keep the promise he had made in accepting his office,
simply because it would pay best.

Wilton and his confederates had no difficulty in making
up the required number of discontents and malcontents
before six o’clock, which was the time fixed
for carrying out the enterprise they had planned.
Some of the recruits joined because they anticipated
a good time in the city in celebrating the Fourth,
and others from a mere love of mischief and excitement.
The details of the scheme had been carefully elaborated
by Monroe and Wilton, after the ranks of the conspirators
were full. Having learned a valuable lesson from
the daily discipline of the ship, the mischief was
certainly well planned. Each boy was assigned
to a particular position in the boats, and knew on
what thwart he was to sit, and which oar he was to
pull.

Wilton and Monroe, as the master spirits of the enterprise
were to run out first on the swinging boom, and slide
down the painters, each into the boat he was to command.
The others were to follow in the same way, descending
from the boom, for it was not considered prudent to
run the boats up to the gangway, where some enthusiastic
officer might easily interfere with the plan, which
was to depend for its success upon the celerity of
its execution.

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When four bells struck, the professors went down to
their evening meal, as usual, and the boatswain piped
the port watch to supper, the starboard watch having
taken theirs at three bells, or half past five.
Wilton gave a low whistle, when Shuffles, officer of
the deck, was abaft the mizzenmast, with his back
to the runaways who had gathered in the waist, and
were waiting for the signal.

“Be lively, fellows,” said the leader
of the enterprise, as he sprang over the rail, and
ran out on the boom, followed by Monroe.

The others, in the order in which they had been instructed,
did the same. About half of them were on the
boom, when the movement was reported to the officer
of the deck by the midshipman on duty in the waist.
Shuffles rushed forward, now understanding, for the
first time, the intentions of Wilton; and true to
the inspiration of fidelity, he set about defeating
the object of “our fellows.”

The studding-sail boom, to which the boats were fastened,
was supported by a topping-lift from above, and kept
in position, at right angles with the side of the
ship, by guys extending forward and aft.

“Stand by that fore guy!” shouted Shuffles,
as he sprang upon the rail. “Cast off!”

“Lively, fellows!” said Wilton, when he
saw that the third lieutenant intended to swing in
the boom to the ship’s side.

“Stand by the after guy of the studding-sail
boom!” continued Shuffles, with becoming energy.

Both his orders were promptly obeyed; but seeing that
his movement would be too late, he rushed to the topping-lift,
and cast it off, causing the swinging boom to drop
into the water, just as the last boy was about to
slide down into the professors’ boat. Of
course the luckless fellow went into the water; but
he was promptly picked up by his companions in mischief.

“If I’m caught, Bob Shuffles, you look
out for breakers!” cried Wilton, as the third
lieutenant appeared at the gangway again.

The tide was coming in, and the boats swung so far
abaft the boom that it had fallen clear of them when
it dropped into the water. Wilton and Monroe
were prompt to avail themselves of their present success,
and the boys sat in the boats, with their oars up,
ready to pull as soon as the order was given.

“Let fall!” said Wilton; and the eight
oars of the professors’ barge dropped into the
water, and the rowers placed them in readiness for
the first stroke.

Monroe, in the third cutter, followed the example
of his principal, and was hardly a second behind him.

“Give way!” added Wilton.

“Give way!” repeated Monroe; and the two
boats gathered way and darted off towards the nearest
point of the shore.

Thus far the enterprise of “our fellows”
was entirely successful, and Shuffles stood on the
gangway, chagrined at the defeat which had attended
his efforts to prevent the escape of the runaways.

“Stand by to clear away the first cutter!”
shouted he, suddenly and with energy, as he made his
way to the davits, where the boat indicated was suspended.

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“Cast off the gripes, and man the falls!”
he continued when the watch were collected at the
scene of action. “Mr. Kendall, you will
inform the captain what has happened.”

Within three minutes, the first cutter was in the
water, for the crew had been frequently exercised
in the evolution of lowering boats, and performed
it with remarkable facility for boys. Before the
first cutter touched the water, the captain, the principal,
and all the professors, came on deck.

Mr. Lowington was entirely cool, though everybody
else appeared to be intensely excited. The crew
of the first cutter were piped away, and at the principal’s
suggestion, the third lieutenant was sent off in the
boat to prevent the landing of the rebellious pupils.

“Up oars! Let fall! Give way!”
said Shuffles, in the boat, delivering his orders
in rapid succession; and the first cutter darted off
in chase of the runaways.

**CHAPTER VI.**

THE FOURTH OF JULY.

The first cutter was manned by her regular crew, who
had been trained with the utmost care to pull together,
while Wilton, in the professors’ barge, which
was of the same size, had some very indifferent oarsmen.
The runaways had made up their force of such material
as they could obtain, and though all were somewhat
accustomed to rowing, they had not been drilled to
work together; they were not the unit of power in
pulling a boat. Shuffles, therefore, had a manifest
advantage, and he was determined to bring back the
fugitives.

The second cutter, in charge of Paul Kendall, was
cleared away, and, with Mr. Lowington and Mr. Fluxion
on board, left the ship to take part in the pursuit.
The chase promised to be an exciting one, for Wilton
and Monroe were straining every nerve to reach the
shore before they were overtaken. They were making
for the nearest land, and having just the number of
hands required to pull the boat, each of them was obliged
to use an oar himself. They had no coxswains,
and Wilton, at the bow oar of the professors’
barge, could not see what was ahead, though he kept
the pursuing boats in full view.

The nearest land, not more than half a mile from the
ship, was a point covered with salt marsh, above which
was a cove, whose opening was about ten rods in width.
Wilton was making for the point below the cove, but
his calculations were made without judgment or discretion.
If he reached the land, his party would be obliged
to walk a mile in order to get round the cove, on
a narrow strip of marsh, where they might be intercepted.
But the fatal defect in his plan of operations was
a failure to consider the depth of water between the
ship and the point. The flow of the tide from
the cove, while it kept a clear channel through the
entrance, had formed a bar off the tongue of land on
the seaward side of it, which was bare at half tide,
and was now just covered. Wilton was pulling
for this bar, with all the strength of his crew.

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Shuffles was prompt to observe the mistake of his
late crony, and just as prompt to profit by it.
The first cutter was gaining rapidly on the chase;
but Shuffles, as she reached the border of the main
channel, ordered his coxswain to keep the boat’s
head towards the entrance of the cove.

“We shall never catch them on this tack,”
said the coxswain of the cutter, who knew nothing
about the bar.

“I think we shall,” replied the third
lieutenant, confidently.

“We are not going towards the point.”

“That’s very true, and the professors’
barge will not go much farther in that direction.
Pull steady, my lads; don’t hurry yourselves.
There is plenty of time.”

The coxswain thought his superior officer was taking
the matter very coolly, and knowing of the intimacy
which had formerly subsisted between Shuffles and
Wilton, he was ready to conclude that the third lieutenant
was willing to permit the escape of “our fellows.”
While he was putting this construction on the conduct
of his superior, the professors’ barge “took
the ground,” and stuck fast.

“They’re aground, Mr. Shuffles,”
said the coxswain.

“There’s just where I expected them to
be,” answered Shuffles, quietly.

“Shall I run towards them?”

“No; keep her as she is. There isn’t
more than a foot of water anywhere between them and
the point.”

The third cutter, being a smaller boat than the professors’
barge, did not touch the bar as soon as her consort;
but Monroe saw that his craft could not land her party
on the point at that stage of the tide, and he ordered
his crew first to lay on their oars, and then to back
water. Wilton’s boat was aground at the
bow, and when he had sent part of his crew aft, she
was easily pushed off the bar. By this delay he
had lost the chance of landing at the point, and his
only alternative was to pull up to the cove; but in
doing so, it would be impossible to avoid the first
cutter, which had now secured a position off the mouth
of the little bay.

“Stand by to lay on your oars,” said the
coxswain of the first cutter, as directed by the lieutenant
in command. “Oars!”

The crew ceased rowing, and laying on their oars,
waited the next movement of the runaways. In
the mean time the second cutter was well away from
the ship, and Mr. Lowington, promptly comprehending
the intentions of the third lieutenant, directed the
officer in command to pull towards the boats on the
bar, keeping well to seaward, in order to prevent
them from escaping in that direction.

Wilton realized that he was cornered, and hoping that
Shuffles would not be over-zealous in the discharge
of his duty, directed his course towards the opening
of the cove. A few strokes brought him within
hailing distance of the first cutter.

“No use, Wilton,” said Shuffles, laughing.
“You may as well pull for the ship. It’s
all up with you.”

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But the leader of the runaways, instead of heeding
this good advice, attempted to push by astern of the
first cutter.

“Stern, all! Give way!” shouted Shuffles,
sharply. “Coxswain, stand by with your
stern line!”

It was generally understood that the third lieutenant
of the Young America was a fighting character, and
that he could whip any officer or seaman in the ship,
though his prowess had not been practically demonstrated.
Shuffles took the stern line himself, instead of intrusting
the duty to the coxswain. He intended to grapple
the bow of the professors’ barge, and make fast
to it with the rope; but the cutter did not gather
way enough in season to do this. As she backed,
she fouled the oars of the barge, and Shuffles secured
a firm hold of her stern.

“What are you doing, Bob Shuffles?” demanded
Wilton, angry, when he saw that his late crony was
fully in earnest.

The third lieutenant made no reply; but passing his
rope through a ring in the stern of the barge, he
made it fast, and then pushed the cutter off from
her. When the line had run out about a fathom,
he secured the end he held in his hand to the after
thwart of his own boat. Thus the first cutter
and the barge were lashed together, stern to stern.

“Cast off that rope!” shouted Wilton to
the stroke oarsman in the barge.

“Don’t you touch it, my lad,” interposed
Shuffles, when the boy attempted to obey the order
of his leader. “If you attempt it, you will
purchase a sore head.”

[Illustration: THE ESCAPE FROM THE SHIP.
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The third lieutenant had picked up a boat-hook, and
stood ready to rap any of the barge’s crew who
might attempt to cast off the line by which the boats
were fastened together. No one was disposed to
cross the purposes of so formidable a person as Shuffles,
and the stroke oarsman did not obey the order of Wilton.
It would not be safe to do so.

“Now, Wilton, what do you say?” demanded
Shuffles, a smile of triumph playing upon his face,
which was very aggravating to the leader of the runaways.
“Will you go back to the ship, or not?”

“No, of course I won’t,” replied
the discomfited chief of the malcontents.

“You had better, my dear fellow. There
comes Mr. Lowington.”

“I didn’t think this of you, Bob Shuffles,”
said Wilton, reproachfully.

“I told you I should do my duty; and I shall,
to the end. If you will return, all right; if
not, I shall take you back.”

“No, you won’t.”

“I think I will,” added the third lieutenant,
quietly. “Stand by to give way!”
he continued, to the coxswain.

“Two can play at that game,” said Wilton,
as he gave the same order to his crew.

“Give way!” shouted the coxswain of the
first cutter, with energy.

“Give way!” repeated Wilton, in the barge.

The rope straightened, Shuffles stood up in the stern-sheets
of the cutter, to prevent the line from being cast
off, and the contest began, to ascertain which should
drag the other. It was rather ludicrous, in spite
of the serious question of discipline involved in the
affair, and the boys in the cutter were intensely
amused, as well as excited. Both crews struggled
with all their might, and each leader urged his followers
to renewed exertions.

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The discipline of the first cutter was on the point
of carrying the contest in favor of law and order,
when Monroe, seeing that his friend was nearly worsted,
backed the third cutter up to the bow of the barge,
and took her painter on board, which he made fast at
the stern. Resuming his oar, he ordered his crew
to give way together. Then law and order appealed
to be at a discount, for the eight oarsmen in the first
cutter were not a match, even in the cause of discipline,
against the fourteen in the barge and third cutter.

Shuffles did not give it up, notwithstanding the great
odds against him. Letting out the stern line
far enough to allow space for a new manoeuvre, he
directed the starboard oarsmen to lay on their oars,
while those on the port side pulled the boat round.
Then all gave way together, and the barge was dragged
round sideways, until her oars fouled with those of
Monroe’s boat. At this stage of the exciting
proceedings the second cutter came up with the principal.

Mr. Fluxion sat in the stern-sheets, shaking his sides
with laughter at the singular contest which was going
on; but Mr. Lowington, though evidently amused, maintained
his gravity, and was as dignified as usual. The
appearance of the principal ended the struggle.
A glance from him was quite sufficient to take all
the stiffening out of the runaways, and even Wilton,
though he talked valiantly behind Mr. Lowington’s
back, and neglected even to give him the simple title
of “mister,” had not the courage to resist
the strong arm of his authority. As the second
cutter backed up to the barge, the principal stepped
on board of her, and took a seat in the stern-sheets.

“Young gentlemen, you will return to the ship,”
said Mr. Lowington, sternly, as he took the tiller-ropes
in his hands. “Give way!”

The malcontents had no thought of further resistance.
The presence of the principal was sufficient to overcome
all insubordination; they did not dare to disobey
him. Mechanically they bent to their oars, and
without a word pulled back to the ship.

Mr. Fluxion, by direction of Mr. Lowington, had taken
his place in Monroe’s boat, and followed the
barge, the two cutters bringing up the rear.
This was the first instance of flagrant insubordination
which had occurred since the organization of the ship’s
company, and the students were not a little anxious
to learn how it would be treated. It was singular
that Shuffles, who on shore had always been the ringleader
in enterprises of mischief, had been the means of
defeating the scheme of the runaways.

The boats were hoisted up at the davits, and the boatswain
was ordered to pipe all hands on deck. The principal
looked calm, but stern, as he took the position on
the hatch which he usually occupied when he addressed
the students.

“Wilton and Monroe,” said he.

The culprits came forward, hanging their heads with
shame.

“I learn that you are the ringleaders in this
movement. Is it so?”

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“I suppose we are,” replied Wilton.

“Who proposed the plan?”

“Wilton first spoke to me about it,” answered
Monroe.

“And you induced the others to join you?”

“Yes, sir.”

“As the ringleaders, Wilton and Monroe will
lose twenty marks each, and remain in their mess rooms
to-morrow. The other twelve lose ten marks each,”
continued Mr. Lowington. “Young gentlemen,
those who have engaged in this scheme are not to be
trusted. I have nothing further to say.”

The crew were dismissed, and all the students were
disposed to laugh at the mildness of the punishment,
compared with the enormity of the offence.

“Mr. Shuffles,” said the principal, as
he stepped down from the hatch, “I am very much
obliged to you for the zeal and energy which you have
exhibited in the discharge of your duty. Not only
was your disposition to do your duty highly commendable,
but your plans displayed skill and forethought.”

“Thank you, sir,” replied the third lieutenant;
“I am very glad to have pleased you.”

Mr. Lowington bowed, and descended to the cabin to
finish his supper, which had been interrupted by the
event described. What the professors said about
the affair was not known to the boys; but Shuffles
was warmly praised for the moderate but skilful measures
he had used in the capture of the rebels.

At sundown, a shore boat came alongside with an abundant
supply of fireworks, which had been ordered by Mr.
Lowington. They were hoisted on board, and deposited
in a safe place. At the usual hour, the boys turned
in to dream of the good time which these squibs and
crackers suggested to them—­all but Monroe
and Wilton, who had something else to think about.
The latter was disappointed and surly, while the former
congratulated himself upon getting out of the scrape
so easily. Wilton was very angry with Shuffles,
who might have permitted him to land, if he had been
so disposed; and he determined to take what he considered
an ample vengeance upon the traitor. As soon
as he had an opportunity to speak to Mr. Lowington,
he intended to tell him all about the plan for a mutiny,
and he was fully satisfied that Shuffles would be sent
in disgrace from his pleasant position in the after
cabin, to take up his abode in the steerage again.

On the morning of the ever-glorious Fourth, all hands
were mustered on the deck of the Young America at
four o’clock. Crackers were served out,
and for two hours there was a tremendous racket from
stern to stern, among the younger boys. At six
o’clock, the port watch were piped to breakfast,
and all the crackers having been burned, the decks
were swept, and everything put in perfect order, by
the starboard watch. A band of music, engaged
for the day, came off, and the enlivening strains
of the national airs sounded through the ship.

At seven o’clock, when all hands had breakfasted,
an hour earlier than usual, the crew were piped to
muster, wondering, as they always did, what was going
to be done.

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“All hands, up anchor ahoy!” shouted the
boatswain prompted by the first lieutenant; but this
order was so common in the every-day practice of the
crew, that no one supposed it had any unusual significance;
and some of the boys even began to grumble at being
compelled to go through the routine of ship’s
work on the Fourth of July.

“Bring to on the cable, and unbitt!” continued
the officer in command. “Ship the capstan
bars, and swifter them! Heave in the cable to
a short stay!”

These orders were duly executed, under the direction
of the various officers at their stations.

“Avast heaving!” called the first master.
“Anchor apeak, sir,” he reported to the
first lieutenant.

“Pawl the capstan, stopper the cable, and unship
the bars!” added the executive officers, all
of which was done, and duly reported.

“Stations for loosing topsails!” which
were shaken out by the ordinary routine, sheeted home,
and hoisted up.

“Forecastlemen, loose the head sails! After-guard,
clear away the spanker! Man the capstan bars,
ship and swifter them! Heave around!”

This last was a manoeuvre which the crew had never
before been called upon to perform; and the order
sent a thrill of delight to all hearts. The cable
had often been heaved to a short stay, that is, so
that it run nearly up and down; but that was as far
as they had ever before been permitted to proceed.
Now, with the anchor apeak, they were ordered to the
capstan again, and they realized that the Young America
was actually going to sea. The command kindled
an enthusiasm which glowed on every face. The
ship was going out of the harbor, and the evil doers
in the mess rooms below were to be pitied.

“Anchor aweigh, sir,” reported the excited
boatswain who, however, had to be prompted in this
instance by Peaks, for it had never been in that position
before since it first hooked the mud in Brockway harbor.

“Anchor aweigh, sir,” repeated the second
lieutenant.

“Man the jib and flying-jib halyards!”
said the first lieutenant.

“Anchor’s at the bow, sir,” said
the boatswain, which report went through the same
channels as before, till it reached the executive
officer.

“Hoist away on the jib and flying-jib halyards!
Avast heaving! Pawl the capstan! Stopper
the cable! Cat and fish the anchor!” shouted
the first lieutenant. “Port the helm!”

The Young America was clear of the ground. The
fore topsail, which had been trimmed to the fresh
breeze, was full, and the ship began to gather headway.
Two seamen had been placed at the wheel, under the
charge of the quartermaster. The boys had often
“made believe” do these things, but now
they were real. The vessel was actually moving
through the water, and they could hardly contain themselves,
so exhilarating was the scene.

“Steady!” said the first lieutenant, when
the ship had come up to her intended course.

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“Steady, sir,” repeated the quartermaster
in charge of the helm.

“Stand by to set the spanker,” added the
first lieutenant. “Man the outhaul!
Cast off the brails, and loose the vangs!”

The after-guard, which is the portion of the ship’s
company stationed on the quarter-deck, or abaft the
mizzenmast, obeyed this order, and stood ready to
set the spanker, which is the aftermost sail.

“Walk away with the outhaul!” and the
after-guard ran off with the rope, which drew the
sail out into its place on the gaff. “Stand
by the spanker sheet—­let it out!”

“You must attend to your main and mizzen topsails
Mr. Pelham,” said the principal, in a low tone.

“Man the fore and main braces!” said the
executive officer; and the young seamen sprang to
their stations. “Let go and haul!”

The main and the mizzen topsails were thus trimmed,
so that they took the wind.

“That was very well done, Captain Carnes, though
your crew need more practice. They are very much
excited,” said Mr. Lowington.

“I don’t wonder, sir; I think none of
them knew we were going out of the harbor,”
replied the captain.

“I am glad they enjoy it,” added the principal,
“though I should not have left the anchorage,
except as a substitute for the Fourth of July celebration.”

“They will like this much better than going
to the city.”

“I have no doubt on that point; and last evening,
when those students wished to run away, I was tempted
to punish their disobedience by letting them go.
The wind is pretty fresh, Captain Carnes, but I think
you may set the top-gallant sails.”

The captain gave the order to the first lieutenant.

“Aloft, sail-loosers of the top-gallant sails!”
shouted Mr. Pelham; and the eager young salts dashed
up the rigging. “Lay out! Loose!
Let fall! Man your sheets and halyards!
Sheets home, and hoist away!”

The addition of the top-gallant sails was sensibly
felt by the Young America; and, “taking a bone
in her teeth,” she careened over, and dashed
away merrily on her course.

The band played Hail, Columbia, and as the ship passed
the fort, the crew mounted the rigging and gave three
cheers. The excitement on board was immense,
and never was Independence Day more thoroughly and
enthusiastically enjoyed. The officers and crew
were at the height of felicity, as the gallant little
ship bowled over the waves, threading her way through
the channels between the numerous islands of the bay.

“Can’t we put on any more sail, Mr. Lowington?”
asked Captain Carnes, as he met the principal on the
quarter-deck.

“Not at present. We are making very good
progress now.”

“The boys want to see all sail on her.”

“The wind is blowing half a gale now,”
added Mr. Lowington, with a smile. “I think
we shall be able to give them quite enough of it when
we get out into blue water. I’m afraid
you will lose half your crew before noon!”

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“Lose them?”

“By seasickness, I mean.”

“Do you think they will be sick, sir?”

“I have no doubt of it. Many of them never
saw the ocean before, and never looked upon a ship
till they came on board of the Young America.
I don’t think it would be prudent to put on
all sail, until we know what force we are to have
to handle the ship.”

“They don’t look like being seasick at
present.”

“Wait till we get out into the heavy sea,”
laughed the principal, as he went forward.

At eight bells the ship was abreast of the last island,
and she began to pitch and roll a little, though the
motion was hardly perceptible, until she was well
off from the land. Professor Paradyme was the
first victim of seasickness, and the boys all laughed
when they saw the woe-begone expression on the face
of the learned man; but some of those who laughed
the loudest were the first to be taken by the ridiculous
malady.

The Young America pitched and rolled heavily as she
receded from the land, and nothing more was said by
the students about putting on more sail. The
spray broke over the bow, and washed the decks; but
most of the boys enjoyed the scene as they had never
enjoyed anything before.

“What are you doing here, sir?” demanded
Mr. Lowington, as he went forward, and discovered
Wilton skulking under the lee of the foremast.
“You were told to stay in your mess room, sir!”

“I couldn’t, sir,” whined the culprit.

“You could, and you will.”

“I was seasick, sir.”

“I can’t help it; you must stay in your
mess room,” added the principal, sternly.

“If you please, sir, I will obey orders if you
will let me stay on deck,” said Wilton, humbly.

“No; return to your room?” and Wilton
was compelled to obey.

It was a very severe punishment to him and Monroe
to be obliged to stay in the steerage during the first
trip of the Young America.

**CHAPTER VII.**

HEAVING THE LOG.

The Young America, under topsails and top-gallant
sails, was making about ten knots an hour. After
passing the last island in the bay, she was headed
to the south-east, which brought the wind over the
starboard quarter. The ship was of the clipper
class, though not as sharp as many of this model.
It was found that her sailing ability was excellent,
and Mr. Lowington and Mr. Fluxion expressed much satisfaction
at her performance, both in respect of speed and weatherly
qualities.

When the ship left her moorings, the principal had
not decided where to go, or how long to remain at
sea, intending to be governed by the circumstances
of the hour. It had never been his purpose to
keep her at one anchorage, but to go from port to
port, remaining a few days or a few weeks at each,
as the discipline of the ship and the progress of the
boys in their studies suggested. There were many
elements of seamanship which could not be effectively
practised while the ship lay at anchor, such as heaving
the log, sounding and steering, though the boys had
been carefully instructed in the theory of these operations.

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The instructor in mathematics, the boatswain, the
carpenter, and the sailmaker, all of whom were good
seamen, were in great demand as soon as the ship was
under way; but when she had sea-room enough, the helm
was handed over to the boys, under the charge of a
juvenile quartermaster. Peaks stood by, and gave
the necessary directions, till the students were able
to do the work themselves.

“Now, my lads, we will heave the log,”
said the boatswain, when the ship was well out from
the land.

“We know how to do that,” replied Smith,
one of the quartermasters.

“I dare say you do, young gentlemen; but in
my opinion, you can’t do it. You know how
to write a psalm, but I don’t believe you could
write one,” added Peaks. “You have
to learn how to do these things by the feeling, so
that they will do themselves, so to speak. After-guard,
stand by to haul in the log-line. Here, quartermaster,
you will hold the glass, and the officer of the deck
will throw the chip.”

“We know all about it, Mr. Peaks,” repeated
Smith.

“I know you do; but you can’t tell within
five knots how fast the ship is going,” laughed
the boatswain. “Let’s do it right
a few times, and then you can be trusted.”

The quartermaster took the glass, and Gordon, then
officer of the watch, the chip, which he cast into
the water over the stern of the ship.

“Turn!” said he, when the stray line had
run out.

Now, Smith, at this particular moment, was watching
a vessel over the quarter, and he did not instantly
turn the glass, as he should have done; but Peaks
said nothing.

“Up!” cried the quartermaster, when the
sand had all run through the glass.

Gordon stopped the reel from which the line was running
out, and noted the mark.

“Seven knots,” said he.

“Not right,” replied the boatswain, sharply.
“This ship is going nine or ten knots an hour,
and any man who has snuffed salt water for six months
could guess nearer than you make it. Now try it
once again, and if you don’t hit nearer than
that next time, you may as well throw the reel overboard,
and hire a Yankee to guess the rate of sailing.”

“I thought we knew all about it,” added
Smith.

“I think you do, young gentlemen; but you were
star-gazing when you ought to have been all attention.
The line ran out two or three knots before you turned
the glass.”

Gordon took the chip again. It was a thin piece
of board, in the form of a quarter circle. The
round side was loaded with just lead enough to make
it float upright in the water. The log-line was
fastened to the chip, just us a boy loops a kite,
two strings being attached at each end of the circular
side, while the one at the angle is tied to a peg,
which is inserted in a hole, just hard enough to keep
it in place, while there is no extra strain on the
board, but which can be drawn out with a smart pull.
When the log-line has run out as far as desired, there
would be some difficulty in hauling in the chip while
it was upright in the water; but a sudden jerk draws
the peg at the angle, and permits the board to lie
flat, in which position the water offers the least
resistance to its passage.

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The half-minute glass used on board the Young America,
held by the quartermaster, was like an hour glass,
and contained just sand enough to pass through the
hole in the neck in thirty seconds. The log-line
was one hundred and fifty fathoms in length, and was
wound on a reel, which turned very easily, so that
the resistance of the chip to the water would unwind
it. The log-line is divided into certain spaces
called knots, the length of each of which is the same
fractional part of a mile that a half minute is of
an hour. If there be sixty-one hundred and twenty
feet in a nautical mile, or the sixtieth part of a
degree of a great circle, which is not far from accurate,
and the ship be going ten knots an hour, she will
run sixty-one thousand two hundred feet in an hour.
If the chip were thrown overboard at eight o’clock,
and the line were long enough, the ship would have
run out sixty-one thousand two hundred feet, or ten
miles, at nine o’clock, or in one hour.
In one minute she would run one sixtieth of sixty-one
thousand two hundred feet, which is ten hundred and
twenty feet; in half a minute, five hundred and ten
feet.

The half-minute glass is the measure of time generally
used in heaving the log. While the sand is dropping
through, the line runs out five hundred and ten feet,
the ship going ten knots an hour being the basis of
the calculation. One knot, therefore, will be
fifty-one feet. If the line pays out five hundred
and ten feet in thirty seconds, by the glass, the
ship is going ten knots an hour. If it pays out
four hundred and eight feet in half a minute, or eight
hundred and sixteen feet in a minute, she will pay
out a mile in as many minutes as eight hundred and
sixteen feet is contained in sixty-one hundred and
twenty feet, which is seven and a half minutes.
Then the ship goes a mile in seven and a half minutes,
or eight miles an hour.

A knot on the log-line is therefore invariably fifty-one
feet; and the number of knots of the line run out
in half a minute indicates also the ship’s speed
per hour, for fifty-one feet is the same part of a
nautical mile that half a minute is of an hour.
The calculations are given without allowances, merely
to show the principle; and both the glass and the
line are modified in practice.

On board the Young America, ten fathoms were allowed
for “stray line;” this length of line
being permitted to run out before the measuring commenced,
in order to get the chip clear of thee eddies in the
wake of the ship. The ten fathoms were indicated
by a white rag, drawn through the line; and when the
officer paying out comes to this mark, he orders the
quartermaster to turn the glass, and the operation
actually begins. At every fifty-one feet (or
forty-seven and six tenths, making the allowances)
there is a mark—­a bit of leather, or two
or more knots. The instant the sands have all
run through the glass, the quartermaster says, “Up,”
and the officer notes the mark to which the line has
run out. Half and quarter knots are indicated
on the line.

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“Now, quartermaster, mind your eye. When
the officer of the deck says, ‘Turn,’
you repeat the word after him, to show that you are
alive,” continued Peaks.

“Ready!” said Gordon.

“Ready!” replied Smith.

The lieutenant threw the chip into the water, and
when the stray line had run off, he gave the word
to turn the glass.

“Turn!” repeated Smith.

Gordon eased off the log-line, so that nothing should
prevent it from running easily.

“Up!” shouted Smith; and Gordon stopped
the line.

“Very well,” added Peaks. “What’s
the mark?”

“Ten and a quarter,” replied the officer.

“That sounds more like it. I knew this
ship was going more than seven knots. You see,
young gentlemen, you can’t catch flies and tend
the log-line at the same time. Now, you may try
it over again.”

The experiment was repeated, with the same result.
Other officers and seamen were called to the quarter-deck,
and the training in heaving the log continued, until
a reasonable degree of proficiency was attained.

“Land ho!” cried the lookout on the top-gallant
forecastle, at about eleven o’clock in the forenoon.

“Where away?” called the officer of the
deck.

“Dead ahead, sir.”

“What is that land, Mr. Lowington?” asked
Paul Kendall.

“Don’t you know?”

“I’m sure I don’t.”

“Then you should study your map more. Look
at the compass, and tell me how she heads.”

“South-east, sir,” replied Paul, after
looking into the binnacle.

“Now, what land lies south-east of Brockway
Harbor?” asked the principal.

“Cape Cod, I think.”

“You are right; then that must be Cape Cod.”

“Is it, really?”

“Certainly it is,” laughed Mr. Lowington.
“Have you no faith in your map?”

“I didn’t think we could be anywhere near
Cape Cod. I thought it was farther off,”
added Paul, who seemed to be amazed to think they had
actually crossed Massachusetts Bay.

“The land you see is Race Point, which is about
forty miles from the entrance to the bay, at the head
of which Brockway is located. We have been making
about ten knots an hour, and our calculations seem
to be very accurate. By one o’clock we
shall come to anchor in Provincetown Harbor.”

This prediction was fully verified, and the Young
America was moored off the town. Those who had
been seasick recovered as soon as the motion of the
ship ceased; and when everything aloft and on deck
had been made snug, the crew were piped to dinner.

In the afternoon, part of the students were permitted
to go on shore; the band played, and several boat-races
took place, very much to the delight of the people
on shore, as well as those on board. At six o’clock
the ship was opened for the reception of visitors,
who came off in large numbers to inspect the vessel.
After dark there was a brilliant display of fireworks,
and the Young America blazed with blue-lights and
Roman candles, set off by boys on the cross-trees,
and at the yard-arms. At ten the festivities
closed, and all was still in the steerage and on deck.

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The next morning, the ship got under way, and stood
out of the harbor, bound for Brockway again.
She had a light breeze, and a smooth time, and the
boys had the satisfaction of seeing every rag of canvas
spread, including studding-sails alow and aloft; but
it was not till after dark that the ship came to anchor
at her former moorings.

Wilton and Monroe were released from confinement in
the morning, and permitted to go on deck. Whatever
their shipmates might have said, they felt that they
had been severely punished, especially as they had
failed in their runaway expedition. Wilton did
not feel any more kindly towards Shuffles when he
was released than when he had been ordered to his room.
He felt that his late crony had been a traitor, and
he was unable to take any higher view of the circumstances.

“Wilton,” said Mr. Lowington, when he
met the runaway on deck, the day after the Fourth,
“I told you that you had made a mistake.
Do you believe it yet?”

“I suppose I do, sir.”

“You suppose you do! Don’t you know?”

“Yes, sir, I think I did make a mistake,”
replied Wilton, who found it very hard to acknowledge
the fact.

“I do not refer to your punishment, when I allude
to the consequences of your misdeed, for that was
very light. You have fallen very low in the estimation
of your superiors.”

“Do you mean Mr. Shuffles, sir?”

“I did not mean the officers exclusively, though
I believe they have a proper respect for the discipline
of the ship.”

“I don’t think Shuffles need to say anything.”

“He hasn’t said anything.”

“He is worse than I am.”

“Shuffles has done very well, and merits the
approbation of the principal and the instructors.”

“They don’t know him as well as I do,”
growled Wilton.

“They probably know him better. Your remarks
do not exhibit a proper spirit towards an officer.
He defeated your plan to escape, but he did no more
than his duty. He would have been blamed, perhaps
punished, if he had done any less.”

“I don’t find any fault with him for doing
his duty, but I don’t like to be snubbed by
one who is worse than I am. If you knew what I
know, sir, you would turn him out of the after cabin.”

“Then it is fortunate for him that I don’t
know what you know,” replied Mr. Lowington,
sternly. “If you wish to injure him in my
estimation, you will not succeed.”

“He is going to get up a mutiny one of these
days. He told me all about it,” continued
Wilton, desperately, when he found that the principal
was in no mood to listen to his backbiting.

“That will do, Wilton? I don’t wish
to hear anything more about that matter. Your
testimony against Shuffles, under present circumstances,
is not worth the breath you use in uttering it.”

“I thought it was my duty to tell you, if any
one was trying to get up a mutiny.”

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“You did not think so; you are telling me this
story to revenge yourself against the third lieutenant
for his fidelity. Whether there is, or is not,
any truth in what you say, I shall take no notice of
it.”

“It is all true, sir. He did speak to me
about getting up a mutiny, locking up the professors,
taking the ship, and going round Cape Horn; and he
will not deny it.”

“He will have no opportunity to deny it to me,
for I shall not mention the subject to him. Go
to your duty, and remember that you have injured yourself
more than Shuffles by this course.”

Wilton hung his head, and went forward, cheated of
his revenge, and disconcerted by the rebuke he had
received.

Mr. Lowington was quite willing to believe that Shuffles
had talked about a mutiny, while he was in the steerage,
but there was at least no present danger of an extravagant
scheme being put into operation. He understood
Shuffles perfectly; he knew that his high office and
his ambition were his only incentives to fidelity
in the discharge of his duty; but he had fairly won
his position, and he was willing to let him stand
or fall by his own merits. He was not a young
man of high moral principle, as Paul Kendall, and
Gordon, and Carnes were; but the discipline of the
ship was certainly doing wonders for him, though it
might ultimately fail of its ends.

The ship came to anchor, the band was sent on shore,
and the Fourth of July holidays were ended. On
the following morning the studies were resumed, and
everything on board went on as usual. A few days
later, the ship went on a cruise to the eastward,
spending a week in each of the principal ports on
the coast. The students soon became so accustomed
to the motion of the ship, that none of them were
seasick and the recitations were regularly heard,
whether the Young America was in port or at sea.

When the cold weather came, stoves were put up in
the cabins and in the steerage, and the routine of
the ship was not disturbed; but Mr. Lowington dreaded
the ice and snow, and the severe weather of mid-winter,
and in November, the Young America started on a cruise
to the southward, and in the latter part of December
she was in Chesapeake Bay. In March she returned
to Brockway. By this time the crew were all thorough
seamen, and had made excellent progress in their studies.
Mr. Lowington was entirely satisfied with the success
of his experiment, and was resolved to persevere in
it.

The boys were in splendid discipline, and there had
not been a case of serious illness on board during
the year. Besides the six hours of study and
recitation required of the pupils per day, they were
all trained in gymnastics by Dr. Winstock, the surgeon,
who had a system of his own, and was an enthusiast
on the subject. This exercise, with the ordinary
ship’s duty, kept them in excellent physical
condition; and while their brown faces and rosy cheeks
indicated a healthy state of the body, their forms
were finely developed, and their muscles scientifically
trained.

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Greek and Latin, German and French, with the ordinary
English branches pursued in high schools and academies,
were taught on board, and the instructors were satisfied
that the boys accomplished twice as much as was ordinarily
done in similar institutions on shore, and without
injury to the students. Everything was done by
rule, and nothing was left to the whims and caprices
of teachers and scholars. Just so much study was
done every day, and no more. There was no sitting
up nights; there were no balls and parties, theatres
and concerts, to interfere with the work; no late
suppers of escalloped oysters and lobster salads to
be eaten. Boys who had bad habits were watched,
and injurious tendencies corrected.

But the students enjoyed their life on shipboard.
As the vessel went from port to port, new scenes were
opened to them. Those who could be trusted were
allowed to go on shore in their off-time; and as all
their privileges depended upon their good conduct,
they were very careful to do their duty, both as students
and as seamen, cheerfully and faithfully.

The Young America dropped her anchor in Brockway Harbor
on the 5th of March, on her return from her southern
cruise. The first term of the second year was
to commence on the 1st of April, and it was understood
that the ship would sail for Europe on the last day
of March. The vessel needed some repairs, and
all the students were allowed a furlough of twenty
days to visit their homes.

Several of the larger boys, including Carnes, had
obtained places in the navy, and were not to return.
Two or three were to enter college in the summer,
and a few were to go into mercantile houses; but these
vacancies would be more than filled by the applicants
who had been waiting months for an opportunity to
join the ship.

After the departure of the students, the Young America
was docked, and the necessary repairs made upon her.
She was thoroughly cleansed and painted, and came
out as good as new. Before the return of the boys,
her provisions, water, and stores, were taken on board,
and all the preparations made for a foreign voyage.
On the 25th of the month she was anchored again at
her old moorings, and in the course of the next two
days all the instructors and pupils were in their places.
There were eleven new boys.

“Young gentlemen,” said Mr. Lowington,
as he mounted his usual rostrum, “I am happy
to see you again, and to welcome you on board.
Our experience during the coming season will be much
more interesting and exciting than that of the last
year. We shall proceed immediately to Europe,
and all who are worthy of the privilege will have an
opportunity to visit the principal cities of Europe—­London,
Paris, Naples, St. Petersburg. We shall go up
the Baltic and up the Mediterranean, in this or a
subsequent cruise, and I can safely promise you, not
only an interesting, but a profitable trip. In
a circular I have informed your parents and guardians
of my purposes, and you are shipped this time for
a foreign voyage, with their consent and approval.”

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This speech caused no little excitement among the
boys, who anticipated a great deal from the summer
voyage. It was no small thing to visit London,
Paris, and St. Petersburg, and not many boys obtain
such an opportunity.

“But, young gentlemen, I believe in discipline
and progress, as most of you know. I expect every
student to do his whole duty; and I wish to tell you
now, that misconduct, and failures at recitation, will
bring heavy disappointments upon you. If you
do nothing for yourselves, you need expect nothing
from me. For example, when the ship is going up
the Thames, if any one of you, or any number of you,
should be guilty of flagrant misconduct, or gross
neglect of your studies, you will see no more of the
city of London than you can see from the cross-trees,
for you shall not put a foot on shore.”

“Rather steep,” whispered one of the new
comers.

“That’s so, but he means it,” replied
an old student.

“We shall be at sea, out of sight of land, for
twenty or thirty days,” continued Mr. Lowington.
“We shall encounter storms and bad weather,
such as none of you have ever seen; for in going from
port to port, last season, we were enabled to avoid
all severe weather. We shall go to sea now with
no harbor before us till we reach the other side of
the Atlantic, and we must take whatever comes.
But the ship is as strong as a ship can be built,
and with good management she would stand any gale
that ever blew. Good management includes good
discipline, and every officer and seaman must be faithful
in the discharge of his duty, for the safety of the
ship and all on board of her will depend upon the
fidelity of each individual.

“Young gentlemen, there are eleven new scholars:
they must take the vacant berths after the ship’s
company is organized on the old plan. The offices
will be given out and the berths drawn by the merit
roll for January, February, and a portion of March—­only
about nine weeks of term time.”

Shuffles, who stood near the principal, looked very
much disconcerted when this announcement was made,
and whispered to Paul Kendall that it was not fair
to distribute the offices by last year’s record.
While the Young America was lying at anchor in Chesapeake
Bay, in December, Shuffles, then second lieutenant,
had received a letter from his mother, in which she
had informed him that his family would visit Europe
in the following spring, and that he would leave the
ship, and form one of the party. This information
had caused him to relax his efforts as a student,
and he had fallen very low in rank. This was the
reason why the proposed distribution of offices was
not fair.

When Shuffles went home on his furlough of twenty
days, he had behaved so badly that his father refused
to have him form one of the party in the trip abroad,
and compelled him to return to the ship for another
year of wholesome discipline under Mr. Lowington.
Angry and indignant, Shuffles did return and the announcement
that the offices were to be distributed by the merit
roll did not add to his equanimity.

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“I will now read the record of marks,”
said the principal, “and announce the officers
for the next term.”

The boys were silent and anxious; for places in the
after cabin were more highly valued than ever, now
that the Young America was going to Europe.

**CHAPTER VIII.**

**OUTWARD BOUND.**
Mr. Lowington read the merit roll, announcing the
officers as he proceeded. The occupants of the
after cabin, who were appointed for the succeeding
three months, during which time the ship crossed the
Atlantic, and visited various European ports, were
as follows:—­

CHARLES GORDON, *Captain.*
Joseph Haven, *First Lieutenant.*
Paul Kendall, *Second “*
Samuel Goodwin, *Third “*
Augustus Pelham, *Fourth “*
William Foster, *First Master.*
Henry Martyn, *Second “*
Thomas Ellis, *Third “*
Joseph Leavitt, *Fourth “*
Joseph O. Rogers, *First Purser.*
Edward Murray, *Second “*
George W. Terrill, *First Midshipman.*
John Humphreys, *Second “*
Mark Robinson, *Third “*
Andrew Groom, *Fourth “*
The students mentioned in the list made the required
promise to behave themselves like gentlemen, and faithfully
discharge the duties of their several offices, and
were duly installed in their new positions in the
after cabin. Most of them had been officers before,
but all of them were higher in rank than at any former
period. Richard Carnes had been captain four
terms, for no one could get ahead of him.

The new captain had been first lieutenant, during
the preceding year, three terms out of four, and was
certainly the best qualified student on board for
the command. He was a young man of high moral
aims, with much dignity of character and energy of
purpose.

The officers went to the after cabin, put on their
uniforms, and assumed their proper places. The
choice of berths in the steerage proceeded as usual,
according to the merit roll, and the petty offices
were given to the highest in rank. The new boys
took the unoccupied berths by lot. The organization
of the ship was now completed, and the students were
directed to put their berths and lockers in order.
The remainder of the day was fully occupied in preparing
for the voyage. Great quantities of ice and fresh
provisions were taken on board, and packed away in
the store rooms of the hold, and all was bustle and
confusion.

On Thursday morning the ship was put in order again.
The vessel had been duly cleared at the custom house,
and every article required for the voyage had been
received. The boys were ordered to put on their
best suits, and at nine o’clock a steamer came
off, having on board a large number of the parents
and friends of the students. The forenoon was
given up to this interesting occasion. It was
a beautiful day, with a gentle breeze from the westward,
and at twelve o’clock, all hands were mustered
on deck for religious services, to be performed by
the chaplain, in the presence of the friends of the
pupils.

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Mr. Lowington was a religious man, and the position
of the Rev. Mr. Agneau, as chaplain on board, was
by no means a sinecure. Services had always been
held twice a day on Sunday. At five minutes before
eight in the morning, and at the same time in the
evening, prayers were said on deck, or in the steerage,
in the presence of the entire ship’s company.
On the point of leaving the shores of the United States,
it seemed highly appropriate to invoke the blessing
of God on the voyage and the voyagers, and the principal
had directed that the service should be conducted
in the presence of the parents and friends.

The prayer and the remarks of the chaplain were very
solemn and impressive, and even the roughest of the
students were moved by them. At the conclusion
of the religious service, Mr. Lowington addressed the
visitors, explaining the details of his plan more fully
than he had done in his circulars, and saying what
he could to inspire the parents with confidence in
regard to the safety of their sons. It need not
be said that there were many tears shed on this occasion.

At the close of the speech a collation was served
to the visitors, in the cabins and steerage, after
which another hour was allowed for social intercourse;
and then the ship was cleared, the visitors going on
board the steamer again, which was to accompany the
Young America below the lighthouse. The boys
were sent below to change their clothes again.

“All hands, up anchor, ahoy!” piped the
boatswain; and the crew sprang to their stations with
more than usual alacrity.

This was a greater event than they had ever known
before. The anchor, which was now to be hauled
up, was not to be dropped again for about a month,
and then in foreign waters. They were going out
upon the waste of the ocean, to be driven and tossed
by the storms of the Atlantic. They were bidding
farewell to their native land, not again to look upon
its shores for many months. They were boys, and
they were deeply impressed by the fact.

The capstan was manned, and the cable hove up to a
short stay. The topsails and top-gallant sails
were set; then the anchor was hauled up to the hawse-hole,
catted and fished. The Young America moved; she
wore round, and her long voyage was commenced.
The courses and the royals were set, and she moved
majestically down the bay. The steamer kept close
by her, and salutations by shouts, cheers, and the
waving of handkerchiefs, were continually interchanged,
till the ship was several miles outside of the lower
light.

The steamer whistled several times, to indicate that
she was about to return. All hands were then
ordered into the rigging of the ship; and cheer after
cheer was given by the boys, and acknowledged by cheers
on the part of the gentlemen, and the waving of handkerchiefs
by the ladies. The steamer came about; the moment
of parting had come, and she was headed towards the
city. Some of the students wept then; for, whatever
charms there were in the voyage before them, the ties
of home and friends were still strong. As long
as the steamer could be seen, signals continued to
pass between her and the ship.

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“Captain Gordon, has the first master given
the quartermaster the course yet?” asked Mr.
Lowington, when the steamer had disappeared among the
islands of the bay.

“No, sir; but Mr. Fluxion told him to make it
east-north-east.”

“Very well; but the masters should do this duty,”
added Mr. Lowington, as he directed the instructor
in mathematics to require the masters, to whom belonged
the navigation of the ship, to indicate the course.

William Foster was called, and sent into the after
cabin with his associates, to obtain the necessary
sailing directions. The masters had been furnished
with a supply of charts, which they had studied daily,
as they were instructed in the theory of laying down
the ship’s course. Foster unrolled the
large chart of the North Atlantic Ocean upon the dinner
table, and with parallel ruler, pencil, and compasses,
proceeded to perform his duty.

“We want to go just south of Cape Sable,”
said he, placing his pencil point on that part of
the chart.

“How far south of it?” asked Harry Martyn.

“Say twenty nautical miles.”

The first master dotted the point twenty miles south
of Cape Sable, which is the southern point of Nova
Scotia, and also the ship’s position, with his
pencil. He then placed one edge of the parallel
ruler on both of these points, thus connecting them
with a straight line.

A parallel ruler consists of two smaller rulers, each
an inch in width and a foot in length, connected together
by two flat pieces of brass, riveted into each ruler,
acting as a kind of hinge. The parts, when separated,
are always parallel to each other.

Foster placed the edge of the ruler on the two points
made with the pencil, one indicating the ship’s
present position, the other the position she was to
obtain after sailing two or three days. Putting
the fingers of his left hand on the brass knob of
the ruler, by which the parts are moved, he pressed
down and held its upper half, joining the two points,
firmly in its place. With the fingers of the right
hand he moved the lower half down, which, in its turn,
he kept firmly in place, while he slipped the upper
half over the paper, thus preserving the direction
between the points. By this process the parallel
ruler could be moved all over the chart without losing
the course from one point to the other.

On every chart there are one or more diagrams of the
compass, with lines diverging from a centre, representing
all the points. The parallel ruler is worked
over the chart to one of these diagrams, where the
direction to which it has been set nearly or exactly
coincides with one of the lines representing a point
of the compass.

The first master of the Young America worked the ruler
down to a diagram, and found that it coincided with
the line indicating east by north; or one point north
of east.

“That’s the course,” said Thomas
Ellis, the third master—­“east by
north.”

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“I think not,” added Foster. “If
we steer that course, we should go forty or fifty
miles south of Cape Sable, and thus run much farther
than we need. What is the variation?”

“About twelve degrees west,” replied Martyn.

The compass does not indicate the true north in all
parts of the earth, the needle varying in the North
Atlantic Ocean from thirty degrees east to nearly
thirty degrees west. There is an imaginary line,
extending in a north-westerly direction, through a
point in the vicinity of Cape Lookout, called the
magnetic meridian, on which there is no variation.
East of this line the needle varies to the westward;
and west of the line, to the eastward. These
variations of the compass are marked on the chart,
in different latitudes and longitudes, though they
need to be occasionally corrected by observations,
for they change slightly from year to year.

“Variation of twelve degrees,"[1] repeated Foster,
verifying the statement by an examination of the chart.
That is equal to about one point, which, carried to
the westward from east by north, will give the course
east-north-east.

[Footnote 1: These calculations are merely approximate,
being intended only to illustrate the principle.]

The process was repeated, and the same result being
obtained, the first master reported the course to
Mr. Fluxion, who had made the calculation himself,
in the professors’ cabin.

“Quartermaster, make the course east-north-east,”
said the first master, when his work had been duly
approved by the instructor.

“East-north-east, sir!” replied the quartermaster,
who was conning the wheel—­that is, he was
watching the compass, and seeing that the two wheelmen
kept the ship on her course.

There were two other compasses on deck, one on the
quarter-deck, and another forward of the mainmast
which the officers on duty were required frequently
to consult, in order that any negligence in one place
might be discovered in another. The after cabin
and the professors’ cabin were also provided
with “tell-tales,” which are inverted compasses,
suspended under the skylights, by which the officers
and instructors below could observe the ship’s
course.

The log indicated that the ship was making six knots
an hour, the rate being ascertained every two hours,
and entered on the log-slate, to be used in making
up the “dead reckoning.” The Young
America had taken her “departure,” that
is, left the last land to be seen, at half past three
o’clock. At four, when the log was heaved,
she had made three miles; at six, fifteen miles; at
eight, the wind diminishing and the log indicating
but four knots, only eight miles were to be added for
the two hours’ run, making twenty-three miles
in all. The first sea day would end at twelve
o’clock on the morrow, when the log-slate would
indicate the total of nautical miles the ship had
run after taking her departure. This is called
her dead reckoning, which may be measured off on the
chart, and should carry the vessel to the point indicated
by the observations for latitude and longitude.

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The wind was very light, and studding-sails were set
alow and aloft. The ship only made her six knots
as she pitched gently in the long swell of the ocean.
The boys were still nominally under the order of “all
hands on deck,” but there was nothing for them
to do, with the exception of the wheelmen, and they
were gazing at the receding land behind them.
They were taking their last view of the shores of their
native land. Doubtless some of them were inclined
to be sentimental, but most of them were thinking
of the pleasant sights they were to see, and the exciting
scenes in which they were to engage on the other side
of the rolling ocean, and were as jolly as though
earth had no sorrows for them.

The principal and the professors were pacing the quarter-deck,
and doubtless some of them were wondering whether
boys like the crew of the Young America could be induced
to study and recite their lessons amid the excitement
of crossing the Atlantic, and the din of the great
commercial cities of the old world. The teachers
were energetic men, and they were hopeful, at least,
especially as study and discipline were the principal
elements of the voyage, and each pupil’s privileges
were to depend upon his diligence and his good behavior.
It would be almost impossible for a boy who wanted
to go to Paris while the ship was lying at Havre,
so far to neglect his duties as to forfeit the privilege
of going. As these gentlemen have not been formally
introduced, the “faculty” of the ship
is here presented:—­

Robert Lowington, *Principal*.
Rev. Thomas Agneau, *Chaplain*.
Dr. Edward B. Winstock, *Surgeon*.

INSTRUCTORS.

John Paradyme, A.M., *Greek and Latin*.
Richard Modelle, *Reading and Grammar*.
Charles C. Mapps, A.M., *Geography and History*.
James E. Fluxion, *Mathematics*.
Abraham Carboy, M.D., *Chemistry and Nat. Phil.*
Adolph Badois, *French and German*.

These gentlemen were all highly accomplished teachers
in their several departments, as the progress of the
students during the preceding year fully proved.
They were interested in their work, and in sympathy
with the boys, as well as with the principal.

It was a very quiet time on board, and the crew were
collected in little groups, generally talking of the
sights they were to see. In the waist were Shuffles,
Monroe, and Wilton, all feuds among them having been
healed. They appeared to be the best of friends,
and it looked ominous for the discipline of the ship
to see them reunited. Shuffles was powerful for
good or evil, as he chose, and Mr. Lowington regretted
that he had fallen from his high position, fearing
that the self-respect which had sustained him as an
officer would desert him as a seaman, and permit him
to fall into excesses.

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Shuffles was more dissatisfied and discontented than
he had ever been before. He had desired to make
the tour of Europe with his father, and he was sorely
disappointed when denied this privilege; for with the
family he would be free from restraint, and free from
hard study. When he lost his rank as an officer,
he became desperate and reckless. To live in
the steerage and do seaman’s duty for three months,
after he had enjoyed the luxuries of authority, and
of a state-room in the after cabin, were intolerable.
After the cabin offices had been distributed, he told
Monroe that he intended to run away that night; but
he had found no opportunity to do so; and it was unfortunate
for his shipmates that he did not.

“This isn’t bad—­is it, Shuffles?”
said Wilton, as the ship slowly ploughed her way through
the billows.

“I think it is. I had made up my mouth
to cross the ocean in a steamer, and live high in
London and Paris,” replied Shuffles. “I
don’t relish this thing, now.”

“Why not?” asked Wilton.

“I don’t feel at home here.”

“I do.”

“Because you never were anywhere else.
I ought to be captain of this ship.”

“Well, you can be, if you have a mind to work
for it,” added Monroe.

“Work for it! That’s played out.
I must stay in the steerage three months, at any rate;
and that while the burden of the fun is going on.
If we were going to lie in harbor, or cruise along
the coast, I would go in for my old place.”

“But Carnes is out of the way now, and your
chance is better this year than it was last,”
suggested Monroe.

“I know that, but I can’t think of straining
every nerve for three months, two of them while we
are going from port to port in Europe. When we
go ashore at Queenstown, I shall have to wear a short
jacket, instead of the frock coat of an officer; and
I think the jacket would look better on some younger
fellow.”

“What are you going to do, Shuffles?”
asked Wilton.

“I’d rather be a king among hogs, than
a hog among kings.”

“What do you mean by that?”

“No matter; there’s time enough to talk
over these things.”

“Do you mean a mutiny?” laughed Wilton.

“Haven’t you forgotten that?”

“No.”

“I wonder what Lowington would say, if he knew
I had proposed such a thing,” added Shuffles,
thoughtfully.

“He did know it, at the time you captured the
runaways, for I told him.”

“Did you?” demanded Shuffles, his brow
contracting with anger.

“I told you I would tell him, and I did,”
answered Wilton. “You were a traitor to
our fellows, and got us into a scrape.”

“I was an officer then.”

“No matter for that. Do you suppose, if
I were an officer, I would throw myself in your way
when you were up to anything?”

“I don’t know whether you would or not;
but I wouldn’t blow on you, if you had told
me anything in confidence. What did Lowington
say?”

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“Nothing; he wouldn’t take any notice
of what I said.”

“That was sensible on his part. One thing
is certain, Wilton: you can’t be trusted.”

“You mustn’t make me mad, then.”

“I will keep things to myself hereafter,”
growled Shuffles.

“Don’t be savage. You served me a
mean trick, and I paid you off for it; so we are square.”

“We will keep square then, and not open any
new accounts.”

“But you will want me when anything is up,”
laughed Wilton. “What would you do without
me in getting up a mutiny?”

“Who said anything about a mutiny?”

“I know you are thinking over something, and
you don’t mean to submit to the discipline of
the ship, if you can help it.”

“Well, I can’t help it.”

“There goes the boatswain’s whistle, piping
to muster,” said Monroe.

“Confound the boatswain’s whistle!”
growled Shuffles. “I don’t like the
idea of running every time he pipes.”

Very much to the surprise of his companions, Shuffles,
his irritation increased by the conduct of Wilton,
took no notice of the call, and went forward, instead
of aft. His companions, more wise and prudent,
walked up to the hatch, which Mr. Lowington had just
mounted.

“Groom, tell Shuffles to come aft,” said
the principal to one of the midshipmen.

The officer obeyed the order; Shuffles flatly refused
to go aft. Mr. Lowington descended from his rostrum
and went forward to enforce obedience. This event
created a profound sensation among the students.

“Shuffles,” said Mr Lowington, sternly.

“Sir,” replied the malcontent, in a surly
tone.

“The boatswain piped the crew to muster.”

“I heard him.”

“You did not obey the call. I sent for
you, and you refused to come.”

“I don’t think I ought to obey the boatswain’s
call.”

“May I ask why not?”

“I’ve been an officer three terms, and
I should be now if we had had fair play,” growled
Shuffles.

“I am not disposed to argue this point in your
present frame of mind. I order you to go aft.”

“And I won’t go!” replied Shuffles,
impudently.

“Mr. Peaks,” said the principal, calling
the senior boatswain.

“Here, sir,” replied Peaks, touching his
hat to the principal.

“Mr. Leech,” added Mr. Lowington.

“Here, sir.”

“Walk this young gentleman aft.”

“Let me alone!” cried Shuffles, as Peaks
placed his hand upon him.

“Gently, my sweet lamb,” said the boatswain,
with affected tenderness.

“Take your hands off me!” roared the mutinous
pupil, as he struggled to release himself from the
grasp of the stalwart seaman.

Peaks took him by the collar with one hand, and held
his wrist with the other, on one side, while Leech
did the same on the other side.

“Walk him aft,” repeated the principal.

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“Mr. Fluxion, may I trouble you to bring up
the irons?” continued Mr. Lowington, when the
boatswain and carpenter had “walked” the
rebel aft, in spite of his struggling and kicking.

“Irons!” gasped Shuffles, as he heard
the request of the principal.

He trembled with rage as he uttered the word.
The irons seemed to pierce his soul. Probably
he did not think that the son of a wealthy gentleman
would be compelled to submit to such an indignity as
being put in irons.

Mr. Fluxion came on deck with a pair of handcuffs.
It was the first time they had been seen, and no student
even knew there were any on board. The discipline
of the ship had been as gentle as it was firm, and
this was the first time such instruments were necessary.

“Mr. Peaks, put the irons on him!” said
Mr. Lowington, his usual dignity unruffled by angry
emotions.

“Don’t put them on me!” cried Shuffles,
making an effort to disengage himself from the grasp
of his captors.

“Put them on at once!” added the principal.

“You shall not put them on me! I will die
first!” roared the rebel.

It was easier to talk than to do, in the hands of
two sturdy sailors, one of whom had used the cat in
the navy, when its use was tolerated. Shuffles
did not die, and he was ironed, in spite of his struggles
and his protest.

**CHAPTER IX.**

THE WATCH-BILL.

Shuffles struggled with the irons and with the stout
men who held him until he had exhausted himself; and
then, because his frame, rather than his spirit, was
worn down, he was quiet. It was the first case
of severe discipline that had occurred on board, and
it created a tremendous sensation among the students.

Mr. Lowington stood with folded arms, watching the
vain struggles of the culprit, until he was reduced
to a state of comparative calmness. He looked
sad, rather than angry, and his dignity was not impaired
by the assault upon his authority.

“Shuffles, I am sorry to see one who has been
an officer of the ship reduced to your condition;
but discipline must and shall be maintained,”
said the principal. “We are on the high
seas now, and disobedience is dangerous. You
led me to believe that you had reformed your life and
conduct.”

“It isn’t my fault,” replied Shuffles,
angrily.

“You had better not reply to me in that tone,”
added Mr. Lowington, mildly.

“Yes, I will!”

“Mr. Topliffe,” continued the principal.

“Here, sir,” replied the head steward.

“You will have the brig cleared out for use.”

“Yes, sir;” and the head steward went
below to obey the order.

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There was not a boy on board who knew what the “brig”
was, though the establishment had existed in the steerage
from the time when the boys first went on board the
ship. It had never before been required for use,
and Mr. Lowington had carefully veiled every disagreeable
feature of discipline, until it was necessary to exhibit
it. The brig was the prison of the ship—­the
lock-up. It was located under and abaft the main
ladder, in the steerage, being an apartment five feet
in length by three feet in width. The partitions
which enclosed it were composed of upright planks,
eight inches in width, with spaces between them for
the admission of light and air.

The brig had been used as a store room for bedding
by the stewards, and the students never suspected,
till Shuffles’ case came up, that it was not
built for a closet. Mr. Topliffe and his assistants
removed the blankets and comforters from this lock-up,
and prepared it for the reception of the refractory
pupil. When the room was ready he went on deck,
and reported the fact to the principal.

“Shuffles, our discipline has always been of
the mildest character,” said Mr. Lowington,
breaking the impressive silence which reigned on deck.
“I regret to be compelled to resort to force
in any form; even now I would avoid it.”

“You needn’t, on my account,” replied
Shuffles, shaking his head. “You have done
your worst already.”

“Mr. Peaks, take him below, lock him up in the
brig, and bring the key to me.”

The manacled rebel made another effort to resist,
but the stout sailors easily handled him, and bore
him down into the steerage. He was thrust into
the brig, ironed as he was, and the door locked upon
him. Shuffles glanced at the interior of the
prison, and broke out into a contemptuous laugh.
He then commenced kicking the pales of the partition?
but he might as well have attempted to break through
the deck beneath.

“Shuffles,” said Peaks, in a low tone,
when he had locked the door, “be a man.
You act like a spoiled child now.”

“I have been insulted, and abused,” replied
Shuffles, fiercely.

“No, you haven’t. Aboard almost any
ship, you would have got a knock on the head with
a handspike before this time. Don’t make
a fool of yourself. You are only making yourself
ridiculous now—­’pon my word as an
old sailor, you are.”

“I’ll have satisfaction.”

“No, you won’t, unless you break your
own head. I want to advise you, as a friend,
not to make a fool of yourself. I’m sorry
for you, my lad.”

“Don’t talk to me.”

“I can forgive you for disobeying orders, but
I can’t forgive you for being a fool. Now,
keep quiet, and be a man.”

The well-meant effort of the boatswain to pacify the
culprit was a failure, and Peaks, going on deck, delivered
the key of the brig to Mr. Lowington. Shuffles
kicked against the partition till he was tired of
the exercise.

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“Young gentlemen, to-day we enter upon a new
experience on shipboard,” said the principal,
without making any further allusion to Shuffles.
“Our short trips last season were so timed that
we kept no regular night watches, and, with two or
three exceptions, the ship was at anchor when you
slept. Of course that is not practicable on a
long voyage, and you must all do duty by night as
well as by day.

“This has been a difficult matter to arrange,
for you are all too young to be deprived of your regular
sleep, though in heavy weather I am afraid you will
lose your rest to some extent. At eight o’clock
this evening the starboard watch will be on duty.
We have four times as many hands on board the Young
America as are usually employed in merchant ships,
so that a quarter watch will be able to handle the
ship on all ordinary occasions. We shall, therefore,
keep a quarter watch on ship’s duty at all times
through the twenty-four hours.

“During the night, including the time from eight
in the evening until eight in the morning, each quarter
watch will be on duty two hours, and then off six
hours; and each hand will obtain six consecutive hours’
sleep every night. At eight this evening, the
first part of the starboard watch will have the ship
in charge, and all others may turn in and sleep.
At ten, the second part of the starboard watch will
be called, without disturbing any others. At
twelve, the first part of the port watch will be summoned;
at two, the second part; and so on till eight in the
morning.

“The first part of the starboard watch, which
turned in at ten, will sleep till four, giving them
six hours of rest all together, and they may turn
in again at six o’clock, when relieved by the
second part, and sleep till half past seven, which
is breakfast time for those off duty.

“During the daytime, from eight in the morning
till eight in the evening, the same routine will be
observed To-morrow, at eight in the morning, the first
part of the port watch will take charge of the ship
till ten; the second part will be off duty, and the
time will be their own, to use as they think proper.
At ten, the second part will be in charge, and the
first will have their own time till twelve. All
the starboard watch, during these four hours, will
study and recite. In the afternoon the same course
will be pursued with the other watch. Do you
understand it?”

“Yes, sir,” replied the boys.

“By this arrangement you will average three
hours of duty every night. To-night the port
watch will be on deck two hours, and the starboard
watch, whose turn will come twice, four hours; but
to-morrow night the operation will be reversed, and
the port will have the deck four hours, and the starboard
but two. Two copies of the watch bill will be
posted in the steerage, and one in the after cabin.
Young gentlemen, I recommend you to study it, until
you are perfectly familiar with its requirements.”

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“How is it with the officers, Mr. Lowington?”
asked Paul Kendall, who was generally the spokesman
for his companions.

“The officers are divided into watches in precisely
the same manner as the crew. To the starboard
watch belong the first and third lieutenant, the second
and fourth master, and the first and third midshipman,
which makes one officer of each grade for each quarter
watch,” replied Mr. Lowington. “Their
off-time and study-time correspond with those of the
crew.”

It is quite possible that the officers and crew of
the Young America understood the complicated arrangement
of the principal. If they did not, they could
refer to the posted document; and, as we cannot deprive
our readers of this privilege, we insert in full, the

 WATCH BILL. FIRST
DAY.
 *First Watch, from
8 till 12 P.M.*
 From 8 till 10. 1st
Lieut., 2d Master, 1st Mid. First Part of the
 Starboard Watch.

 From 10 till 12. 3d
Lieut., 4th Master, 3d Mid. Second Part of the
 Starboard Watch.
 *Mid Watch, from 12
till 4 A.M.*
 From 12 till 2. 2d Lieut.,
1st Master, 2d Mid. First Part of the
 Port Watch.

 From 2 till 4. 4th Lieut.,
3d Master, 4th Mid. Second Part of the
 Port Watch.
 *Morning Watch, from
4 till 8 A.M.*
 From 4 till 6. 1st Lieut.,
2d Master, 1st Mid. First Part of the
 Starboard Watch.

 From 6 till 8. 3d Lieut.,
4th Master, 3d Mid. Second Part of the
 Starboard Watch.
 *Forenoon Watch, from
8 till 12 A.M.*
 From 8 till 10. 2d Lieut.,
1st Master, 2d Mid. First Part of the
 Port Watch. Second
Part of Port Watch off Duty. All the Starboard
 Watch study and recite
till 12.

 From 10 till 12. 4th
Lieut., 3d Master, 4th Mid. Second Part of
 Port Watch. First
Part of Port Watch off Duty.
 *Afternoon Watch,
from 12 till 4 P.M.*
 From 12 till 2. 1st
Lieut., 2d Master, 1st Mid. First Part of
 Starboard Watch.
Second Part of the Starboard Watch off Duty. All
 the Port Watch study
and recite till 4.

 From 2 till 4. 3d Lieut.,
4th Master, 3d Mid. Second Part of the
 Starboard Watch.
First Part of the Starboard Watch off Duty.
 *First Dog Watch,
from 4 till 6 P.M.*
 From 4 till 5. 2d Lieut.,
1st Master, 2d Mid. First Part of the
 Port Watch. Second
Part of the Port Watch off Duty. All the
 Starboard Watch study
and recite till 6.

 From 5 till 6. 4th Lieut.,
3d Master, 4th Mid. Second Part of the
 Port Watch. First
Part of the Port Watch off Duty.
 *Second Dog Watch,
from 6 till 8 P.M.*
 From 6 till 7. 1st Lieut.,
2d Master, 1st Mid. First Part of the
 Starboard Watch.
Second Part of the Starboard Watch off Duty. All
 the Port Watch study
and recite till 8.

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 From 7 till 8. 3d Lieut.,
4th Master, 3d Mid. Second Part of the
 Starboard Watch.
First Part of the Starboard Watch off Duty.
 *Breakfast.*
 Port Watch, 7-1/2 o’clock.
Starboard Watch, 8 o’clock.
 *Dinner.*
 Starboard Watch, 11-1/2
o’clock. Port Watch, 12 o’clock.
 *Supper.*
 Starboard Watch, 5-1/2
o’clock. Port Watch, 6 o’clock.

The watch bill for the second day was the same, with
the exception of the names of the watches and quarter
watches. The entire programme was reversed by
the operation of the dog watches, which substituted
“port” for “starboard,” and
“starboard” for “port,” in
the next day’s routine.

When the boys were permitted to go below, they rushed
to the watch bills, and studied them faithfully, till
they fully understood the programme. Each student
ascertained his duty for the night, and his off-time
and study-hours for the next day, which were included
in the first day’s bill.

“I go on at twelve o’clock,” said
Paul Kendall, in the after cabin, when he had examined
the bill.

“And I go on deck at eight o’clock,”
added Joseph Haven, the first lieutenant. “I
shall have a chance to sleep from ten till four in
the morning, and an hour and a half, from six till
half past seven.”

“I shall have my watch below from two till breakfast
time. I don’t think we need wear ourselves
out under this arrangement.”

“No; I thought we should be obliged to take
four hours of duty at a time on deck.”

“How will it be when we have rough weather?”
asked Paul.

“I don’t know; I suppose we must take
our chances then.”

“What do you think of Shuffles’ case?”
added Paul.

“He will get the worst of it.”

“I’m sorry for him. He behaved first
rate last year, though they say he used to be a hard
fellow.”

“What’s the use of a fellow doing as he
has done?” said Haven, with palpable disgust.
“He can’t make anything by it.”

“Of course he can’t.”

“I would rather have him in the cabin than in
the steerage, for he will not obey orders; and when
he is ugly, he is a perfect tiger. I wonder what
Mr. Lowington is going to do with him. There is
no such thing as expelling a fellow in this institution
now. If he means to be cross-grained, he can
keep us in hot water all the time.”

The officers were too much excited by the fact that
the ship was outward bound to remain long in the cabin,
and they returned to the deck to watch the progress
of the vessel. At eight o’clock the Young
America was out of sight of land, though it would
have been too dark to see it ten miles distant.
The quartermaster, at the helm, struck eight bells,
which were repeated on the forecastle.

“All the first part of the starboard watch,
ahoy!” shouted the boatswain, for it was now
time to commence the programme of regular sea duty.

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The first lieutenant took his place, as officer of
the deck, near the helm; the second master on the
forecastle and the third midshipman in the waist.
The first part of the starboard watch were stationed
in various parts of the deck. Of the four quartermasters,
one was attached to each quarter watch. The wheel
was given to two hands for the first hour, and two
were placed on the top-gallant forecastle, to act as
the lookout men, to be relieved after one hour’s
service. The rest of the boys were required to
keep awake, but no special duty was assigned to them.
There were hands enough on deck to “tack ship,”
or to take in the sails, one or two at a time.

Though the ship was nominally in the hands and under
the direction of her juvenile officers, who performed
all the duties required in working her, yet they were
closely watched by the principal, who, if there was
anything wrong, informed the captain of the fact.
The commander kept no watch, but he was responsible
for every manoeuvre, and for the regular routine of
duty. Mr. Lowington seldom spoke to any other
officer in regard to ship’s duty or the navigation.

When the watch was set, at eight bells, most of the
boys who were off duty went into the steerage.
Some of them turned in; but the novelty of the occasion
was too great to permit them to sleep. They collected
in groups, to talk over the prospects of the voyage,
and the duties required of them, as indicated by the
watch bill.

Shuffles sat on a stool in the brig, still nursing
his wrath. When his supper was carried to him
by the steward, his irons had been taken off.
He refused to eat, and the food was removed. As
he was now quiet, the irons were not replaced.
The prisoner was far from penitent for his offence.

Mr. Agneau, the chaplain, was very much concerned
about the prisoner. He was shocked by his disobedience,
and pained to find that one who had done so well could
do so ill. The case had been fully considered
in the professors’ cabin; and Mr. Lowington
declared that Shuffles should stay in the brig till
he had repented of his folly, and promised obedience
for the future. The chaplain was a tender-hearted
man, and he thought that some gentle words might touch
the feelings of the prisoner, and bring him to a sense
of duty. With the principal’s permission,
therefore, he paid a visit to Shuffles in the evening.

“I am very sorry to find you here, Shuffles,”
said Mr. Agneau, when he had locked the door behind
him.

“Has Lowington sent you to torment me?”
demanded the prisoner.

“Mr. Lowington, you mean,” added the chaplain,
gently.

“No, I mean Lowington. When a man has abused
and insulted me, I can’t stop to put a handle
to his name.”

“I regret to find you in such an unhappy frame
of mind, my young friend. I came here of my own
accord, to do what I might to help you.”

“Did you, indeed!” sneered Shuffles.

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“That was my only object.”

“Was it? Well, if you want to help me,
you will induce Lowington to let me out of this crib,
apologize for what he has done, and give me my place
in the after cabin.”

“That is plainly impossible,” replied
the astonished chaplain.

“Then you can’t do anything for me; and
I think I can take care of myself.”

“I entreat you, my young friend, to consider
the error of your ways.”

“There is no error in my ways, Mr. Agneau.”

“You are unreasonable.”

“No, I’m not. I only want what is
fair and right.”

“Was it right for you, Shuffles, to refuse obedience
to the principal, when he told you to go aft?”

“I have always obeyed all proper orders; and
under the circumstances, I think it was right for
me to refuse.”

“You fill me with amazement!” exclaimed
the chaplain.

“You know it was not fair to give out the offices
by last year’s marks,” protested Shuffles.

“On the contrary, I think it was entirely fair.”

“I haven’t anything more to say if it
was,” replied Shuffles, in surly tones.

The chaplain, finding the prisoner was not in a proper
frame of mind for edifying conversation, left him,
and returned to the professors’ cabin.
The boys had been forbidden to go near the brig, or
to speak to the prisoner; and thus far no one had
exhibited any disposition to disregard the order.
Many of them, as they passed near the brig, glanced
curiously at him. After the departure of the
chaplain, Wilton sat down on a stool near the lock-up.

“How are you. Shuffles?” said he,
in a low tone.

“Come here, Wilton—­will you?”
replied the prisoner.

“I can’t; we are not allowed to speak
to you.”

“What do you care for that? No one can
see you.”

“What do you want?”

“I want to talk with you.”

“I shall be punished if I’m caught.”

“You won’t be caught. How are our
fellows now?”

“First rate,” replied Wilton, walking
up and down the berth deck, rising and looking as
though nothing was going on.

“You know what we were talking about just before
the row,” added Shuffles, drawing his stool
up to the palings.

“You said you wouldn’t trust me,”
answered Wilton, still pacing the deck in front of
the brig.

“You told Lowington about something he had no
business to know; but I forgive you, Wilton.”

“You are very willing to forgive me, now you
are in a tight place.”

“It was mean of you to do it, Wilton; you can’t
deny that. Lowington was on the best of terms
with me when I was in the after cabin, and I might
have told him a hundred things about you.”

“Didn’t you tell him anything?”

“Not a word.”

“Well, you are a good fellow, and I always thought
you were. I couldn’t see why you turned
traitor to us when we intended to spend the Fourth
of July on shore.”

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“I was obliged to do what I did. If I hadn’t,
I should have been turned out of my office.”

“Perhaps you were right, Shuffles, and we won’t
say anything more about the past,” replied Wilton,
who was too willing to be on good terms with the powerful
malcontent, even while he was a prisoner and in disgrace.

“Wilton, I am going to be captain of this ship
within ten days,” said Shuffles, in a whisper.
“Now you may go and tell Lowington of that.”

“Of course I shall not tell him,” added
Wilton, indignantly.

“I told you merely to show you that I had full
confidence in you—­that’s all.
You can betray me if you wish to do so.”

“I don’t wish to do anything of the kind.
Of course we shall always go together, as we did before
you were an officer.”

“I shall be an officer again soon.”

“What’s the use of talking about such
a thing?”

“I shall.”

“Do you mean to get up the mutiny?”

“I do. I feel more like it now than I ever
did before,” replied Shuffles; and his low tones
came from between his closed teeth.

“It’s no use to think of such a thing.
It’s too wild.”

“No matter if it is; it shall be carried out.”

“The fellows won’t go in for it; they
won’t dare to do it.”

“Yes, they will. I know them better than
you do, Wilton. It isn’t quite time yet;
but in three or four days they will be ready for anything.”

“You can’t bring them up to what you mean.”

“Yes, I can.”

“What do you expect to do, locked up in that
place?” demanded Wilton, incredulously.

“When I get ready to go out of this place, I
shall go. I needn’t stay here any longer
than I please.”

“Do you really mean to get up a mutiny?”

“Hush! Don’t call it by that name.”

“What shall I call it?”

“Call it making a chain.”

“I don’t understand you,” answered
Wilton, puzzled by the expression.

“I know what I’m about, and I have got
more friends in the ship than
Lowington has. And I know exactly how to manage
the whole thing,” added
Shuffles, confidently.

“But the fellows are all perfectly satisfied
with their condition. They wish to go to Europe,
and are pleased with the prospect before them.”

“Perhaps they are; and they shall all go to
Europe, and travel about without being tied to Lowington’s
coat-tails. I shall come out of this place to-morrow,
and we will work the thing up.”

“I’m in for a time with any good fellow;
but I don’t think we can make this thing go,”
said Wilton. “Hush! Don’t say
another word. There comes an officer.”

One bell, indicating half past eight in the evening,
struck on deck. It was the duty of the master
and midshipman on deck, alternately, to pass through
the steerage every half hour during the watch, to see
that there was no disorder, and that the lights were
all secure, so as to avoid any danger from fire.
Henry Martyn, the second master, performed this office
on the present occasion. He descended the main
ladder, and Wilton, who expected the visit when he
heard the stroke of the bell, retreated to his mess
room, and threw himself into his berth. Harry
walked around the steerage, and glanced into the gangways,
from which the rooms opened.

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“Harry,” said Shuffles, in a low tone,
as the master was about to return to the deck.

“Did you speak to me?” asked Harry, stepping
up to the bars of the cage.

“I did. Will you oblige me by telling the
chaplain that I would like to see him?” added
the prisoner.

“I will;” and Harry knocked at the door
of the professors’ cabin.

**CHAPTER X.**

MAKING A CHAIN.

The chaplain was too glad of an opportunity to converse
with the prisoner to refuse his request, and he hastened
to the brig, hoping to find Shuffles in a better state
of mind than when he had visited him before.
Mr. Agneau entered the lock-up, and was securing the
door behind him, when the prisoner spoke.

“You needn’t lock it, sir; I will not
attempt to escape,” said he. “I sent
for you to apologize for my rudeness.”

“Indeed! Then I am very glad to see you,”
replied the delighted chaplain. “I have
been sorely grieved at your misconduct, and I would
fain have brought you to see the error of your ways.”

“I see it now, sir,” replied Shuffles,
with apparent penitence. “I’m afraid
I am a great deal worse than you think I am, sir.”

“It is of no consequence what I think, Shuffles,
if you are conscious of the wrong you have done,”
added the worthy chaplain. “You behaved
exceedingly well last year, and it almost broke my
heart to see you relapsing into your former evil habits.”

“I am grateful to you for the interest you have
taken in me, and I assure you I have often been encouraged
to do well by your kind words,” continued the
penitent, with due humility. “I have done
wrong, and I don’t deserve to be forgiven.”

“‘He that humbleth himself shall be exalted,’”
said Mr. Agneau, gratified at the great change which
had apparently been wrought in the prisoner.
“If you are really sorry for your offence, Mr.
Lowington, I doubt not, will pardon you, and restore
you to favor again.”

“I don’t deserve it, sir. Since you
left me, I have been thinking of my past life.
I dare not tell you how bad I have been.”

“You need not tell me. It is not necessary
that you should confess your errors to me. There
is One who knows them, and if you are sincerely repentant
He will pity and forgive you.”

“I think I should feel better if I told some
one of my misdeeds.”

“Perhaps you would; that is for you to judge.
I will speak to Mr. Lowington about you to-night.
What shall I say to him?”

“I hardly know. I deserve to be punished.
I have done wrong, and am willing to suffer for it.”

The tender-hearted chaplain thought that Shuffles
was in a beautiful state of mind, and he desired to
have him released at once, that he might converse
with him on great themes under more favorable circumstances;
but Shuffles still detained him.

“I’m afraid I have ruined myself on board
this ship,” continued Shuffles, persisting in
his self-humiliation.

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“If you manfully acknowledge your fault, you
will be freely and generously forgiven.”

“Mr. Lowington hates me now, after what I have
done.”

“O, far from it!” exclaimed the chaplain.
“It will be a greater satisfaction to him than
to you to forgive you. You are no longer of the
opinion that you were unfairly used in the distribution
of the offices, I suppose.”

“Mr. Agneau, I was beside myself when I resisted
the principal. I should not have done it if I
had been in my right mind.”

“You were very angry.”

“I was—­I was not myself.”

“Anger often makes men crazy.”

“You don’t understand me, Mr. Agneau.”

“Indeed, I do. You mean that you deluded
yourself into the belief that you had been wronged,
and that you ought not to obey the orders of your
officers, and of the principal. The force that
was used made you so angry that you did not know what
you were about,” added the sympathizing chaplain.

“In one word, Mr. Agneau, I had been drinking,”
said Shuffles, with something like desperation in
his manner, as he bent his head, and covered his face
with his hands.

“Drinking!” gasped the chaplain, filled
with horror at the confession.

“I told you I was worse than you thought I was,”
moaned Shuffles.

“Is it possible!”

“It is true, sir; I say it with shame.”

“Are you in the habit of taking intoxicating
drinks?” asked the chaplain, confounded beyond
measure at this complication of the difficulty.

“I am not in the habit of it, because I can’t
get liquor all the time. My father has wine on
his table, and I always was allowed to drink one glass.”

“Can it be!” ejaculated the chaplain.
“A youth of seventeen——­”

“I’m eighteen now, sir.”

“A youth of eighteen in the habit of taking
wine!” groaned Mr. Agneau.

“I drank a great deal more than my father knew
of while I was at home.”

“I am amazed!”

“I knew you would be, sir; but I have told you
the truth now.”

“But where did you get your liquor to-day?”

“It was wine, sir.”

“Where did you get it?”

“I brought two bottles on board with me when
I reported for duty yesterday.”

“This is terrible, Shuffles! Do you know
what an awful habit you are contracting, my dear young
friend?”

“I never thought much about it till to-night.
It has got me into such a scrape this time, that I
don’t believe I shall ever drink any more.”

“As you respect yourself, as you hope for peace
in this world, and peace in the next, never put the
cup to your lips again. ’Wine is a mocker;
strong drink is raging; and whosoever is deceived thereby
is not wise.’ Did you drink the two bottles?”

“No, sir; only part of one bottle,” replied
Shuffles, with commendable promptness.

“Where is the rest of it?”

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“Under my berth-sack.”

“Are you willing I should take possession of
it, and hand it to Mr. Lowington?”

“I will agree to anything which you think is
right.”

“Then I will take the wine and throw it overboard.”

“Just as you think best, sir. You will
find the two bottles in my berth, No. 43, Gangway
D,—­the forward one on the starboard side.”

“I hope you will never touch the wine-cup again.”

“I will not—­till next time,”
added Shuffles, as the chaplain moved towards the
door of the brig.

“’Look not thou upon the wine when it
is red, when it giveth his color in the cup, at the
last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an
adder,’” continued the chaplain, as he
passed out of the lock-up.

Mr. Agneau went to the prisoner’s berth, and
found the two bottles of wine. They were a sufficient
explanation of the remarkable conduct of Shuffles.
The youth had “drank wine, and was drunken,”
otherwise he would not have been guilty of such flagrant
disobedience. Though in his own estimation the
excuse was worse than the original fault, yet it was
an explanation; and if the root of the evil could be
removed, the evil itself would cease to exist.
The wine could be thrown overboard, and as no more
could be obtained during the voyage, the good conduct
of the young tippler would be insured, at least till
the ship reached Queenstown, which was the port to
which she was bound.

With the two bottles in his hands, the chaplain returned
to the professors’ cabin. Mr. Lowington
was on deck. He did not deem it prudent to leave
the ship in the hands of the students, at first, without
any supervision, and it was arranged that the principal,
Mr. Fluxion, and Mr. Peake, the boatswain, should
take turns in observing the course and management
of the vessel. Mr. Agneau carried the prize he
had captured on deck, and informed Mr. Lowington what
had just transpired in the brig.

“I knew the boy drank wine when he was at home,”
replied the principal; “and if he is ruined,
his father must blame himself.”

“But it is really shocking!” exclaimed
the chaplain as he tossed one of the bottles of wine
over the rail. “How can a parent permit
his son to drink wine, when he knows that more men
are killed by intemperance than by war and pestilence?
I am amazed!”

“So am I, Mr. Agneau.”

“The boy is hardly to blame for his conduct,
since he contracted this vicious habit under the eye
of his father.”

“The discipline of the ship must be preserved.”

“Certainly, Mr. Lowington.”

“And the boy is just as much to blame for his
act of disobedience as though it had been done in
his sober senses.”

“But you can afford to pardon him, under the
circumstances.”

“I will do that when he is willing to make a
proper acknowledgment of his offence in the presence
of the ship’s company, before whom the act was
committed.”

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“He is quite ready to do so now.”

“If he will say as much as that to me, he shall
be released at once.”

“He will, sir.”

“It is very strange to me that I noticed nothing
peculiar in the boy’s speech or manner at the
time,” added the principal. “He certainly
did not seem to be intoxicated.”

“Probably he had taken just enough to inflame
his evil passions, without affecting his manner,”
suggested the chaplain.

“I did not even discover the odor of wine upon
him.”

“Perhaps you did not go near enough to him.
If you please, Mr. Lowington, we will go down and
see him; and you can judge for yourself whether or
not it is prudent to release him.”

“I will.”

“Thank you, sir. I feel a deep interest
in the young man, and I hope he may yet be saved.”

When Mr. Agneau left the brig, after his second visit,
Wilton, who was very anxious to know what Shuffles
meant by “making a chain,” came out of
his mess room. He had been watching the chaplain,
and wondering what the prisoner could have to say
to him.

“What’s up, Shuffles?” asked Wilton,
when Mr. Agneau had left the steerage.

“I’ve been smoothing him down,”
laughed Shuffles, with an audible chuckle. “I
have concluded not to stay in here any longer.”

“What do you mean?”

“I’m coming out pretty soon, though it
has cost me a bottle and a half of old sherry to get
out,” laughed Shuffles.

“I don’t know what you mean.”

“I told the parson that I was drunk when I disobeyed
orders, and that I was very sorry for it, and wouldn’t
get drunk any more.”

“Did you tell him that?”

“I did; I assured him I was the worst fellow
in the whole world, and ought to be hung, drawn, and
quartered for my wickedness; and he swallowed it as
a codfish does a clam.”

“And you gave him all the wine?”

“No, I didn’t; I gave him one full bottle,
and what was left in the one from which we drank this
afternoon. I have two more.”

“We were going to have a good time with that
wine.”

“I have enough left.”

“Where is it?”

“In my locker.”

“They may find it.”

“No, they won’t; I will put it in some
other place before inspection day. There is plenty
of wine in the medical stores. It was a good joke
for the parson to suppose I was drunk.”

“Perhaps you were,” suggested Wilton.

“I felt good; but I was as sober as I am now.”

“The drink I took went into my head, and I felt
as though I was going up in a ballon.”

“That was because you are not used to the article.
It waked me up a little, but I knew what I was about.”

“I think you were a confounded fool to do what
you did.”

“Wilton, I’m not going to live in the
steerage—­you may take my word for it.
I’ve been an officer too long to come down to
that. If we don’t succeed in making a chain,
I shall quit the concern the first time I put my foot
on shore in Ireland.”

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“What do you mean by making a chain?”
asked Wilton, eagerly.

“A chain is strong.”

“Well; what of it?”

“It is composed of many links. Can’t
you understand that?”

“Hush up! Some one is coming,” said
Wilton, as he walked away from the brig.

“Here! who is that?” demanded Mr. Lowington,
as he saw Wilton moving away from the lock-up.

“No. 59, sir—­Wilton,” replied
he. “I was just going on deck to find you,
sir.”

“To find me?” asked the principal.

“Yes, sir. Shuffles called me when I was
passing, and wished me to tell you he wanted to see
you very much. I was just going after you, sir.”

“If there is any blame, sir, it rests on me,”
interposed Shuffles, through the bars of his prison.

Mr. Lowington unlocked the door of the brig, and entered,
followed by Mr. Agneau, leaving Wilton to congratulate
himself on the result of the lies he had uttered.

“I am told you wish to see me, Shuffles,”
said the principal.

“Yes, sir; I wish to say that I am extremely
sorry for what I have done.”

“I thought you were crazy when you refused to
obey; and now I find you were.”

“I had been drinking, sir, I confess.”

“Mr. Agneau has told me your story; it is not
necessary to repeat it now. To-morrow I shall
require you to acknowledge your error at muster, and
promise obedience in the future. Are you willing
to do so?”

“I am, sir.”

“You are discharged from confinement then, and
will at once return to your duty,” replied Mr.
Lowington, upon whom Shuffles did not venture to intrude
his extremely penitential story. “To which
watch do you belong?”

“To the port watch, first part, sir.”

“It will be on deck during the first half of
the mid watch, from twelve till two,” added
the principal, as he came out of the brig.

Mr. Lowington made no parade of what he had done.
He never subjected any student to unnecessary humiliation.
He indulged in no reproaches, and preached no sermons.
He went on deck, intending to leave the culprit to
the influence of the better thoughts which he hoped
and believed had been kindled in his mind by the events
of the day. Mr. Agneau remained a moment to give
a final admonition to the penitent, as he regarded
him, and then went to his cabin.

“Are you going to turn in, Shuffles?”
asked Wilton.

“Not yet. Are there any of our fellows
below?”

“Plenty of them.”

“Our fellows” was a term applied to that
portion of the crew who were understood to be ready
for any scrape which might be suggested. Shuffles
had coined the expression himself, while at the Brockway
Academy, and introduced it on board the ship.
Without concealment or palliation, they were bad boys.
By the discipline of the ship they were kept in good
order, and compelled to perform their duties.

As in every community of men or boys, where persons
of kindred tastes find each other out, the bad boys
in the Young America had discovered those of like
tendencies, and a bond of sympathy and association
had been established among them. They knew and
were known of each other.

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On the other hand, it is equally true, that there
was a bond of sympathy and association among the good
boys, as there is among good men. If a good man
wishes to establish a daily prayer meeting, he does
not apply to the intemperate, the profane swearers,
and the Sabbath breakers of his neighborhood for help;
there is a magnetism among men which leads him to
the right persons. If a bad man intends to get
up a mob, a raffle, or a carousal, he does not seek
assistance among those who go to church every Sunday,
and refrain from evil practices, either from principle
or policy. He makes no mistakes of this kind.

In every community, perhaps one fourth of the whole
number are positively good, and one fourth positively
bad, while the remaining two fourths are more or less
good or more or less bad, floating undecided between
the two poles of the moral magnet, sometimes drawn
one way, and sometimes the other.

The Young America was a world in herself, and the
moral composition of her people was similar to that
of communities on a larger scale. She had all
the elements of good and evil on board. One fourth
of the students were doubtless high-minded, moral
young men, having fixed principles, and being willing
to make great sacrifices rather than do wrong.
As good behavior, as well as proficiency in the studies,
was an element of success in the ship, a large proportion
of the positively good boys were in the after cabin.

Another fourth of the students were reckless and unprincipled,
with no respect for authority, except so far as it
was purchased by fear of punishment or hope of reward.
Occasionally one of this class worked his way into
the cabin by superior natural ability, and a spasmodic
attempt to better his condition on board.

The rest of the ship’s company belonged to the
indefinite, undecided class, floating more or less
distant from the positive elements of good or evil.
They were not bad boys, for, with proper influences,
they could be, and were, kept from evil ways.
They were not good boys on principle, for they could
be led away in paths of error.

“Our fellows” were the positively bad
boys of the floating academy; and they existed in
no greater proportion in the ship’s company than
in the communities of the great world. To this
class belonged Shuffles, Wilton, Monroe, and others.
To the positively good boys belonged Gordon, Kendall,
Martyn, and others—­not all of them in the
after cabin, by any means.

Shuffles and Wilton walked forward to find some of
these kindred spirits. They seemed to know just
where to look for them, for they turned in at Gangway
D. Over each of the six passages from which the mess
rooms opened, a lantern was suspended, besides four
more in the middle of the steerage. It was light
enough, therefore, in the rooms for their occupants
to read coarse print.

In the lower berths of mess room No. 8 lay two students,
while another sat on a stool between them. Their
occupation was sufficient evidence that they belonged
to “our fellows,” for they were shaking
props for money, on a stool between the bunks.
As Shuffles and Wilton approached, they picked up
the props and the stakes, and drew back into their
beds.

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“It’s Shuffles,” said Philip Sanborn.
“How did you get out?”

“Worked out,” replied Shuffles, gayly.

“You don’t mean to say you broke jail?”

“No; that would have been too much trouble.
There was an easier way, and I took that.”

“How was it?”

“Why, I soft-sawdered the parson, and he soft-sawdered
Lowington.”

“It’s all right; go ahead with the game,”
said Lynch, as he produced the props again.

Sanborn placed the money on the stool, consisting
of two quarters in fractional currency. Lynch
shook the props, and dropped them on the stool.

“A nick!” exclaimed he, snatching the
money. “I’ll go you a half now.”

“Half it is,” replied Sanborn, as he placed
the requisite sum on the money the other laid down.

Lynch rattled the props, and threw them down again.

“A browner!” cried he, intensely excited,
as he seized the money with eager hand.

“Don’t talk so loud, you fool!”
added Sanborn. “The fellows are asleep
above us, and you will wake them up. I’ll
go you a half again.”

“Half it is!” replied Lynch, in a whisper,
as he shook again.

“An out!” said Sanborn, picking up the
money.

“Three bells! Dry up!” interposed
Wilton. “One of the officers of the deck
will be down in a minute.”

The young gamblers put away the implements, and drew
back into their berths until the inspecting officer
had looked into the room. When the master had
gone on deck again, the play was resumed, and Shuffles
and Wilton watched it with deep interest.

Gambling was a new thing on board the Young America.
It had not been practised at all in the preceding
year, having been introduced by Shuffles and Monroe,
who had visited a prop saloon in the city where they
resided, during their late furlough. Each of them
had brought a set of props on board, with which they
intended to amuse themselves during the voyage.
As yet, the practice was confined to a few of “our
fellows;” but the crew in the steerage were certainly
in very great danger of being carried away by the
passion for gaming, for it was spreading rapidly.

The prop-shaking was carried on in the mess rooms,
while the students were off duty. Shuffles had
played with half a dozen boys the night before; Sanborn
and Lynch had been engaged in the game since the first
watch was set, and another party had been employed
in the same manner in another room. All of the
boys were supplied with money in considerable sums,
generally in sovereigns and half sovereigns, for use
when they reached Europe. It was changing hands
now, though no one had as yet been particularly lucky.

“Have a game, Shuffles?” said Lynch, when
Sanborn declared that he had no money left but gold.

“No,” replied Shuffles, “I shall
not play any more.”

“Why not?”

“I haven’t time; and I don’t want
to become too fond of it.”

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“Haven’t time!” exclaimed Lynch.

“No; I’ve got a big job on my hands.”

“What’s that?”

“Making a chain.”

“Making a what?”

“Making a chain.”

“A watch chain?”

“I think it will be a watch chain; but I’ll
tell you about it when we are alone. Do you understand?”

“No, I don’t.”

“Keep still then.”

Shuffles turned in, and the others followed his example.
He did not sleep, if they did, for his soul was full
of rage and malice. He was studying up the means
of revenge; and he had matured a project, so foolhardy
that it was ridiculous, and his mind was fully occupied
with it.

At twelve o’clock he was called to take his
place with the first part of the port watch on deck.
Belonging to each quarter watch, there were five petty
officers, four of whom were to call the portion of
the crew who were to relieve those on duty. Shuffles
was called by one of these.

The wind was freshening when he went on deck, and
the ship was going rapidly through the water.
At the last heaving of the log she was making eleven
knots, with her studding sails still set. Mr.
Fluxion came on deck at eight bells.

Wilton, Sanborn, and Adler were in the watch with
Shuffles, and the malcontent lost not a moment in
pushing forward the scheme he had matured. Fortunately
or unfortunately, he was placed on the lookout with
Wilton, and the solitude of the top-gallant forecastle
afforded them a good opportunity for the conference.

**CHAPTER XI.**

THE GAMBLERS IN NO. 8.

“It’s coming on to blow,” said Wilton,
as the lookouts took their stations on the top-gallant
forecastle.

“I don’t think it will blow much; it is
only freshening a little,” replied Shuffles.

“Now, what about the mutiny?” demanded
Wilton, impatiently, after he had become more accustomed
to the dash of the sea under the bows of the ship.

“Don’t call it by that name,” replied
Shuffles, earnestly. “Never use that word
again.”

“That’s what you mean—­isn’t
it? You might as well call things by their right
names.”

“It’s an ugly word, and if any one should
happen to hear it, their attention would be attracted
at once. We musn’t get in the habit of
using it.”

“I don’t know what you are going to do
yet,” added Wilton.

“It’s a big job; but I mean to put it
through, even if I am sure of failure.”

“What’s the use of doing that? Do
you want to get the fellows into a scrape for nothing?”

“There will be no failure, Wilton; you may depend
upon that. There will be a row on board within
a day or two, and, if I mistake not, nearly all the
fellows will be so mad that they will want to join
us.”

“What row?”

“Do you know the reason why I wouldn’t
shake props this evening?”

“I’m sure I don’t.”

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“Lowington has found out what is going on in
the rooms.”

“He hasn’t, though!”

“Yes, he has.”

“How do you know?”

“What odds does it make how I know?” answered
Shuffles, impatiently, for Wilton was much too inquisitive
to suit his purposes. “I talked with the
chaplain half an hour to-night. When he went to
my berth after the wine, I rather think he heard the
rattle of the props. At any rate the whole thing
will be broken up to-morrow or next day.”

“I don’t see how that will make a row.
Not more than a dozen fellows have played any; and
they won’t think of making a row about that.”

“You see!” added Shuffles, confidently.

“Ugh!” exclaimed Wilton, as a cloud of
spray dashed over the bow, and drenched the lookout;
but they wore their pea-jackets, and such an occurrence
was to be expected at sea.

“Stand by to take in studding sails!”
shouted Paul Kendall, who was the officer of the deck;
and the order was repeated by his subordinates in
the waist and on the forecastle.

“We must go,” said Wilton; and they descended
from their position.

The wind had continued to freshen, until the ship
labored somewhat under her heavy press of canvas.
It was the policy of the principal to go as easily
and comfortably as possible, and he had directed Mr.
Fluxion, if the wind continued to increase, to have
the sail reduced, though neither the safety of the
ship nor of the spars absolutely required such a step.
The quarter watch on deck was sufficient to perform
this labor.

“Lay aloft, foretopmen!” said the second
lieutenant; and those of the watch who had their stations
in the fore rigging sprang up the shrouds. “Stand
by the halyard of the top-gallant studding sails!
Man the tacks and sheets!”

“All ready, sir,” reported the second
midshipman, who was in the foretop, superintending
the operation.

“Lower on the halyards! Ease off the tacks,
and haul on the sheet!”

The two top-gallant studding-sails were thus brought
into the top, where they were made up. The fore-topmast
and the lower studding sails were taken in by a similar
routine, and the Young America then moved along less
furiously through the water.

“Now about the chain,” said Wilton, when
the lookouts had returned to their stations.

“Let me see; where did I leave off?” replied
Shuffles.

“You said there was to be a row; which I don’t
believe.”

“I may be mistaken about that; if I am, the
job will be all the more difficult. Lowington
has got us out to sea now, and, in my opinion, he
means to shake us up. He is a tyrant at heart,
and he will carry it with a high hand. I hate
the man!” added Shuffles, with savage earnestness.

“You may, but the fellows don’t generally.”

“They will as soon as he begins to put the twisters
on them. You won’t hear him say, ‘If
you please, young gentlemen,’ now that we are
in blue water. You know how savage he was with
me.”

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“Well, but you were disobedient. You told
him, up and down, you wouldn’t do what he ordered
you to do.”

“No matter for that. You had a chance to
see the spirit of the man. He was a perfect demon.
He put me in irons!” exclaimed Shuffles, still
groaning under this indignity. “I have been
insulted and outraged, and I will teach him that Bob
Shuffles is not to be treated in that manner!
I will be revenged upon him, if it costs me my life.”

“The fellows won’t go into any such desperate
game as that,” replied Wilton, cautiously.

“But there will be fun in the thing,”
added the malcontent, softening his tone. “We
shall have the ship all to ourselves. We needn’t
trouble ourselves anything about Latin and Greek,
and trigonometry and algebra. We shall go in
for a good time generally.”

“It is all moonshine; it can’t be done.
What’s the use of talking about such a thing?”
said Wilton.

“It can be done, and it shall be,” replied
Shuffles, stamping his foot on the deck.

“How?”

“I am not quite ready to tell you yet.”

“Very well; I don’t want to know anything
more about it,” answered the timid conspirator,
who was almost disgusted at the foolhardiness of the
plan.

“I can get along without you,” added Shuffles,
with assumed indifference.

“I would rather have you do so.”

“All right; but you will want to come in when
we have got along a little farther.”

“Perhaps I shall; if I do, I suppose the door
will be open to me.”

“It may be open; but perhaps you can’t
walk into the cabin then.”

“Why not?”

“Do you suppose the fellows who do the burden
of the work are going to be shut out of the cabin?
If you join at the eleventh hour, you will have to
be what you are now—­a foremast hand.”

“What can I be if I join now?”

“Second or third officer.”

“Who will be first.”

“I can’t mention his name yet. He
belongs in the cabin now.”

“You don’t mean so!” said Wilton,
astonished to learn that his bold companion expected
to find friends among the present officers of the
ship.

“I know what I’m about,” replied
Shuffles, confidently.

With this information Wilton thought more favorably
of the mad enterprise. If it was to be a winning
game, he wished to have a part in it; if a losing
one, he desired to avoid it. There was something
in the decided manner of the chief conspirator which
made an impression upon this doubting mind.

“I don’t want to go in till I know more
about it,” said he, after walking two or three
times across the top-gallant forecastle.

“You can’t know anything more about it
until you have been toggled,” replied Shuffles.

“Toggled?” repeated the sceptic, curiously.

“This thing is to be well managed, Wilton.
We shall not use any hard words, that outsiders can
understand; and if any of them happen to hear anything
that don’t concern them, they will not know what
it means. Will you join, or not?”

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“I will,” replied Wilton, desperately.

The strange words which Shuffles used, and the confidence
he manifested in the success of his project, carried
the hesitating lookout man. He was fascinated
by the “clap-trap” which the leader of
“our fellows” had adopted to help along
his scheme, for it promised to afford no little excitement
during the voyage.

“Now you talk like a man, Wilton,” replied
Shuffles. “You shall be a member of the
league at once.”

“What’s the league?”

“The Chain League.”

“Upon my word, Shuffles, you have been reading
yellow-covered novels to some purpose.”

“I didn’t get this idea from a novel.
I invented it myself.”

“The Chain League!” repeated Wilton, who
was pleased with the title of the conspirators.

“It will be called simply ‘The Chain.’
I am the first member, and you are the second; or
you will be when you have been toggled.”

“Toggled again!” laughed Wilton.
“What do you mean?”

“Initiated.”

“Go ahead, then.”

“Repeat after me.”

“Go on,” replied Wilton, deeply interested
in the proceeding, even while he was amused at its
formality.

“*I am a link of the chain*.”

“I am a link of the chain,” repeated Wilton.

“*I will obey my superior officers*.”

“I will obey my superior officers.”

“*And I will reveal none of its secrets*.”

“And I will reveal none of its secrets.”

“*This I promise*——­”

“This I promise——­”

“*On penalty of falling overboard accidentally*.”

“On penalty of what?” demanded Wilton,
both puzzled and terrified by the mysterious words.

“Repeat the words after me. On penalty,”
said Shuffles, sternly.

“I know what the words are, but I’ll be
hanged if I will repeat them. ‘Falling
overboard accidentally!’ What does that mean?”

“It means that, if you betray the secrets of
The Chain, you might fall overboard accidentally,
some day.”

“That is, you would push me over when no one
was looking,” added Wilton, involuntarily retreating
from the conspirator, whom, for the moment, he regarded
as a very dangerous companion.

“That’s what the words mean,” replied
Shuffles, coolly.

“Have I been toggled?” demanded Wilton.

“No; you didn’t repeat all the words.”

“Then you needn’t toggle me any more.
I’ve got enough of this thing.”

“All right; just as you say. But I can
tell you this, my dear fellow? if you should whisper
the first word of what has passed between us to-night,
you might fall overboard,” continued Shuffles,
sharply, as he laid his hand on his companion’s
shoulder.

Wilton grasped the sheet of the fore-topmast staysail
which was the nearest rope to him, and held on as
though he was then in imminent danger of “falling
overboard accidentally.”

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“I won’t say a word,” protested
he, vehemently; for he did not know but that Shuffles
was wicked enough to push him into the sea.

“Wilton, you are a fool!” added the disappointed
conspirator, with deep disgust. “Why didn’t
you say what I told you?”

“I don’t want to be bound in any such
way as that,” replied the terrified student.

“Don’t you see it is only a form?”

“No, I don’t; or if it is, I don’t
want anything to do with such forms. You won’t
get any fellows to be toggled in that way.”

“Yes, I shall? I shall get plenty of them.
They are not babies, like you.”

“I’m not a baby.”

“Yes, you are—­a great calf!
What are you afraid of?”

“I’m not afraid; I didn’t think
you meant to have any murder in your Chain.”

“I don’t; no fellow will think of such
a thing as betraying one of the secrets.”

“Then what’s the use of having such a
penalty?”

“It will prevent any fellow from opening his
mouth when he ought to keep it shut.”

“I don’t want anything to do with a concern
that means murder. I’m not any better than
I should be, but I’m too good for that.”

“Suit yourself; but remember, if you should
happen to say a word, you will fall overboard accidentally,
some night when you are on the lookout, or out on
the yard-arm.”

“Two bells,” said Wilton, greatly relieved
to hear them, for he did not like to stand any longer
on the top-gallant forecastle, where there was no
railing, with such a dangerous fellow as Shuffles proved
to be.

Two other members of the watch were sent forward to
take their places. Wilton and Shuffles went down
and mingled with their shipmates, who were talking
about what they should do and what they should see
in Ireland, where the ship would first make a harbor.
Wilton breathed easier, and the topic was a more agreeable
one than the dark and terrible matter which had been
under discussion on the top-gallant forecastle.

Shuffles was disappointed by the scruples of his generally
unscrupulous companion. He regarded the machinery
of the plot, the clap-trap of the secret league, as
decidedly attractive; and he depended largely upon
it to influence his companions. Though he claimed
that his plan was original, it was suggested by a
secret political organization in Europe, of which
he had read in a pamphlet; and the idea had doubtless
been modified by his more extensive readings in the
department of fiction, in which midnight juntos laid
out robbery, treason, and murder; Venetian tales in
which bravos, assassins, and decayed princes in disguise
largely figured; in which mysterious passwords opened
mysterious dungeons beneath ruined castles; in which
bravo met bravo, and knew him by some mysterious sign,
or cabalistic word.

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Shuffles had a taste for these things, and out of
his lively imagination he had coined a similar association
to be recruited from the crew of the Young America,
which was to redress fancied wrongs, and even take
the ship out of the hands of the principal. He
could think of nothing but this brilliant enterprise;
and while his shipmates were talking of the future,
and indulging in the old salts’ vocation of “spinning
yarns,” he was busy maturing the details of
“The Chain League.” He did not, for
reasons best known to himself attempt to make any more
proselytes that night.

The ship continued to go along easily on her course
till morning. It was a clear night, and though
the wind was fresh, the sea was not rough, and the
Young America behaved very handsomely. The programme
for the watches was carried out to the letter, but
on the first night out, the boys were too much excited
by the novelty of the situation to be able to sleep
much.

At eight bells in the morning, after the port watch
had breakfasted, all the students off duty attended
prayers. Then the starboard watch had their morning
meal, after which all hands were piped to muster.

Mr. Lowington mounted the hatch, and it was understood
that the case of discipline which had come up the
day before was to be settled now.

“Shuffles!” called the principal.

The culprit came forward.

“Are you still of the same mind as when I saw
you last evening?” continued Mr. Lowington.

“I am, sir,” replied Shuffles, with a
becoming exhibition of meekness.

“You will step upon the hatch, then.”

Shuffles took position by the side of the principal.

“You will repeat after me,” added Mr.
Lowington.

The culprit was startled at these words, and began
to suspect that Wilton had betrayed him in spite of
his fear of falling overboard accidentally. It
looked just then as though the principal intended to
“toggle” him.

“I acknowledge that I have done wrong,”
Mr. Lowington continued.

Shuffles repeated the words, happy to find that he
was not to take the obligation of “The Chain
League.”

“And I will hereafter endeavor to do my duty
faithfully.”

The promise was repeated with the lips, but of course
it had no meaning, and did not reach the heart.

“That is all, Shuffles,” added the principal.—­“Young
gentlemen, you are dismissed from muster.”

This was certainly a very mild atonement for the grave
offence which Shuffles had committed, and the lenity
of the principal was generally commented upon by the
boys. The starboard watch was piped below to
study and recite, while the port watch were to be off
and on during the forenoon. The first part now
had the deck, while the second was off duty, and the
boys belonging to it were permitted to remain on deck
or to spend their time in the mess rooms. They
were not allowed to linger in the steerage where the
recitations were going on, but might pass directly
through on their way to their apartments.

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At ten o’clock the first part of the port watch
was relieved, and the second part went on duty.
Shuffles and Wilton were at liberty now, but there
appeared to be a coldness between them, and Wilton
sought another companion for his leisure hours.
Sanborn and Adler belonged to his part of the watch,
and he soon joined them.

“There isn’t much difference between being
off duty and being on,” said Adler, as they
seated themselves on the main hatch.

“There will be a difference when we have to
make and take in sail every half hour. We had
a big job taking in the studding sails last night.”

“They don’t drive the ship,” added
Sanborn. “I suppose if we were a merchantman,
they would crack on all the sail she would carry.”

“She goes along beautifully,” said Wilton.

“She was only making five knots the last time
the log was heaved.”

“And the sea is as smooth as a mill-pond.
We shall not get to Queenstown for two months at this
rate.”

“Stand by to set studding sails!” shouted
Pelham, the officer of the deck.

“I wondered why they didn’t do that before,”
said Sanborn.

The fore and main studding sails were set, two at
a time, by the part of the watch on duty, the wind
still being well aft.

“What shall we do?” asked Wilton, with
a long yawn, after they had watched the operation
of setting the studding sails for a time. “This
is stupid business, and I’m getting sleepy.”

“Let us go below,” suggested Sanborn.

“What for? The professors won’t let
you speak out loud while the recitations are going
on,” added Adler.

“We don’t want to speak out loud.
What do you say to shaking a little?” continued
Wilton.

“I’m with you,” replied Wilton.
“Can either of you change me a half sovereign?”

Neither of them could, but they were willing to take
Wilton’s due bills, till his indebtedness amounted
to ten shillings. The boys had already begun
to talk the language of sterling currency, and many
of them were supplied with English silver coins as
well as gold. The three boys went down at the
fore hatch, and removing their caps as they entered
the steerage, walked silently to Gangway D, from which
they went into mess room No. 8, which had thus far
been the headquarters of the gamblers. Seating
themselves on the stools, they used one of the beds
as a table, and in a few moments were deeply absorbed
in the exciting game. They spoke in whispers,
and were careful not to rattle the props too loudly.

After they had played a few moments, Shuffles came
in. They invited him to join them in the play,
but he declined, and soon left the mess room, returning
to the deck. In the waist he met Paul Kendall,
who was the officer of his watch, and, like him, was
off duty. They had generally been on good terms
while in the after cabin together, for then Shuffles
was on his best behavior.

“How do things go on in the after cabin now,
Kendall—­I beg your pardon—­Mr.
Kendall?” said Shuffles, in his most gentlemanly
tones.

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“About as usual, Mr. Shuffles,” replied
Paul.

“I am not a ‘mister’ now,”
laughed Shuffles.

“Well, it’s all the same to me. I
am sorry you are not with us now.”

“So am I,” added Shuffles. “I
did not expect to be on board this year, or I should
have been there now.”

“You can be, next term, if you like.”

“This thing yesterday has ruined all my prospects.”

“That was rather bad. I never was so sorry
for anything in my life before,” answered Paul,
warmly. “You and I were always good friends
after we got well acquainted, though I did vote for
another at the election a year ago.”

“You did what you thought was right, and I don’t
blame you for that. I always did my duty when
I was an officer.”

“That you did, Shuffles; and we always agreed
first rate. Isn’t it a little strange that
I have not lived in the steerage since the ship’s
company were organized?”

“That’s because you were always a good
boy, and a smart scholar. I think you would not
like it.”

“If it wasn’t for losing my rank, I should
like to try it,” replied Paul. “I
should like to get better acquainted with the fellows.”

“You wouldn’t like them in the steerage.
You would see a great many things there which you
never see in the cabin; a great many things which
Mr. Lowington and the professors know nothing about.”

“Why, what do you mean, Shuffles?” demanded
Paul, astonished at this revelation.

“I ought not to say anything about it; but I
believe these things will break up the Academy Ship
one of these days, for the boys are growing worse
instead of better in her, and their folks will find
it out sooner or later.”

“You surprise me!” exclaimed Paul, sadly,
for he held the honor of the ship and her crew as
the apple of his eye. “If there is anything
wrong there, you ought to make it known.”

“I suppose I ought; but you know I’m not
a tell-tale.”

“You have told me, and I’m an officer.”

“Well, I blundered into saying what I have.
What you said about going into the steerage made me
let it out. I am sorry I said anything.”

“You have raised my curiosity.”

“I will tell you; or rather I will put you in
the way of seeing for yourself, if you will not mention
my name in connection with the matter, even to Mr.
Lowington, and certainly not to any one else.”

“I will not, Shuffles.”

“The fellows are gambling in the steerage at
this very moment,” added Shuffles, in a low
tone. “Don’t betray me.”

“I will not. Gambling!” exclaimed
Paul, with natural horror.

“You will find them in No. 8,” continued
Shuffles, walking away, and leaving the astonished
officer to wonder how boys could gamble.

**CHAPTER XII.**

THE ROOT OF ALL EVIL.

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Paul Kendall, who had not occupied a berth in the
steerage since the first organization of the ship,
was greatly surprised and grieved to learn that some
of the crew were addicted to vicious practices.
Gambling was an enormous offence, and he was not quite
willing to believe that such a terrible evil had obtained
a foothold in the ship. He could hardly conceive
of such a thing as boys engaging in games of chance;
only the vilest of men, in his estimation, would do
so. Shuffles had told him so, apparently without
malice or design, and there was no reason to doubt
the truth of his statement, especially as he had given
the particulars by which it could be verified.

The second lieutenant went down into the steerage.
Classes were reciting to the professors, and studying
their lessons at the mess tables. There was certainly
no appearance of evil, for the place was still, and
no sound of angry altercation or ribald jest, which
his fancy connected with the vice of gambling, saluted
his ears. He cautiously entered Gangway D, and
paused where he could hear what was said in mess room
No. 8.

“I’m five shillings into your half sovereign,”
said one of the gamblers; and then Paul distinctly
heard the rattling of the props.

“There’s the half sovereign,” added
another, whose voice the officer recognized as that
of Wilton. “You own five shillings in it,
and I own five shillings.”

“That’s so,” replied Sanborn, who
appeared to be the lucky one.

“Let us shake for the coin,” added Wilton.
“It’s my throw.”

“That’s rather steep.”

“We get along faster—­that’s
all. If I throw a nick, or a browner, it’s
mine; if an out, it’s yours.”

“I am agreed—­throw away,” replied
Sanborn, without perceiving that the one who held
the props had two chances to his one.

The props rattled, and dropped on the bed.

“A browner!” exclaimed Wilton, thereby
winning all he had lost at one throw.

“Hush! don’t talk so loud,” interposed
Adler. “You’ll have the profs down
upon us.”

“I’ll go you another five shillings on
one throw,” said Sanborn, chagrined at his loss.

“Put down your money.”

The reckless young gambler put two half crowns, or
five shillings, upon the bed, and Wilton shook again.

“A nick!” said he, seizing the two half
crowns.

“Try it again,” demanded Sanborn.

Paul Kendall was filled with horror as he listened
to this conversation. When he had heard enough
to satisfy him that the speakers were actually gambling,
he hastened to inform Mr. Lowington of the fact.
Paul was an officer of the ship, and this was so plainly
his duty that he could not avoid it, disagreeable
as it was to give testimony against his shipmates.
It seemed to him that the ship could not float much
longer if such iniquity were carried on within her
walls of wood; she must be purged of such enormities,
or some fearful retribution would overtake her.
There was no malice or revenge in the bosom of the
second lieutenant; he was acting solely and unselfishly
for the good of the institution and the students.

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He went on deck again. Shuffles was still there,
and they met in the waist.

“You told me the truth,” said Paul.

“You did not think I was joking about so serious
a matter—­did you?” replied Shuffles.

“No; but I hoped you might be mistaken.”

“How could I be mistaken, when I have seen,
at one time and another, a dozen fellows engaged in
gambling? Of course such things as these will
ruin the boys, and bring the ship into disrepute.”

“You are right. My father, for one, wouldn’t
let me stay on board a single day, if he knew any
of the boys were gamblers.”

“It can be easily stopped, now you know about
it,” added Shuffles.

“Perhaps it can. I will inform Mr. Lowington
at once.”

“Remember, if you please, what I said, Mr. Kendall.
I am willing to do a good thing for the ship; but
you know how much I should have to suffer, if it were
known that I gave the information. I didn’t
mean to blow on my shipmates; but you and I have been
so intimate in the after cabin, that I spoke before
I was aware what I was about,” continued Shuffles.

“I shall not willingly betray you.”

“Willingly! What do you mean by that?”
demanded the conspirator, startled by the words of
the officer.

“Suppose Mr. Lowington should ask me where I
obtained my information,” suggested Paul.

“Didn’t you see for yourself in No. 8?”

“He might ask what led me to examine the matter
so particularly. But, Shuffles, I will tell him
honestly that I do not wish to inform him who gave
me the hint; and I am quite sure he will not press
the matter, when he finds that the facts are correct.”

“Don’t mention my name on any account,”
added Shuffles. “It was mean of me to say
anything; but the ship was going to ruin, and I’m
rather glad I spoke, though I didn’t intend
to do so.”

“I will make it all right, Shuffles,”
replied Paul, as he descended the cabin steps.

Mr. Lowington was in the main cabin, and the second
lieutenant knocked at the door. He was readily
admitted, and invited to take a seat, for the principal
was as polite to the young gentlemen as though they
had been his equals in age and rank.

“I would like to speak with you alone, if you
please, sir,” Paul began, glancing at the cabin
steward, who was at work in the pantry.

“Come into my state room,” said the principal,
leading the way.

“I hope your business does not relate to the
discipline of the ship,” continued Mr. Lowington,
when they were seated, and the door of the room was
closed. “If it does, you should have applied
to the captain.”

“This is a peculiar case, sir, and I obtained
my information while off duty,” replied Paul,
with some embarrassment; for he had thought of communicating
his startling discovery to Captain Gordon, and had
only been deterred from doing so by the fear of betraying
Shuffles.

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“I will hear what you have to say.”

“There is something very bad going on in the
steerage,” said Paul, seriously.

“Indeed! What is it?” asked the principal,
full of interest and anxiety.

“Gambling, sir.”

“Gambling!” repeated Mr. Lowington, his
brow contracting.

Paul made no reply; and he expected to be asked how
he had obtained the startling information.

“Are you quite sure of what you say, Mr. Kendall?”

“Yes, sir, I am. In mess room No. 8, there
are three or four students now engaged in gambling.
I stood at the door long enough to find out what they
were doing.”

“This is serious, Mr. Kendall.”

“If you have any doubt about the fact, sir,
I hope you will take measures to satisfy yourself
at once, for I think the students are still there.”

“I will, Mr. Kendall; remain in this cabin,
if you please, until my return,” added the principal,
as he moved towards the door.

“You must be careful when you approach them,
sir, for the gamblers are very sly.”

Mr. Lowington passed from the professors’ cabin
into the steerage, and proceeding to the entrance
of No. 8, he paused to listen. He heard the whispered
conversation about the stakes, and “nicks,”
“browners” and “outs.”
The gamblers were by this time highly excited by the
game, and had not only become imprudent, but absolutely
reckless, so intense was the fascination of their
employment. Suddenly, but with a light step, he
entered the mess room. Wilton sat in the berth,
while his companions occupied stools outside and their
heads were close together.

Mr. Lowington took Adler by the collar of his frock
with one hand, and Sanborn with the other, just as
Wilton had thrown the props upon the bed. With
a vigorous jerk, he tossed them back upon the floor,
so as to obtain a full view of the stakes and the
gambling implements. The culprits were astounded
at this sudden descent upon them; but before they
could comprehend the situation fully, the principal
turned upon his heel, and left the room without a
word of astonishment or censure.

“We’re in for it now,” said Wilton,
as his companions picked themselves up from the floor,
and gazed at each other with a sheepish look.

“That’s so,” replied Sanborn.

“We shall catch it,” added Adler.

“We shall find out how the inside of the brig
looks, in my opinion,” continued Wilton.
“I was a fool to play here, right in the steerage.
Shuffles told me that Lowington smelt a mice, and would
make a row about this thing.”

“Shuffles told you so!” exclaimed Adler.
“How did he know?”

“I don’t know? I believe the parson
told him last night, when he was in the brig.”

“Why didn’t you say so then?” demanded
Sanborn. “You have got us into a pretty
scrape! That is the reason why Shuffles wouldn’t
play himself.”

“Yes, he said it was; but I didn’t believe
Lowington knew anything about it; I don’t see
how he could. He walked in here as straight as
though he had been sent for, and knew just where to
go,” said Wilton.

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“Of course he did: you say Shuffles told
you Lowington knew all about it; and I suppose he
has been on the watch to find some fellows at it so
as to make an example of them.”

“That’s the whole of it. We might
as well throw the props overboard now.”

Mr. Lowington returned to the cabin, where he had
left Paul Kendall. He was sadly disturbed by
the discovery he had made, for he had no suspicion
before that any of his pupils had made so much progress
in vice. He knew what a terrible evil gambling
was among men; that it was the forerunner of dissipation
and crime; and he felt the responsibility which rested
upon him as a guardian and instructor of youth.

“Mr. Kendall, your information was correct;
and I commend the zeal you have displayed in bringing
this fearful evil to light. How happened you
to discover it?”

“I had a hint from a source which I would rather
not mention,” replied the second lieutenant,
with some embarrassment.

“Indeed!”

“Yes, sir; one of the students, who berths in
the steerage, happened accidentally to let it out.”

Paul said “accidentally,” because he believed
that Shuffles had been betrayed into the revelation
by their former intimacy.

“And he does not wish to be regarded as an informer,”
added the principal.

“No, sir; after he had excited my curiosity,
he told me where I could find the gamblers at play.”

“I understand his position, precisely,”
said Mr. Lowington; “and I will not ask his
name. The information proves to be painfully correct,
and there appears to have been no malice in giving
it.”

“No, sir; I don’t think there was:
indeed, I know there was not,” added Paul, when
he considered that Wilton and the other gamblers were
Shuffles’ intimate companions.

“This is a very serious matter, Mr. Kendall,”
repeated the principal, thoughtfully.

“I think it is, sir; that is the reason why
I came to you, instead of going to the captain.”

“Perhaps it is better that you did so, on the
whole,” replied Mr. Lowington. “It
has enabled me to see the evil for myself. Have
you any views in regard to what should be done, Mr.
Kendall?”

The principal often asked the opinion of the officers
concerning similar matters under discussion, perhaps
in order to teach them self-respect, rather than with
the expectation of obtaining valuable suggestions from
them.

“I think there should be stricter discipline
in the mess rooms, sir,” replied Paul, blushing
to have his opinion asked. “The fellows——­”

“The students, you mean,” interposed the
principal.

“Excuse me, sir,” added Paul, blushing
deeper than before at this gentle rebuke.

The boys had a language of their own, which was not
tolerated by the faculty when it ran into coarseness
and slang.

“What were you about to say, Mr. Kendall?”
continued the principal, smiling at the confusion
of the young officer.

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“The students can now do anything they like
in the mess rooms. They have plenty of money,
and if they want to gamble, they can. They were
playing last night when the first part of the starboard
watch were on duty.”

“You are right, Mr. Kendall,” said Mr.
Lowington “The students must be looked after
in their rooms. Has there ever been any gambling
among the officers in the after cabin?”

“I never saw any, or heard of any. I don’t
think there has been.”

“I hope not; but we must grapple with this question
in earnest,” added the principal, as he led
the way out of the state room into the main cabin.

The chaplain and the doctor were there, and Mr. Lowington
wished to take their advice upon the serious matter
before him; and before he permitted the second lieutenant
to retire, he stated the case to them.

“Gambling!” groaned the chaplain.

“I detected them in the act myself,” added
Mr. Lowington. “You may retire, Mr. Kendall.”

“Why, this is awful!”

“Boys will do almost anything that men will,”
said Dr. Winstock, the surgeon.

“Drinking and gambling!” ejaculated the
chaplain. “What are we coming to?”

“I fear there are other vices of which we know
nothing yet,” added the doctor.

“Why, I’m afraid the Academy Ship will
prove to be a failure, after all,” sighed Mr.
Agneau.

“Not at all,” argued Dr. Winstock.
“We are in position here to treat these evils
properly. There are no fond mothers and indulgent
fathers to spoil the boys, when the discipline becomes
sharp.”

“What can we do?” demanded the chaplain.
“Moral and religious influences seem to have
no effect.”

“Have faith in your own medicines, Mr. Agneau,”
said the doctor.

“I have full faith in the medicine, Dr. Winstock;
but I fear I have not done my duty faithfully.”

“You need not reproach yourself, Mr. Agneau.
You have been earnest in your work,” interposed
the principal. “In a large community of
young men, all these vices and evils will appear.
It was to meet them that the keel of this ship was
laid, and our institution organized. I expect
to find vice, and even crime, among the boys.
They that be sick need a physician, not they that
be whole. These boys certainly behave better
on board the ship than they did on shore at the various
academies they attended. Pelham, who is now fourth
lieutenant, and has been first, was one of the hardest
boys in the school to which he belonged in New York.
He has given us no trouble here, though he has been
a little sulky since he fell from his former rank.
Shuffles, who, in the Brockway Academy, was the worst
boy I ever knew, without exception, behaved himself
astonishingly well for a whole year. I am sorry
to see that he has begun the second year badly.”

“O, his is a very hopeful case!” said
Mr. Agneau. “He is penitent for his folly,
and I never saw so great a change in an individual
as he exhibited on my second visit to him last evening.”

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“I hope he will not disappoint you. I only
mentioned him to show what a benefit the ship had
been to him; for if it keeps him out of trouble even
a single year, it is so far a blessing to him, to say
nothing of his intellectual progress, which has been
more than satisfactory. The fact that there are
gambling, and drinking and other vices on board, does
not diminish my faith in the institution.”

“It certainly ought not to do so,” added
Dr. Winstock, who was not so sanguine a reformer as
the chaplain and was willing to wait till the medicine
had time to produce an effect. “Here is
an evil: we must meet it, and we needn’t
stop to groan over it. What’s to be done?
that’s the question.”

“The officer of the watch must be required to
visit every room during the first watch at least,”
said the principal.

“But those who are disposed to gamble will find
abundant opportunities to do so,” suggested
the doctor. “A couple of them up in the
maintop, or even in the cross-trees, could shake props,
‘odd or even,’ and play other games of
chance, without being seen. I don’t think
you have hit the nail on the head yet, Mr. Lowington.”

“The utmost vigilance we can use will not entirely
prevent evil. We depend upon moral influences,
as well as discipline, for the prevention and cure
of vice and error,” added the principal.

“I’m afraid a lecture on gambling wouldn’t
do much, good while the means of play were still in
the hands of the students. It would influence
some; but others are not to be influenced in any way:
a strong arm alone will meet their case.”

“We can take the props from them,” said
Mr. Lowington.

“You must go a step farther than that; you must
search the berths and lockers for cards, dice, or
other gambling implements. Even then you will
not have struck at the root of the evil.”

“What is the root of the evil?” asked
the principal.

“Money, sir!” replied the doctor, with
unusual energy.

“That is said to be the root of all evil,”
added Mr. Lowington, with a smile.

“Among boys, money does more injury than we
can comprehend. A college friend of mine was
wholly spoiled by his allowance of money. His
purse was always full, which made him the prey of
dissolute persons. He always had the means of
gratifying his appetites, and is now a sot, if he is
living. He began to drink, gamble, and dissipate
generally, before he entered college: he was
expelled in a year. Without money, as a boy, he
would have been saved from a score of temptations.
Every boy on board this ship has a pocket full of
sovereigns for his European expenses. They are
all young nabobs, and if you ever let them go ashore,
you will have your hands full, Mr. Lowington.
They will drink beer and wine, visit bad places, gamble
and carouse. While they have plenty of money,
you can hardly prevent them from being a nuisance to
you and to themselves.”

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“There is a great deal of force in what you
say, Dr. Winstock.”

“Money will be the root of all evil to these
boys, most emphatically. Those who are disposed
to gamble will do so while they have money.”

“The inference to be drawn from your remarks
is, that the students should not have pocket money.”

“Most decidedly that is my opinion. If
I had a son, I wouldn’t allow him a penny of
pocket money.”

“That would be rather hard,” said the
chaplain.

“I know it, but it would be the best thing in
the world for the boy. I don’t mean to
say that I would never permit him to have money; but
he should have no stated allowance; and when he had
a dollar, I should want to know how it was to be expended.”

“This question of money allowances has been
under serious consideration with me.”

“You can’t handle the boys in Europe with
money in their pockets. A regiment of soldiers
could not keep them straight.”

“I think you are right, doctor. I am tempted
to take their money from them.”

“Do it, by all means!” exclaimed Dr. Winstock.

The chaplain regarded the measure as rather high-handed.
He thought it would belittle the boys, and deprive
them of some portion of their self-respect. The
instructors came into the cabin at seven bells, and
their opinions were taken. Four of the six were
in favor of taking all money from the boys. Mr.
Lowington had already reached this view of the case,
and it was resolved to take the important step at once,
as the best means of effectually putting a stop to
the practice of gambling.

Mr. Fluxion had been unable to attend this conference
for more than a few moments, for he was the instructor
in mathematics, which included navigation, and he
was compelled to superintend the observations, which
were made with separate instruments by himself and
by the two masters of the forenoon watch. The
position of the ship was found, and marked on the
chart, and the “dead reckoning” compared
with the result obtained by calculation.

At one bell in the afternoon watch, all hands were
piped to muster, and the gamblers readily understood
that this call was for their especial benefit.

“Wilton,” said Mr. Lowington, from his
usual position.

The culprit came forward.

“With whom were you gambling in mess room No.
8, this forenoon?” asked the principal.

Wilton looked up at the stern dispenser of discipline.
If he did not know, it was not his business to tell.

“Answer me.”

“I don’t know.”

“You are telling a falsehood.”

“I don’t remember their names now,”
said Wilton.

“You do remember them; and for each falsehood
you utter you shall suffer an additional penalty.”

“I’m not a tell-tale, sir,” answered
Wilton, doggedly. “I don’t want to
tell who they were.”

“Very well; why didn’t you say that at
first? I have some respect for the student who
dislikes to betray even his companions in error; none
at all for a liar. Adler and Sanborn,”
added the principal; and the two gamblers stepped
up to the hatch. “Young gentlemen, you are
charged with gambling. Have you anything to say?”

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“Nothing sir,” they all replied.

“Wilton, how much money have you lost at play?”

“None, sir.”

“How much have you made?”

“Ten shillings—­half a sovereign.”

“From whom did you win it?”

“From Sanborn.”

“Return it to him.”

Wilton obeyed. Adler had won about a dollar from
Sanborn, which he was also compelled to restore.
Mr. Lowington was satisfied that others had gained
or lost by gambling, but as he did not know who the
other gamblers were, he did not attempt to have the
ill-gotten money restored; for he never made himself
ridiculous to the students by endeavoring to do what
could not be done.

Mr. Lowington then made a very judicious address upon
the evil of gambling, pointing out its dangerous fascination,
and the terrible consequences which sooner or later
overtook its victims. He illustrated his remarks
by examples drawn from real life. The chaplain
followed him, detailing the career of a young man
whom he had attended in prison, and who had been utterly
ruined by the habit of gaming, contracted before he
was of age.

These addresses seemed to produce a deep impression
on the boys, and one would have judged by their looks
that they all regarded the dangerous practice with
well-grounded horror. Mr. Lowington took the stand
again, and followed with another address upon “the
root of all evil;” adding that, having money
in their possession, they would be tempted to gamble.

“Now, young gentlemen, I propose that you all
deliver your funds to me, taking my receipt for whatever
amount you deliver to me. When you have any real
need of money, apply to me, and I will restore it,”
added Mr. Lowington.

“Take our money from us!” exclaimed several;
and it was evident that the proposition was creating
a tremendous sensation among the students.

**CHAPTER XIII.**

PIPING TO MISCHIEF.

After the offensive announcement that the students
were to deliver up their money to the principal, and
take his receipt for it, the crew were dismissed from
muster, after being informed that the business of
receiving the funds would be immediately commenced
in the steerage. The three gamblers were not
punished, except by the mortification of the exposure,
even by the loss of their marks, though Wilton was
confined in the brig one hour for each falsehood he
had uttered. Mr. Lowington knew that at least
a dozen of the boys were guilty of gambling; and as
the matter now came up for the first time, he did
not deem it expedient to punish those who had been
discovered hoping that the preventive measures he
had adopted would effectually suppress the evil.

Many of the students regarded the taking of their
money as an indignity. Only a few of them, comparatively,
had engaged in gambling, though many of the occupants
of the steerage knew of the existence of the practice
on board the ship. They were willing to believe,
and did believe, after the impressive addresses to
which they had listened, that games of chance were
a perilous amusement, but they were not quite willing
to acknowledge the justice of Mr. Lowington’s
measures.

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Most of the officers, and many of the crew, cheerfully
complied with the new regulation. They handed
their money to the pursers, and received a receipt
for the amount, signed by the principal. Others
emptied the contents of their exchequer sullenly,
and under protest; while not a few openly grumbled
in the presence of Mr. Lowington. Some of “our
fellows” attempted to keep back a portion of
their funds, and perhaps a few succeeded, though the
tact of the principal exposed the deceit in several
instances. Whatever may be thought of the justice
or the expediency of depriving the students of their
money, it was evidently an exceedingly unpopular step.

In the second dog watch, when Shuffles and Paul Kendall
were off duty, they happened to meet in the waist;
and the exciting topic of the day came up for discussion,
as it had in every little group that collected that
afternoon. Shuffles had accomplished his purpose;
he had accomplished far more than he intended.
He had expected nothing more than a general onslaught
upon gambling, followed by increased stringency in
the regulations, and a closer watch over the students
in their rooms, which would produce sufficient irritation
among the boys to suit his purposes. Now the
crew, and even some of the officers, were in a ferment
of indignation, and ripe for a demonstration of any
kind.

“The business is done,” said Paul Kendall,
as he met the conspirator.

“I’m afraid it’s overdone,”
answered Shuffles, seriously, though he was actually
in a state of exultation over the effect which had
been produced by the new regulation.

“I hope not. I did not mention your name
to the principal in connection with the matter,”
added Paul.

“Didn’t he ask you?”

“He did? but when I stated the case to him,
and told him the person who had given me the information
had let it out accidentally, and did not wish to be
known, he asked no more questions.”

“Thank you, Mr. Kendall. This last measure
is so unpopular that I should have been cast out like
an unclean bird, if it were known that I gave the
hint.”

“No one shall know anything about it from me,
Shuffles. You did a good thing for the ship,
and for every fellow in it.”

“They wouldn’t be willing to believe that
just now,” said Shuffles, laughing.

“Perhaps not? but it is a fact, none the less.”

“I didn’t think Mr. Lowington would go
it quite so strong. If I had, I shouldn’t
have told you what I did.”

“Why, are you not satisfied with what has been
done?” asked Kendall, with some astonishment.

“No, I am not. I am glad enough to see
the gambling stopped, but I don’t think the
principal had any more right to take my money away
from me than he had to take my head off,” replied
Shuffles, earnestly.

“Don’t you think it will be better for
the fellows to be without money than with it?”

“Perhaps it will; I don’t know about that.
Your neighbor might be a better man if he were poor
than if he were rich: does that make it that
you have any right to take his property from him?”

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“I don’t think it does,” replied
Paul.

“The State of Massachusetts, for instance, or
the State of Ohio, makes laws against games of chance.
Why not make a law, if a man gambles, that all his
money shall be taken from him?”

“The state has no right to make such a law,
I suppose.”

“But the principal goes a long reach beyond
that. He takes every man’s money away from
him, whether he is accused of gambling or not.
Do you think he had any right to do that?”

“He hasn’t made any law; but if you want
law, I’ll give you some!” laughed Paul,
who was disposed to treat the subject very good-naturedly,
especially as there was so much loose indignation floating
about the decks.

“I don’t mean law alone, but justice,”
added Shuffles. “I call it high-handed
injustice to take the fellows’ money away from
them.”

“Let me give you a little law, then,”
persisted Paul. “How old are you, Shuffles?”

“Eighteen.”

“Good! You are an infant.”

“In law, I am.”

“Suppose your uncle, or somebody else, should
die to-day, and leave you fifty thousand dollars:
wouldn’t you have a good time with it?”

“I should, as soon as I got hold of it, you
had better believe,” replied Shuffles.

“As soon as you got hold of it!” exclaimed
Paul.

“I suppose I should have a guardian till I became
of age.”

“Who would appoint your guardian?”

“The court, I believe.”

“Exactly so! The law! What, take your
money away from you, or not let you touch it!”

“That’s law, certainly.”

“Well, wouldn’t the law have just as much
right to take off a fellow’s head, as to take
his money?” demanded Paul, triumphantly.

“Mr. Lowington is not our guardian.”

“Yes, he is, for the time being; and I hold
that he has just as much right to take your money
from you as your father would have.”

“I don’t see it; I don’t believe
it. The money was given us by our fathers to
spend in Europe when we get there.”

“Mr. Lowington is to pay all our expenses on
shore, by the terms of the contract. Besides,
the regulations of the Academy Ship, to which all the
parents assented, require that the control of the boys
shall be wholly given up to the principal. It’s
a plain case, Shuffles.”

Mr. Lowington and his policy had an able and zealous
defender in the person of Paul Kendall, who, by his
arguments, as well as his influence, had already reconciled
several of the students to the new regulation.

“If I were willing to grant the right of the
principal to take the fellows’ money from them—­which
I am not—­I think it is treating them like
babies to do so. It is punishing the innocent
with the guilty.”

“Mr. Lowington said, in so many words, that
the measure was not intended as a punishment; that
it was purely a matter of discipline, intended to
meet certain evils which must appear when we landed
in Europe, as well as to prevent gambling.”

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Paul certainly had the best of the argument; but Shuffles
was not convinced, because he did not wish to be convinced.

At eight bells, when the first part of the port watch
went on duty, the wind had shifted from west to north;
the studding-sails had been taken in, the spanker,
main spencer, and all the staysails had been set, and
the ship, close-hauled, was barely laying her course.
The wind was fresh, and she was heeled over on the
starboard side, so that her decks formed a pretty
steep inclined plane. Under these circumstances,
it required a great deal of skill and watchfulness
on the part of the wheelmen to keep the sails full,
and at the same time to lay the course. As the
ship’s head met the heavy seas, a great deal
of spray was dashed on deck, and the position of the
lookout-men on the top-gallant forecastle was not
as comfortable as if the weather had been warmer.
There was no dodging; every student was obliged to
stand at his post, wet or dry, blow high or blow low.

Wilton had been discharged from confinement in the
brig, where Mr. Agneau had visited him, giving him
good advice and religious instruction, as he did to
all who were punished in any manner, and was now with
his watch on deck. The new regulation was particularly
odious to “our fellows,” and Wilton regarded
himself as a martyr to the popular cause, forgetting
that he had been punished for the lies he had told.
He and twenty others were forward to say they “wouldn’t
stand it;” and the indignation seemed to be
increasing rather than subsiding.

“Well, Wilton, how do you like the inside of
the brig?” asked Shuffles, when they met in
the maintop, having been sent aloft to clear away the
bowline bridle on the main-topsail.

“I like it well enough,” replied Wilton.
“I wasn’t going to blow on the fellows;
I would stay in there a month first.”

“Did you give up your money?”

“Of course I did; I couldn’t help myself.”

“How do you like the new regulation?”

“I don’t like it any better than the rest
of the fellows do,” answered Wilton, in surly
tones. “I won’t stand it, either.”

“O, I guess you will,” laughed Shuffles.
“I told you Lowington was a tyrant, but you
wouldn’t believe me.”

“Yes, I would; and I did.”

“The fellows will find out what he is before
they are many days older.”

“I think they have found out now, I say, Shuffles,
was this the row you spoke about last night?”

“Yes; only there’s more of it than I expected.”

“How did you know anything about it beforehand?”

“I have a way of finding out these things,”
replied the artful conspirator, mysteriously.
“I have one or two friends at court.”

“Is Paul Kendall one of them?”

“No; he is a simpleton. He don’t
know which side his bread is buttered. If Lowington
takes snuff, Kendall sneezes.”

“I have seen you talking with him two or three
times to-day.”

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“I was only pumping him.”

“Well, there is a jolly row on board now, anyhow,”
added Wilton, as he prepared to descend over the cat-harpings.

“Hold on; don’t let’s go on deck
yet,” interposed Shuffles. “I want
to know what our fellows are going to do.”

“They will call us down, if we stop here.”

“When they do, we will go down, then,”
replied Shuffles, as he seated himself in the top,
with his legs through the lubber’s-hole.
“What are our fellows going to do? Do they
mean to stand this thing?”

“They can’t help themselves; they are
mad enough to do anything; but what’s the use?”
added Wilton, as he seated himself by the side of his
companion.

“Don’t you think they will join the League
now?”

“They would join anything that would give them
their rights. I’ll join now; but I don’t
want to be toggled in such a way as you said last
night.”

“Then you can’t be toggled at all.”

“I haven’t any idea of falling overboard
accidentally. I’d rather lose my money
than do that.”

“It’s nothing but a form, Wilton.
Between you and me, it’s only a bugbear, intended
to work upon the nerves and the imagination. Of
course we shouldn’t help any fellow overboard;
no one would dare to do any such thing.”

“I don’t like the sound of the thing.”

“If you really mean to expose the secrets which
are intrusted to you, I advise you not to join.”

“I don’t mean any such thing,” added
Wilton, indignantly.

“If you didn’t, you wouldn’t be
afraid of the penalty.”

“Toggle me, then; and see what I mean.”

“I don’t want you to go in if you don’t
believe in it.”

“But I do believe in it; so go ahead.”

Shuffles pronounced the ridiculous obligation again,
and Wilton repeated it after him.

“Now you are toggled,” said the leader.

“What are we going to do?”

“Bring in the rest of our fellows; that is the
first job. In my opinion we can get over fifty
of them now.”

“I don’t know about that,” answered
Wilton, doubtfully.

“I’m very sure we can. If we get
enough to take the ship, we can have all the rest
as soon as we have done the job.”

“Take the ship!” exclaimed Wilton, appalled
at the idea.

“That’s what we mean.”

“I don’t believe you can do it,”
replied the doubtful “link in the Chain.”

“It’s the easiest thing in the world.
The affair will come off at supper time, when the
professors are all in their cabin. All we have
to do is to clap the hatch on the after companion-way,
and secure the doors leading from the main cabin into
the steerage. Then we have them, and they can’t
help themselves.”

“But the boatswain, carpenter, and sailmaker
will be loose.”

“No, they won’t. At the right time,
we will pass the word for them, and say that Lowington
wants to see them in the main cabin. As soon as
they go below we will put the hatch on.”

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“The cooks and stewards will still be at large.”

“We can lock them up in the kitchen. If
they make trouble, I have a revolver,” whispered
Shuffles.

“A revolver! I won’t have anything
to do with it if you are going to use pistols,”
said the alarmed confederate.

“It’s only to look at; there will be no
occasion to use it,” answered Shuffles, soothingly.

“There will be twelve men, besides the stewards,
locked up in the main cabin.”

“That’s so.”

“How long do you suppose it would take them
to break down the bulkhead between the cabin and the
steerage, or to climb up through the skylight?”

“If they attempt anything of that kind, we can
show them the revolver; that will quiet them.”

“You might frighten the parson in that way;
but do you suppose men like Mr. Lowington, Mr. Fluxion,
and Peaks, who have been in the navy so long, will
be afraid of a pistol?”

“They won’t want to be shot, if they have
been in the navy all their lives.”

“Then you mean to shoot them?”

“They will think we do, and it will be all the
same.”

“I don’t know about this business.
I’m afraid the pistol might go off, and hurt
somebody.”

“I suppose you could raise objections all night,”
added Shuffles, contemptuously. “I’m
not going to have any man tyrannize over me, Wilton.
I suppose if Lowington wants to pull every fellow’s
teeth out, you won’t object.”

“I’m as much opposed to his tyranny as
you are, and I will do anything that is reasonable;
but I want to know whether the water is hot or cold
before I put my fingers into it. What’s
the use of blundering into an enterprise, and making
a failure of it?”

“I have no idea of making a failure of it.
Did you ever know me to make a failure of anything
that I attempted?”

“Yes, I have.”

“What?”

“You failed to get elected captain when we first
came aboard of the ship.”

“That was only because we had just come on board?
the fellows didn’t know me, and I didn’t
know them. We are better acquainted now, and I
am just as sure of success as though we had already
won it,” added Shuffles, confidently. “I
don’t believe in making failures.”

“I don’t believe there is more than one
chance in ten for you to succeed,” continued
the sceptic.

“There isn’t more than one chance in ten
for us to fail. You are a bird of evil omen.
You have no faith in anything; and if you are going
to croak like this, I don’t want you in the
Chain,” added Shuffles, petulantly.

“I’m in for it, already; and when I can
see my way clearly, I shall be as strong as you are.”

“Then don’t croak any more. We must
go to work while the fever is on the fellows, and
make up——­”

“In the maintop, ahoy!” shouted the master,
from the waist.

“On deck!” replied Shuffles.

“Lay down from aloft!”

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“Yes, sir.”

The conspirators descended, after Shuffles had admonished
his shaky companion to be discreet.

“What are you doing in the top so long?”
demanded Foster, the first master, as the truants
reached the sheer-pole.

“Watching the sea, sir,” replied Shuffles.
“It looks fine from the top.”

“When you have done what you are sent aloft
for, it is your duty to come down and report it,”
added the officer.

Shuffles made no reply, as he probably would have
done if he had not had a heavy operation on his hands,
which prevented him from indulging in any side quarrels.

Except the wheelmen and the lookout, the watch on
deck was divided into little groups, who were quartered
in the most comfortable places they could find, telling
stones, or discussing the exciting topic of the day.

“Shuffles, some of our fellows want to see you
and Wilton,” said Adler, as the first master
went below, to inspect the steerage, at two bells.

“What’s up?” demanded the conspirator.

“Don’t say anything,” added the
messenger, as he led the way to the steerage skylight,
under the lee of which Sanborn and Grimme had stowed
themselves away, out of the reach of the stream that
was flowing along the water-ways, and of the spray
which was dashing over the weather bows.

The party from aloft, with the messenger, increased
the group to five, which was the total number of “our
fellows” that could be mustered in the first
part of the port watch.

“What’s up?” demanded Shuffles,
when he had seated himself by the skylight.

“We intend to pipe to mischief, to-night, Shuffles
and we want some help from you,” said Sanborn,
in reply.

“We have been robbed of our money, and we are
going to have satisfaction, somehow or other,”
added Grimme, in explanation. “We are not
going to stand this sort of thing. We must teach
Lowington and the professors that they can’t
put our noses to the grindstone.”

“Exactly so!” exclaimed Shuffles.
“And you intend to put them there yourselves.
In other words, you mean to get into some scrape, and
be punished for it, as I was.”

“No, we don’t. We are going to work
man-of-war style. Old Peaks told us how to do
it, when we were on watch last night,” replied
Grimme.

“Peaks?”

“Yes, he spun us a yarn about man-of-war life,
and told us how the men serve out the officers when
they don’t behave themselves.”

“Peaks told you this—­did he?”
demanded Shuffles.

“Of course he didn’t mean to have us do
anything of the kind.”

“Well, how did he tell you to serve out the
officers?”

“Make them uncomfortable; keep them in a hornet’s
nest all the time.”

“How? How?” asked Shuffles, impatiently.

“Why, if the unpopular officer went forward,
a belaying pin was sure to drop on his head or his
feet; a tar can or a paint pot would be upset on his
back; or, if he went below, a cannon ball was liable
to roll out of a shot case upon him. Of course
no one ever knew the author of this mischief.”

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“Do you propose to play off any of these tricks
on Lowington?” demanded Shuffles.

“We have got a rod in pickle for him,”
replied Grimme, chuckling.

“What is it?”

“We intend to give him a dose of kerosene oil,
to begin with,” laughed Sanborn.

“One of the stewards left his oil can on the
fore scuttle ladder, after the hatch was put on to
keep the spray out, and I took possession of it,”
added Grimme, hardly able to keep his mirth within
the limits of prudence.

“What are you going to do with it?” asked
Shuffles.

“We are going to give Lowington the contents
of the can, and then throw it overboard.”

“Indeed! Who is the fellow that has boldness
enough to do this thing?”

“I have; and I have volunteered to do the job,”
answered Grimme, with a degree of assurance which
astonished even Shuffles.

“You dare not do it!”

“I dare, and I will, if the fellows will stand
by me. Lowington is sitting at the table in the
professors’ cabin, right under the skylight,
reading. One section of the skylight is open,
and you can see him, as plain as day. It’s
as dark as a pocket on deck, and the officers can’t
see you twenty feet off. All I have to do is to
pop the oil through the opening, and get out of the
way.”

“What then?”

“Why, he will come on deck, and try to find
out who did it; but he can’t.”

“Perhaps he can.”

“No, he can’t; only half a dozen of the
fellows will know anything about it, and of course
they won’t let on.”

“Suppose he don’t find out. What
good will this trick do?”

“The second part of the port watch must follow
up the game. Lowington will come on deck at eight
bells, and Monroe, in the starboard watch, will give
him another dose.”

“What will that be?”

“Slush the first step of the ladder at the after
companion-way, and let him tumble down stairs,”
chuckled Grimme.

“Then Lynch will give him some more,”
said Adler.

“Well, you may break his neck when he tumbles
down the ladder. I’ll have nothing to do
with any of those tricks,” added Shuffles, decidedly.
“If you want to pipe to mischief, I’m
with you, but in no such way as that. Those are
little, mean, dirty tricks.”

“But they will keep him in hot water all the
time, and he will get sick of being a tyrant over
the fellows in less than a week. There are twenty
things we might do to annoy him, which would help to
bring him to his senses. For instance, when the
steward carries the coffee into the professors’
cabin, one fellow might engage his attention, while
another drops a lump of salt, a handful of pepper,
or a piece of tobacco into the urn.”

“I don’t want to hear any more of such
low-lived tricks,” interposed the magnificent
conspirator. “If you want to pipe to mischief,
let us do it like men.”

“What would you do? Fifty of the fellows,
at least, will go into anything to punish Lowington
for his tyranny.”

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“Join the Chain, then,” said Shuffles,
in a whisper, and with a suitable parade of mystery.

“The what?”

“The Chain.”

The object of the League was duly explained; and before
the second part of the port watch came on deck, three
new members had been “toggled.” Greatly
to the satisfaction of Shuffles, and to the astonishment
of Wilton, they did not hesitate at the penalty of
the obligation, and seemed to be entirely willing
to “fall overboard accidentally” if they
failed to make strong and faithful “links in
the Chain.”

**CHAPTER XIV.**

ALL HANDS, REEF TOPSAILS!

Augustus Pelham, the fourth lieutenant of the Young
America, was almost the only malcontent among the
officers; the only one who persistently declined to
be reconciled to the new regulation. Others objected
to it; others criticised it, and even regarded the
act as tyrannical; but the good offices of Paul Kendall,
who argued the question with them, as he did with
Shuffles, had in a measure conciliated them, and they
were at least disposed to submit gracefully to the
order. But Pelham was not of this number He was
above the average age, and, like the chief conspirator
on board, expecting to leave the ship at the end of
the first year, had not exerted himself to the extent
of his ability. He had been first lieutenant
and had now fallen to fourth. He was older than
the captain, and it galled him to be subject to one
younger than himself.

He was dissatisfied with his rank, and this had a
tendency to make him a grumbler. It needed only
an appearance of tyranny or injustice to array him
in spirit against the authorities of the ship.
Shuffles knew his state of mind, and was prepared
to take advantage of it, hoping through him to gain
other discontented spirits in the cabin.

When the first part of the port watch was relieved,
the “Chain” consisted of five links, and
the conspirators were well satisfied with the present
success of the enterprise. Each of the new members
of the League was commissioned to obtain a recruit,
whose name was given to him, and he was required to
report upon the case, to Shuffles, before eight bells
in the afternoon watch. As a measure of precaution,
it was required that no meetings should be held; that
not more than three members should assemble for business
at any one time. The utmost care and circumspection
were urged, and it was agreed that not a word should
be said in the steerage, where it was possible for
any of the professors to overhear it.

The second part of the port watch, with Pelham as
officer of the deck, went on duty at ten o’clock.
The wind had been freshening for the last two hours,
and it was now necessary to reduce sail. The royals
were first taken in, and then the top-gallant sails.

“We can’t lay this course, sir,”
said Burchmore, the quartermaster, who was conning
the helm. “The wind is hauling to the eastward.”

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“Make the course east by north then,”
replied Pelham, without taking the trouble to consult
the captain or Mr. Fluxion, both of whom were on deck.

“The wind is north-north-east, sir,” reported
the quartermaster, a short time afterwards.

“Keep her east then.”

At six bells the wind was north-east, and coming heavier
and heavier every moment. The ship was headed
east-south-east, and it was evident that she still
had on more sail than she could easily carry.

“What’s the course, Mr. Pelham?”
asked Captain Gordon.

“East-south-east, sir,” replied Pelham.

“The course given out was east-north-east.”

“I have changed it three times within the last
hour,” answered the fourth lieutenant, in rather
surly tones.

“By whose order?” demanded the captain.

“By no one’s order, sir.”

“You know the regulation for the officer of
the deck. He is not permitted to alter the course
of the ship, unless to avoid some sudden danger, without
informing the captain.”

“I had to alter the course, or have the topsails
thrown aback,” replied Pelham.

“Very likely it was proper to alter the course;
but it was also proper to inform me, especially when
I was on deck.”

“Very well, Captain Gordon. I will not
alter the course again without your order,”
added the fourth lieutenant, stiffly.

“The regulation is not mine, Mr. Pelham,”
continued the captain, sternly.

As the wind increased, sail was reduced to topsails
and courses, jib and spanker; but at seven bells even
these were found to be too much for her.

“Captain Gordon, it is coming heavier,”
said Mr. Fluxion. “I think it will be necessary
to reef.”

“I was thinking of that, sir. The wind
is north-east, and blowing a gale.”

“You had better call all hands, and do it at
once.”

“Mr. Pelham, you will call all hands to reef
topsails!”

“All hands, sir?”

“Certainly, Mr. Pelham; that was my order,”
replied the captain, more sharply than usual, for
there was something in the manner of the officer of
the deck which he did not like, and he found it necessary
to maintain the dignity of his position.

Pelham touched his cap; he felt the weight of authority
upon him heavier than ever before. Until recently
he had always performed his duty cheerfully, and was
considered a first-rate officer. Since the new
regulation had been put in force, and he had been compelled
to deliver up ten sovereigns in his possession he
had been rather disagreeable. In the cabin he
had used some language reflecting upon the principal,
and he was now regarded as a malcontent by the captain,
and by those who still sustained the discipline of
the ship.

“Morrison,” called he, as he went forward
to the waist.

“Here, sir,” replied the boatswain, who
belonged in this quarter watch; and there was a boatswain’s
mate in each of the others.

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“Call all hands to reef topsails.”

The shrill pipe of the boatswain’s whistle soon
rang above the howling winds, which now sounded gloomily
through the rigging. The call was repeated in
the steerage, and at the door of the after cabin, where
it could be heard by the officers, for no one on board
is exempted when all hands are called. This was
the first taste of the hardships of a seaman’s
life to which the students had been invited. It
is not pleasant, to say the least, to be turned out
of a warm bed in a gale, when the wind comes cold
and furious, laden with the spray of the ocean, and
be sent aloft in the rigging of the ship, when she
is rolling and pitching, jumping and jerking, in the
mad waves. But there is no excuse at such a time,
and nothing but positive physical disability can exempt
officer or seaman from duty.

It was the first time the boys had seen a gale at
sea, and though it was not yet what would be called
a strong gale, it was sufficiently terrific to produce
a deep impression upon them. The ship was still
close-hauled, under topsails and courses, with jib
and spanker. The wind came in heavy blasts, and
when they struck the sails, the Young America heeled
over, until her lee yard-arm seemed to be dipping
the waves. Huge billows came roaring down from
the windward, crowned with white foam, and presenting
an awful aspect in the night, striking the ship, lifting
her bow high in the air, and breaking over the rail,
pouring tons of water on the deck.

Before the whole crew had been called, every opening
in the deck had been secured, and the plank guards
placed over the glass in the skylights. Life
lines had been stretched along the decks, and the
swinging ports, through which the water that came over
the rail escaped, were crossed with whale line by
Peaks, to prevent any unlucky boy from being washed
through, if he happened to be thrown off his feet by
a rush of water to the scuppers.

The scene was wild and startling; it was even terrible
to those who had never seen anything of the kind before,
though the old sailors regarded it quite as a matter
of course. Peaks had never been known to be so
jolly and excited since he came on board. He was
full of jokes and witty sayings; he seemed to be in
his element now, and all his powers of body and mind
were in the keenest state of excitement.

The students were disposed to look upon it as a rough
time, and doubtless some of them thought the ship
was in great peril. Not a few of them pretended
to enjoy the scene, and talked amazingly salt, as though
they had been used to this kind of thing all their
lives. Mr. Lowington came on deck, when all hands
were called; and though, to his experienced eye, there
was no danger while the ship was well managed, he was
exceedingly anxious, for it was a time when accidents
were prone to happen, and the loss of a boy at such
an hour, would endanger the success of his great experiment.
On deck, the students could not get overboard without
the grossest carelessness; but it was perilous to send
them aloft in the gloom of the howling tempest.
He had hoped that he might be permitted to meet the
onslaught of the first gale the ship encountered in
the daytime; but as the “clerk of the weather”
otherwise ordained it, he was compelled to make the
best of the circumstances.

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Before the manoeuvre of reefing, in the gale, was
begun, Mr. Fluxion was sent forward. Bitts was
placed in the fore rigging, Peaks in the main, and
Leach in the mizzen, to see that the young tars did
not needlessly expose themselves, and that they used
all proper precautions to avoid an accident.
All the officers were at their stations.

“Man the topsail clewlines, and buntlines, and
the weather topsail braces,” shouted Haven,
the first lieutenant who always handled the ship when
all hands were called. “Stand by the lee
braces, bowlines, and halyards.”

The clewlines are ropes fastened to the corners of
the topsail, passing through blocks on the topsail
yard, and leading down to the deck through the lubber’s
hole. They are used in hauling the corners of
the sail up when they are to be reefed or furled.

The buntlines are two ropes attached to cringles,
or eyes, in the bottom of the sail, which are used
for hauling up the middle, or bunt, of the topsail.

The braces are the ropes secured to the ends of the
yards, leading down to the deck, directly, or to a
mast first, and thence below, by which the yards and
the sails attached to them are hauled round so as to
take the wind. They are distinguished by the
terms “weather” and “lee,”
the former being those on the side from which the
wind comes, the latter on the opposite side.
They also have their specific names, as the “weather
fore-top-gallant brace,” the “lee main
brace.”

The bowlines are ropes attached to the leeches of
square sails to draw the edge forward, so that they
may take the wind better. They are fastened to
the bridles, which are loops like those of a kite,
two or three of them extending from the side of the
sail.

The halyards are the ropes by which any sail is hoisted.
For square sails they are secured to the yards, which,
with the exception of the lower one on each mast slide
up and down.

“Clear away the bowlines,” said the first
lieutenant when all hands were reported ready for
the manoeuvre which had been ordered.

At this command the bowlines on the topsails and courses
were unfastened.

“All clear, sir,” reported the officers
from their stations.

“Round in the weather braces, ease off the lee
braces!” was the next order. “Settle
away the topsail halyards! Clew down!”

To round in the weather braces was simply to haul
them up as the lee braces were slacked, so that the
yard was squared. As the command was executed,
the sail was “spilled,” or the wind thrown
out of it.

“Haul out the reef tackles! Haul up the
buntlines!” continued the executive officer.

To reef a sail is to tie up a portion of it, so as
to present less surface of canvas to the force of
the wind. Topsails are reefed in the upper part;
a portion of the sail nearest to the yard from which
it is suspended being rolled up and secured by strings
to the yard. Fore and aft sails, like the spanker,
the fore and main spencers, or the mainsail of a schooner,
are reefed at the foot, the lower part being tied down
to the boom.

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The topsails of the Young America had three reef bands,
or strips of canvas sewed crosswise over them, in
which were the reef points, or strings by which the
sail is tied up when reefed. When the first or
highest row of reef points was used, the sail was single
reefed; when the second was used, it was double reefed;
and when the third row was used, it was close reefed.
On each side of the sail, at the end of each reef
band, was a cringle, or eye, in which the reef pendent
was fastened. The reef tackle consists of a rope
passing from the eye, at the end of the reef band,
through a block at the extremity of the yard, thence
to the mast, and down to the deck. Hauling on
this rope draws the required portion of the sail up
to the yard in readiness to be reefed.

The reef tackles were hauled out, and the buntlines
hauled up to bring the sail where it could be easily
handled. When the sail is to be reefed, the seamen
have to a “lay out” on the yards, and tie
up the sail. To enable them to do this with safety,
there are horses, or foot-ropes, extending from the
slings, or middle of the spar, to the yard-arms.
This rope hangs below the yard, the middle parts being
supported by stirrups. When a man is to “lay
out,” he throws his breast across the yard with
his feet on the horse. The man at the “weather
earing,” or eye for the reef pendent, has to
sit astride the yard, and pull the sail towards him.

The foot-rope sometimes slips through the eyes in
the stirrups when only one hand goes out upon it,
which does, or may, place him in a dangerous position.
During the preceding day, when the barometer indicated
a change of weather, Mr. Lowington had sent the old
boatswain aloft to “mouse the horses,”
in anticipation of the manoeuvre which the boys were
now compelled to perform at midnight, in a gale of
wind. Mousing the horses was merely fastening
the foot-ropes to the eyes of the stirrups, so that
they could not slip through, and thus throw the entire
slack of the horse under one boy, by which he sank
down so low that his neck was even with the spar.

At the foot of each mast there is a contrivance for
securing ropes, called the fife-rail. It is full
of belaying pins, to which are secured the sheets,
halyards, buntlines, clewlines, lifts, braces, reef
tackle, and other ropes leading down from aloft.
Looking at the mast, it seems to be surrounded by
a perfect wilderness of ropes, without order or arrangement,
whose uses no ordinary mortal could comprehend.
There were other ropes leading down from aloft, which
were fastened at the sheer-poles and under the rail.
Now, it is necessary that every sailor should be able
to put his hand on the right rope in the darkest night;
and when the order to haul out the buntlines was given
in the gloom and the gale, those to whom this duty
was assigned could have closed their eyes and found
the right lines.

“Aloft, topman!” continued the first lieutenant,
when the topsails were in readiness for reefing.

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At this order thirty of the young tars ran up the
shrouds, over the cat-harpings, and up the rigging,
till they reached the fore, main, and mizzen topsail
yards. Twelve of them were stationed on the main,
ten on the fore, and eight on the mizzen topsail yard.
The first, second, and third midshipmen were aloft
to superintend the work, and when the studding-sail
booms had been triced up, they gave the order to lay
out, and take two reefs.

When the hands were at their stations on the yard,
the first lieutenant ordered the quartermaster to
“luff up;” that is, to put the helm down
so as to throw the ship up into the wind and spill
the sail, or get the wind out of it, that the young
tars might handle it with the more ease.

The boys had been frequently trained in the manoeuvre
which they were now executing under trying circumstances,
and all of them knew their duty. If any one trembled
as the mast swayed over when the ship rolled, he was
afraid to mention the fact, or to exhibit any signs
of alarm. Perhaps most of them would have been
willing to acknowledge that it was rather “ticklish”
business to lay out on a topsail yard at midnight in
a gale of wind; and if their anxious mothers could
have seen the boys at that moment, some of them might
have fainted, and all wished them in a safer place.

The boom tricing-lines were manned again, and the
studding-sail booms restored to their places.

“Lay down from aloft!” shouted Haven,
when the midshipman in charge aloft had reported the
work done; and he was obliged to roar at the top of
his lungs through the speaking trumpet, in order to
be heard above the piping of the gale and the dashing
of the sea. “Man the topsail halyards!
stand by the braces.”

“All ready, sir,” reported the fourth
lieutenant, after the others.

“Hoist away the topsails!”

The hands on deck walked away with the halyards, until
the topsails were hauled up to a taut leech.

The same operation was repeated on the fore and main
course; the yards were trimmed; the bowlines attached
and hauled out, and then the ship was under double-reefed
topsails and courses.

“Boatswain, pipe down!” said the executive
officer when the work was done.

But the crew did not care to pipe down, just then.
This was the first time they had ever seen a gale
at sea, and there was something grand and sublime
in the heaving ocean, and the wild winds that danced
madly over the white-crested waves. It was now
after midnight, eight bells having struck before the
courses were reefed, and the first part of the starboard
watch were to have the deck. Mr. Lowington insisted
that all others should go below and turn in, assuring
them that they would see enough of the gale in the
morning, or as soon as their quarter watches were
called.

The principal and Mr. Fluxion were earnest in their
commendation of the behavior of the Young America.
She was not only a stiff and weatherly ship, but she
behaved most admirably, keeping well up to the wind,
and minding her helm. The four boys at the wheel
handled it with perfect ease.

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The ship did not labor in the gale as she had before
the sails were reefed; and though she jumped, plunged,
and rolled, making a terrific roar as she went along,
everything was ship-shape about her, and the boys
soon became accustomed to the exciting scene.
She was making but little headway, but she still kept
within three points of her general course. Mr.
Lowington remained on deck the rest of the night, anxiously
watching the ship and her crew in the trying experience
of the hour.

Augustus Pelham, the discontented lieutenant, went
below when his quarter watch was relieved. The
little incident, before all hands were called, between
himself and the captain, had disturbed him more than
he would have been willing to acknowledge. He
thought it was harsh of the captain to say anything
to him, though he had broken one of the rules of the
ship; and he regarded the gentle reproof he had received
as a very great indignity.

He went to his state room. The ship was rolling
fearfully, and he could not stand up without holding
on at the front of his berth. Goodwin, the third
lieutenant who was his room-mate, had already turned
in; but it was impossible for him to sleep. Pelham
took a match from his pocket and lighted the lamp,
which swung on gimbals in the room.

“What are you doing, Pelham?” demanded
Goodwin “It is against the rule to light a lamp
after ten o’clock.”

“I know it; but I’m not going to blunder
round here, and have my brains knocked out in the
dark,” growled Pelham.

“Put the light out; you will get into trouble,”
remonstrated his room-mate.

“I won’t do it.”

“What are you going to do?”

“Go to sleep, Goodwin, and don’t bother
me.”

“What’s the matter, Pelham? What
ails you? I never knew you to think of breaking
one of the rules before.”

“I should like to break them all, as Moses did
the ten commandments. I have been insulted.”

“Who insulted you?”

“The captain.”

“Gordon?” asked Goodwin, in astonishment

“Yes.”

“I never knew him to do such a thing as that.
I think you didn’t understand him; or he must
have been excited by the gale.”

“It was before it came on to blow very hard,”
replied Pelham, seating himself on a stool, and bracing
his feet against the front of the berth to prevent
being thrown down.

“What did he do?”

“He snubbed me, told me I knew the rule, and
was as overbearing as though I had been his servant,
instead of an officer of the ship.”

“But what did you do? He wouldn’t
have done anything of the kind if you hadn’t
given him some provocation.”

“I told the quartermaster, when the wind was
heading off the ship, to alter the course.”

“Didn’t you tell the captain beforehand?”

“Not I.”

“Then I don’t blame him for snubbing you.
What’s the use of being captain if the officers
don’t obey you?”

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“If he had anything to say to me, he might have
been a little more gentle about it.”

Pelham neglected to say that he was not particularly
gentle himself.

“Put that light out, Pelham, for my sake, if
not for your own,” said Goodwin, when he found
that his companion was too much out of sorts to be
reasonable.

“Neither for yours nor my own will I put it
out,” replied Pelham, as he took a cigar from
its hiding-place, under the lower berth.

“What are you going to do, Pelham?” demanded
Goodwin, filled with astonishment, as he observed
the conduct of his fellow-officer.

“I’m going to have a smoke.”

“But you know that smoking is positively prohibited
either on ship or shore.”

“I haven’t had a smoke since vacation,”
replied Pelham, as he lighted the cigar.

“See here, Pelham; I won’t stand this!”
exclaimed the third lieutenant, rising up in his bed,
in which act he was nearly pitched out of his berth
by a heavy roll of the ship. “The companion-way
is closed.”

“That’s the very reason why I’m
going to smoke,” replied the malcontent, coolly.

“But I shall be stifled here.”

“Can’t help it.”

“I can,” retorted Goodwin, as he leaped
out on the floor.

“What are you going to do?”

“I am going to inform Mr. Lowington what you
are doing.”

“Are you such a fellow as that?” asked
Pelham, indignantly.

“I am, if you are such a fellow as to attempt
to stifle me with cigar smoke in my own room.
It would make me as sick as a horse in five minutes.”

“Seasick, you mean,” sneered Pelham.
“I’m going to have my smoke, if there
is a row about it.”

Goodwin put on his pea-jacket, and left the room.

**CHAPTER XV.**

AFTER THE GALE.

One of the most singular traits observable in the
character of some boys is the willingness, and even
the desire, under certain circumstances, to get into
trouble. A young gentleman, feeling that he has
been slighted, or his merit overlooked, permits himself
to fall into a mental condition in which he feels
no responsibility for his conduct; in which he recklessly
breaks through all regulations, places himself in an
attitude of opposition to constituted authority, and
seems to court the heaviest penalty which can be inflicted
upon him for disobedience, impudence, and rebellion.

The fourth lieutenant of the Young America had worked
himself up to this disagreeable pitch. He was
not only disposed to assume an attitude of opposition
to the principal, who had made the obnoxious regulation
which was the immediate cause of his rebellious condition,
but to all who supported his authority, or willingly
submitted to it.

Smoking was a high crime on board the Young America—­not
in the relation of the practice to the ship, but to
the student. It was condemned, not simply because
it would be offensive in the cabins and steerage, and
on deck, but because it was a bad habit for a boy
to acquire. The adult forward officers, the cooks
and the stewards, were allowed to smoke on the forecastle
at certain prescribed hours; but it was a punishable
offence for a student to smoke at any time or in any
place, whether on board or on shore.

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Goodwin was indignant at the conduct of his room-mate,
for the third lieutenant was not only opposed to smoking
on principle, but the fumes of tobacco were intensely
offensive to him; and there was no doubt that, in
the confined space of the state room, insufficiently
ventilated, while all the openings in the deck were
closed during the gale, the smoke would make him “as
sick as a horse.” He was a noble-minded,
manly youth, and had all a boy’s detestation
for tattling and tale-bearing. He did not like
to go on deck and inform the principal of the conduct
of Pelham, but he could not submit to the indignity
cast upon him. He went out into the cabin, and
threw himself upon the cushioned divan, under the
stern ports of the ship.

This would have been a very satisfactory place to
sleep under ordinary circumstances; but Goodwin had
hardly secured a comfortable position, before the
heavy rolling and pitching of the vessel tumbled him
off, and he measured his length on the cabin floor—­a
very undignified situation for a third lieutenant.
He picked himself up in the darkness, and tried it
again, but with no better success than before.
He had fully intended to go on deck and inform the
principal of the misconduct of Pelham, which had driven
him from his room; but he shrank from the task.

What Goodwin was attempting to do on the divan many
of the officers were striving to do in their berths,
though with better success than attended his efforts.
It was not an easy matter to stay in the berths; and
this done, the situation was far from comfortable.
Avoiding the rude fall on the one side, the occupant
was rolled over against the partition on the other
side. Sleep, in anything more than “cat
naps,” was utterly impracticable, for as soon
as the tired officer began to lose himself in slumber,
he was thumped violently against the pine boards, or
was roused by the fear of being tumbled out of his
berth.

Mr. Lowington comprehended the situation of the students,
and when the topsails and courses had been reefed,
he called up all the stewards, and sent them through
the after cabin and steerage, to ascertain the condition
of the boys, and to give them the benefit of certain
expedients known to old voyagers for such occasions.
Jacobs, the steward of the after cabin, entered to
perform his duty. He had no light, not even a
lantern; for fire is so terrible a calamity at sea,
that every lamp was extinguished by the stewards at
ten o’clock, and no light was allowed, except
in the binnacle, without the special permission of
the principal Even the captain could not allow a lamp
to be lighted after hours.

Jacobs went to all the state rooms on the port side
first, and pulled up the berth sacks above the front
of the bunks, so as to form a kind of wall, to keep
the occupant from rolling out. A bundle of clothing
was placed on the inside of the berth, and the body
was thus wedged in, so as to afford some relief to
the unstable form. Pelham’s room was the
second one on the starboard side, and Jacobs came to
it at last, in his humane mission. He opened
the door, and started back with unfeigned astonishment
to see the lamp lighted, and the fourth lieutenant
puffing his cigar as leisurely as the violent motion
of the ship would permit.

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“Contrary to regulation, sir,” said Jacobs,
respectfully as he touched his cap to the reckless
officer.

“Take yourself off, Jacobs,” replied Pelham,
coarsely and rudely.

“Yes, sir.”

Jacobs did take himself off, and hastened on deck
to inform Mr. Lowington of the conduct of the infatuated
officer.

The principal immediately presented himself.
Pelham had fully believed, in his self-willed obstinacy,
that he could look Mr. Lowington full in the face,
and impudently defy him. He found that he was
mistaken. The experience of Shuffles in the hands
of the boatswain and carpenter would intrude itself
upon him, and he quailed when the principal opened
the door and gazed sternly into his face.

“Smoking, Mr. Pelham?”

“Yes, sir,” replied the rebel, with an
attempt to be cool and impudent, which, however, was
a signal failure.

“You will put out that cigar, and throw it away.”

“I will; I’ve smoked enough,” answered
Pelham.

“Your light is burning, contrary to regulation.”

“The ship rolls so, I should break my neck without
one,” replied Pelham, sourly.

“That is a weak plea for a sailor to make.
Mr. Pelham, I confess my surprise to find one who
has done so well engaged in acts of disobedience.”

The reckless officer could make no reply; if the reproof
had been given in presence of others, he would probably
have retorted, prompted by a false, foolish pride
to “keep even” with the principal.

“For smoking, you will lose ten marks; for lighting
your lamp, ten more,” added the principal.

“You might as well send me into the steerage
at once,” answered Pelham.

“If either offence is repeated, that will be
done. You will put out your light at once.”

The fourth lieutenant obeyed the order because he
did not dare to disobey it; the fear of the muscular
boatswain, the irons, and the brig, rather than that
of immediate degradation to the steerage, operating
upon his mind. The principal went on deck; Pelham
turned in, and was soon followed, without a word of
comment on the events which had just transpired, by
Goodwin.

The night wore away, the gale increasing in fury,
and the rain pouring in torrents. It was a true
taste of a seaman’s life to those who were on
deck. At daybreak all hands were called again,
to put the third reef in the topsails. At eight
bells the courses were furled. The gale continued
to increase in power during the forenoon, and by noon
a tremendous sea had been stirred up. The ship
rolled almost down to her beam ends, and the crests
of the waves seemed to be above the level of the main
yard.

In the popular exaggerated language, “the waves
ran mountain high,” which means from twenty
to forty feet; perhaps, on this occasion, twenty-five
feet from the trough of the sea to the crest of the
billow. Even this is a great height to be tossed
up and down on the water; and to the boys of the Young
America the effect was grand, if not terrific.
The deck was constantly flooded with water; additional
life-lines had been stretched across from rail to
rail, and every precaution taken to insure the safety
of the crew.

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Study and recitation were impossible, and nothing
was attempted of this kind. The storm was now
what could justly be called a heavy gale, and it was
no longer practicable to lay a course. Before
eight bells in the forenoon watch, the royal and top-gallant
yards had been sent down, and the ship was laid to
under a close-reefed main-topsail, which the nautical
gentlemen on board regarded as the best for the peculiar
conditions which the Young America presented.

When a ship is laying to, no attention is paid to
anything but the safety of the vessel, the only object
being to keep her head up to the sea. In the
gale, the Young America lay with her port bow to the
wind, her hull being at an angle of forty-five degrees,
with a line indicating the direction of the wind.
Her topsail yard was braced so that it pointed directly
to the north-east—­the quarter from which
the gale blew. The helm was put a-lee just enough
to keep her in the position indicated. She made
little or no headway, but rather drifted with the
waves.

The young tars had a hard forenoon’s work; and
what was done was accomplished with triple the labor
required in an ordinary sea. All hands were on
duty during the first part of the day, though there
were intervals of rest, such as they were, while the
boys had to hold on with both hands, and there was
no stable abiding-place for the body. The ship
rolled so fiercely that no cooking could be done, and
the only refreshments were coffee and “hard
tack.”

“This is a regular muzzler, Pelham,” said
Shuffles, in the afternoon, as they were holding on
at the life-lines in the waist.

“That’s a fact; and I’ve got about
enough of this thing.”

“There isn’t much fun in it,” replied
Shuffles, who had been watching for this opportunity
to advance the interests of the “Chain.”

“No, not a bit.”

“It’s better for you officers, who don’t
have to lay out on the yards when they jump under
you like a mad horse, than for us.”

“I suppose I shall have a chance to try it next
term.”

“Why so?”

“I lost twenty marks last night. I got
mad, lighted the lamp, and smoked a cigar in my state
room.”

“Will the loss of the twenty marks throw you
over?”

“Yes? I’m a goner!” added Pelham,
with a smile.

“What made you mad?”

“The captain snubbed me; then Lowington came
the magnificent over me. A single slip throws
a fellow here.”

A single slip in the great world throws a man or woman;
and young men and young women should be taught that
“single slips” are not to be tolerated.
More children are spoiled by weak indulgence than by
over-severe discipline. But a boy had a better
chance to recover from the effects of his errors in
the Young America, than men and women have in the
community.

By gradual approaches, Shuffles informed the fourth
lieutenant of the object of the “Chain,”
which Pelham promptly agreed to join, declaring that
it was just the thing to suit his case. He was
in a rebellious frame of mind; and though he could
not feel that the enterprise would be a complete success,
it would afford him an opportunity to annoy and punish
the principal for his degrading and tyrannical regulation,
as the recreant officer chose to regard it.

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By the exercise of some tact, the conspirators found
a convenient place under the top-gallant forecastle
to consider the project. Pelham was duly “toggled,”
and offered no objection to the penalty; indeed, he
only laughed at it.

“Suppose we get possession of the ship—­what
then?” asked Pelham.

“We will go on a cruise. I understand that
she has provisions for a six months’ voyage
on board. I’m in favor of going round Cape
Horn, and having a good time among the islands of
the South Sea.”

Pelham laughed outright at this splendid scheme.

“Round Cape Horn!” exclaimed he.

“Yes? why not? We should be up with the
cape by the first of June; rather a bad time, I know,
but this ship would make good weather of it, and I
don’t believe we should see anything worse than
this.”

“What will you do with the principal and the
professors?” asked Pelham, lightly.

“We can run up within ten or fifteen miles of
Cape Sable, give them one of the boats, and let them
go on shore.”

“Perhaps they won’t go.”

“We have ten fellows already in the Chain, who
are seventeen years old. If we get half the crew,
we can handle the other half, and the professors with
them.”

“All right! I’m with you, whether
you succeed or not. I’m not going to be
ground under Lowington’s feet, and be snubbed
by such fellows as Gordon. If I want to smoke
a cigar, I’m going to do it.”

“Or take a glass of wine,” suggested Shuffles.

“If there is any on board.”

“There is, plenty of it. I’ll make
you a present of a bottle, if you wish it.”

“Thank you. Suppose we get the ship, Shuffles,
who are to be the officers?” asked Pelham.

“We shall have good fellows for officers.
You will be one, of course.”

“I suppose I am higher in rank now than any
fellow who has joined the Chain.”

“Yes, that’s a fact; but we are not going
to mind who are officers now, or who have been before.
We intend to take the best fellows—­those
who have done the most work in making the Chain.”

“Whether they are competent or not,” added
Pelham.

“All the fellows know how to work a ship now,
except the green hands that came aboard this year.”

“This is rather an important matter. Shuffles,
for everything depends upon the officers. For
instance, who will be captain?” asked Pelham,
with assumed indifference.

“I shall, of course,” replied Shuffles,
with becoming modesty.

“That’s a settled matter, I suppose.”

“Yes; without a doubt it is.”

“I may not agree to that,” suggested the
new convert.

“You have already agreed to it. You have
promised to obey your superiors.”

“But who are my superiors?”

“I am one of them.”

“Who appointed you?”

“I appointed myself. I got up the Chain.”

“I think I have just as much right to that place
as you have. Shuffles.”

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“I don’t see it! Do you expect me
to get up this thing, and then take a subordinate
position?” demanded Shuffles, indignantly.

“Let the members choose the captain; that’s
the proper way.”

“Perhaps they will choose neither one of us.”

“Very well; I will agree to serve under any
fellow who is fairly elected.”

“When shall he be chosen?” asked Shuffles,
who was so sure of a majority that he was disposed
to adopt the suggestion.

“When we have thirty links, say.”

“I will agree to it.”

The conspirators separated, each to obtain recruits
as fast as he could. During the latter part of
the day, the gale began to subside, and at sunset
its force was broken, but the sea still ran fearfully
high. The fore course was shaken out, and the
ship filled away again, plunging madly into the savage
waves.

On Sunday morning, the gale had entirely subsided;
but the wind still came from the same quarter, and
the weather was cloudy. The sea had abated its
fury, though the billows still rolled high, and the
ship had an ugly motion. During the night, the
reefs had been turned out of the topsails; the jib,
flying-jib, and spanker had been set, and the Young
America was making a course east-south-east.

“Sail ho!” shouted one of the crew on
the top-gallant forecastle, after the forenoon watch
was set.

“Where away?” demanded the officer of
the deck.

“Over the lee bow, sir,” was the report
which came through the officers on duty.

The report created a sensation, as it always does
When a sail is seen; for one who has not spent days
and weeks on the broad expanse of waters, can form
only an inadequate idea of the companionship which
those in one ship feel for those in another, even
while they are miles apart. Though the crew of
the Young America had been shut out from society only
about three days, they had already begun to realize
this craving for association—­this desire
to see other people and be conscious of their existence.

After the severe gale through which they had just
passed, this sentiment was stronger than it would
have been under other circumstances. The ocean
had been lashed into unwonted fury by the mad winds.
A fierce gale had been raging for full twenty-four
hours, and the tempest was suggestive of what the
sailor dreads most—­shipwreck, with its long
train of disaster—­suffering, privation,
and death. It was hardly possible that such a
terrible storm had swept the sea without carrying
down some vessels with precious freights of human life.

The Young America had safely ridden out the gale,
for all that human art could do to make her safe and
strong had been done without regard to expense.
No niggardly owners had built her of poor and insufficient
material, or sent her to sea weakly manned and with
incompetent officers. The ship was heavily manned;
eighteen or twenty men would have been deemed a sufficient
crew to work her; and though her force consisted of
boys, they would average more than two thirds of the
muscle and skill of able-bodied seamen.

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There were other ships abroad on the vast ocean, which
could not compare with her in strength and appointments,
and which had not one third of her working power on
board. No ship can absolutely defy the elements,
and there is no such thing as absolute safety in a
voyage across the ocean; but there is far less peril
than people who have had no experience generally suppose.
The Cunard steamers have been running more than a
quarter of a century, with the loss of only one ship,
and no lives in that one—­a triumphant result
achieved by strong ships, with competent men to manage
them. Poorly built ships, short manned, with
officers unfit for their positions, constitute the
harvest of destruction on the ocean.

Mr. Lowington believed that the students of the Academy
Ship would be as safe on board the Young America as
they would on shore. He had taken a great deal
of pains to demonstrate his theory to parents, and
though he often failed, he often succeeded. The
Young America had just passed through one of the severest
gales of the year, and in cruising for the next three
years, she would hardly encounter a more terrific storm.
She had safely weathered it; the boys had behaved
splendidly, and not one of them had been lost, or
even injured, by the trying exposure. The principal’s
theory was thus far vindicated.

The starboard watch piped to breakfast, when the sail
was discovered, too far off to make her out.
The boys all manifested a deep interest in the distant
wanderer on the tempestuous sea, mingled with a desire
to know how the stranger had weathered the gale.
Many of them went up the shrouds into the tops, and
the spy-glasses were in great demand.

“Do you make her out, Captain Gordon?”
asked Mr. Fluxion, as he came up from his breakfast,
and discovered the commander watching the stranger
through the glass.

“Yes, sir; I can just make her out now.
Her foremast and mainmast have gone by the board,
and she has the ensign, union down, hoisted at her
mizzen,” replied the captain, with no little
excitement in his manner.

“Indeed!” exclaimed the teacher of mathematics,
as he took the glass. “You are right, Captain
Gordon, and you had better keep her away.”

“Shall I speak to Mr. Lowington first, sir?”
asked the captain.

“I think there is no need of it in the present
instance. There can be no doubt what he will
do when a ship is in distress.”

“Mr. Kendall, keep her away two points,”
said the captain to the officer of the deck.
“What is the ship’s course now?”

“East-south-east, sir,” replied the second
lieutenant, who had the deck.

“Make it south-east.”

“South-east, sir,” repeated Kendall.
“Quartermaster keep her away two points,”
he added to the petty officer conning the wheel.

“Two points, sir,” said Bennington, the
quartermaster

“Make the course south-east.”

“South-east, sir.”

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After all these repetitions it was not likely that
any mistake would occur; and the discipline of the
ship required every officer and seaman who received
a material order, especially in regard to the helm
or the course, to repeat it, and thus make sure that
it was not misunderstood.

It was Sunday; and no study was required, or work
performed, except the necessary ship’s duty.
Morning prayers had been said, as usual, and there
was to be divine service in the steerage, forenoon
and afternoon, for all who could possibly attend;
and this rule excepted none but the watch on deck.
By this system, the quarter watch on duty in the forenoon,
attended in the afternoon; those who were absent at
morning prayers were always present at the evening
devotions; and blow high or blow low, the brief matin
and vesper service were never omitted, for young men
in the midst of the sublimity and the terrors of the
ocean could least afford to be without the daily thought
of God, “who plants his footsteps in the sea,
and rides upon the storm.”

Every man and boy in the ship was watching the speck
on the watery waste, which the glass had revealed
to be a dismasted, and perhaps sinking ship.
The incident created an intense interest, and was
calculated to bring out the finer feelings of the students.
They were full of sympathy for her people, and the
cultivation of noble and unselfish sentiments, which
the occasion had already called forth, and was likely
to call forth in a still greater degree, was worth
the voyage over the ocean; for there are impressions
to be awakened by such a scene which can be garnered
in no other field.

**CHAPTER XVI.**

THE WRECK OF THE SYLVIA.

The people in the dismasted ship had discovered the
Young America, as it appeared from the efforts they
were using to attract her attention. The booming
of a gun was occasionally heard from her, but she was
yet too far off to be distinctly seen.

On the forecastle of the Academy Ship were two brass
guns, four-pounders, intended solely for use in making
signals. They had never been fired, even on the
Fourth of July, for Mr. Lowington would not encourage
their use among the boys. On the present occasion
he ordered Peaks, the boatswain, to fire twice, to
assure the ship in distress that her signals were
heard.

The top-gallant sails were set, and the speed of the
ship increased as much as possible; but the heavy
sea was not favorable to rapid progress through the
water. At four bells, when all hands but the second
part of the port watch were piped to attend divine
service in the steerage, the Young America was about
four miles distant from the dismasted vessel.
She was rolling and pitching heavily, and not making
more than two or three knots an hour.

Notwithstanding the impatience of the crew, and their
desire to be on deck, where they could see the wreck,
the service on that Sunday forenoon was especially
impressive. Mr. Agneau prayed earnestly for those
who were suffering by the perils of the sea, and that
those who should draw near unto them in the hour of
their danger, might be filled with the love of God
and of man, which would inspire them to be faithful
to the duties of the occasion.

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When the service was ended the students went on deck
again. The wreck could now be distinctly seen.
It was a ship of five or six hundred tons, rolling
helplessly in the trough of the sea. She was apparently
water-logged, if not just ready to go down. As
the Young America approached her, her people were
seen to be laboring at the pumps, and to be baling
her out with buckets. It was evident from the
appearance of the wreck, that it had been kept afloat
only by the severest exertion on the part of the crew.

“Mr. Peaks, you will see that the boats are
in order for use,” said Mr. Lowington.
“We shall lower the barge and the gig.”

“The barge and the gig, sir,” replied
the boatswain.

“Captain Gordon,” continued the principal,
“two of your best officers must be detailed
for the boats.”

“I will send Mr. Kendall in the barge, sir.”

“Very well; he is entirely reliable. Whom
will you send in the gig?”

“I am sorry Shuffles is not an officer now,
for he was one of the best we had for such service,”
added the captain.

“Shuffles is out of the question,” replied
Mr. Lowington.

“Mr. Haven, then, in the gig.”

“The sea is very heavy, and the boats must be
handled with skill and prudence.”

“The crews have been practised in heavy seas,
though in nothing like this.”

The barge and the gig—­called so by courtesy—­were
the two largest boats belonging to the ship, and pulled
eight oars each. They were light and strong,
and had been built with especial reference to the use
for which they were intended. They were life-boats,
and before the ship sailed, they had been rigged with
life-lines and floats. If they were upset in a
heavy sea, the crews could save themselves by clinging
to the rope, buoyed up by the floats.

The Young America stood up towards the wreck, intending
to pass under her stern as near as it was prudent
to lay, the head of the dismasted ship being to the
north-west.

“Boatswain, pipe all hands to muster,”
said the captain, prompted by Mr. Lowington, as the
ship approached the wreck.

“All hands on deck, ahoy!” shouted the
boatswain, piping the call.

The first lieutenant took the trumpet from the officer
of the deck, and the crew, all of whom were on deck
when the call was sounded, sprang to their muster
stations.

“All hands, take in courses,” said the
executive officer; and those who were stationed at
the tacks and sheets, clew-garnets and buntlines,
prepared to do their duty when the boatswain piped
the call.

“Man the fore and main clew-garnets and buntlines!”
shouted the first lieutenant. “Stand by
tacks and sheets!”

The fore and main sail, being the lowest square sails,
are called the courses. There is no corresponding
sail on the mizzenmast. The ropes by which the
lower corners of these sails are hauled up for furling
are the clew-garnets—­the same that are
designated clewlines on the topsails.

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The tacks and sheets are the ropes by which the courses
are hauled down, and kept in place, the tack being
on the windward side, and the sheet on the leeward.

“All ready, sir,” reported the lieutenants
forward.

“Haul taut! Let go tacks and sheets!
Haul up!”

These orders being promptly obeyed, the courses were
hauled up, and the ship was under topsails and top-gallant
sails, jib, flying-jib, and spanker.

“Ship, ahoy!” shouted the first lieutenant
through his trumpet, as the Young America rolled slowly
along under the stern of the wreck.

“Ship, ahoy!” replied a voice from the
deck of the wreck. “We are in a sinking
condition! Will you take us off?”

“Ay, ay!” cried Haven, with right good
will.

“You will heave to the ship, Mr. Haven,”
said the captain, when she had passed a short distance
beyond the wreck.

“Man the jib and flying-jib halyards and down-hauls,”
said the first lieutenant.

“All ready forward, sir,” replied the
second lieutenant, on the forecastle.

“Stand by the maintop bowline! Cast off!
Man the main braces!”

“Let go the jib and flying-jib halyards!
Haul down!” And the jibs were taken in.

“Slack off the lee braces! Haul on the
weather braces!”

The main-topsail and top-gallant were thus thrown
aback, and the Young America was hove to, in order
to enable her people to perform their humane mission.

“Stand by to lower the barge and gig!”
continued Haven.

“Mr. Haven, you will board the wreck in the
gig,” said Captain Gordon.

“Yes, sir,” replied he, touching his cap,
and handing the trumpet to the second lieutenant.

“Mr. Kendall, you will take charge of the barge,”
added the captain.

“The barge, sir,” answered Kendall, passing
the trumpet to Goodwin, the third lieutenant, who,
during the absence of his superiors, was to discharge
the duty of the executive officer.

The boats were cleared away, and every preparation
made for lowering them into the water. This was
a difficult and dangerous manoeuvre in the heavy sea
which was running at the time. The professors’
barge, which was secured at the davits on the weather
side of the ship, was to be lowered with her crew
on board, and they took their places on the thwarts,
with their hands to the oars in readiness for action.
The principal had requested Mr. Fluxion to go in the
barge and Mr. Peaks in the gig, not to command the
boats, but to give the officers such suggestions as
the emergency of the occasion might require.

“All ready, sir,” reported Ward, the coxswain
of the barge, when the oarsmen were in their places.

“Stand by the after tackle, Ward,” said
Haven. “Bowman, attend to the fore tackle.”

At a favorable moment, when a great wave was sinking
down by the ship’s side, the order was given
to lower away, and in an instant the barge struck
the water. Ward cast off the after tackle, and
the bowman did the same with the forward tackle.
At the moment the order to lower was given, as the
wave sank down, the ship rolled to windward, and the
boat struck the water some eight feet from the vessel’s
side.

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“Up oars!” said the coxswain, with energy.

“Lively, Ward,” added the first lieutenant.

“Let fall!” continued the coxswain, as
a billow lifted the boat, so that those on board could
see the ship’s deck. “Give way together!”

The barge, tossed like a feather on the high seas,
gathered headway, and moved off towards the wreck.

The lowering of the barge had been so successful that
the same method was adopted with the gig; but as she
was under the lee of the ship, there was less difficulty
in getting her off. She pulled round the ship’s
bow, and having made less stern way in starting both
boats came up under the counter of the wreck at about
the same time. When the barge and gig reached
the ship, a line was thrown to each of them over the
quarter, which the bowman caught, and made fast to
the ring.

“Where is the captain of the ship?” demanded
Mr. Haven.

“Here,” shouted that officer.

“How many have you aboard?”

“Eighteen!”

“You must slide down on a rope over the stern;
we can’t go alongside,” continued the
first lieutenant.

“Ay, ay, sir!” responded the captain of
the ship. “I have two women and two children
on board.”

“You must lower them in slings,” added
Haven, prompted by Mr. Fluxion.

[Illustration: THE WRECK OF THE SYLVIA. page
254.]

The people on board the wreck went to work, and one
of the women was lowered into each boat at the same
time. A long loop was made in the end of the
rope, and the woman sat down in the bight of it, holding
on to the line with her hands. At a moment when
the sea favored the movement, the boats were hauled
up close to the ship’s stern, the passenger caught
by two of the crew, and hauled on board. A boy
and a girl were let down in the same manner.
The captain, mates, and seamen came down the rope
hand over hand.

Each boat now had nine passengers, who were stowed
in the stern sheets and on the bottom. The ropes
from the ship were cast off, and the oarsmen were
ordered to give way. The barge and the gig rose
and fell, now leaping up on the huge billows, and
then plunging down deep into the trough of the sea;
but they had been well trimmed, and though the comb
of the sea occasionally broke into them, drenching
the boys with spray, the return to the Young America
was safely effected.

“How happens it that you are all boys?”
asked the captain of the wrecked ship, who was in
Paul Kendall’s boat.

“That’s the Academy Ship,” replied
the second lieutenant.

“The what?” exclaimed the captain.

“It is the Young America. She is a school
ship.”

“O, ay!”

There was no disposition to talk much in the boats.
The officers and crews were fully employed in keeping
the barge and gig right side up in the tremendous
sea, and though all hands were filled with curiosity
to know the particulars of the wreck, all questions
were wisely deferred until they were on the deck of
the ship.

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When the gig came up under the counter of the Young
America, a line was thrown down to the bowman who
made it fast to the ring. The passengers were
then taken aboard in slings rigged on the spanker-boom,
which was swung over the lee quarter for the purpose.
Part of the boat’s crew were taken on board
in the same way, and then the gig was hoisted up to
the davits with the rest in her.

Before the barge was allowed to come up under the
counter, the officer of the deck wore ship, so as
to bring the port quarter, on which the boat was to
be suspended, on the lee side. Her passengers
were taken on deck as those from the gig had been,
and she was hoisted up.

“Mr. Kendall, I congratulate you upon the success
of your labors,” said Mr. Lowington, when the
second lieutenant reached the deck. “You
have handled your boat exceedingly well, and you deserve
a great deal of credit.”

“That’s a fact, sir,” added Boatswain
Peaks, touching his cap. “I hardly spoke
a word to him, and I’ve seen many a boat worse
handled in a sea.”

Paul blushed at the praise bestowed upon him, but
he was proud and happy to have done his duty faithfully
on this important occasion. The same commendation
was given to the first lieutenant, after the barge
had been hauled up to the davits, and the order given
for the ship to fill away again.

The women and children were conducted to the professors’
cabin as soon as they came on board, and the seamen
were taken into the steerage. All of them were
exhausted by the anxiety and the hardships they had
endured, and as soon as their safety was insured, they
sank almost helpless under the pressure of their physical
weakness.

“This is a school ship, I’m told,”
said Captain Greely, the master of the shipwrecked
vessel, who had also been invited to the main cabin.

“Yes, sir; we call it the Academy Ship, and
we have eighty-seven young gentlemen on board,”
replied Mr. Lowington.

“They are smart boys, sir. I never saw
boats better handled than those which brought us off
from the ship,” added Captain Greely, warmly.

“Your voyage has come to an unfortunate conclusion,”
said Mr. Lowington.

“Yes, sir; I have lost my ship, but I thank
God my wife and children are safe,” answered
the weather-beaten seaman, as he glanced at one of
the women while the great tears flowed down his sun-browned
cheeks.

“Poor children!” sighed Mr. Agneau, as
he patted the little girl on the head; and his own
eyes were dim with the tears he shed for others’
woes.

Captain Greely told his story very briefly. His
ship was the Sylvia, thirty days out of Liverpool,
bound to New York. She had encountered a heavy
gale a week before, in which she had badly sprung her
mainmast. Finding it impossible to lay her to
under the foresail, they had been compelled to set
the main-topsail, reefed; but even this was too much
for the weak mast, and it had gone by the board, carrying

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the second mate and five men with it. The Sylvia
was old, and the captain acknowledged that she was
hardly sea-worthy. She became unmanageable, and
the foremast had been cut away to ease off the strain
upon her. Her seams opened, and she was making
more water than could be controlled with the pumps.
For eighteen hours, all hands, even including the two
women, had labored incessantly at the pumps and the
buckets, to keep the ship afloat. They were utterly
worn out when they discovered the Young America, were
on the point of abandoning their efforts in despair,
and taking to the boats, in which most of them would
probably have perished.

After the boats started from the Young America, Mr.
Lowington had ordered the cooks to prepare a meal
for the people from the wreck; and as soon as they
came on board, coffee and tea, beefsteaks, fried potatoes,
and hot biscuit were in readiness for them. Tables
were spread in the main cabin and in the steerage,
and the exhausted guests, providentially sent to this
bountiful board, were cordially invited to partake.
They had eaten nothing but hard bread since the gale
came on, and they were in condition to appreciate
the substantial fare set before them.

By the forethought of Captain Greely, the clothing
of the women and children had been thrown into one
of the boats. The bundle was opened, and its
contents dried at the galley fire. The doctor
and the chaplain gave up their state room to the captain,
his wife and children, while Mr. Lowington extended
a similar courtesy to the other woman, who was Mrs.
Greely’s sister. Mr. Fluxion was the first
to offer his berth to the mate of the Sylvia, which
was reluctantly accepted; and all the professors were
zealous to sacrifice their own comfort to the wants
of the wrecked visitors.

In the steerage, every boy, without an exception,
wanted to give up his berth to one of the seamen from
the Sylvia; but the privilege was claimed by the adult
forward officers, the cooks, and stewards. The
principal was finally obliged to decide between them:
and for obvious reasons, he directed that the guests
should occupy the quarters of the men, rather than
of the boys. The people from the Sylvia needed
rest and nourishment more than anything else.
They were warmed, and fed, and dried, and then permitted
to sleep off the fatigues of their severe exertion.

At three o’clock, though they had slept but
an hour or two, most of the shipwrecked people appeared
at divine service, for this was a privilege which
they had long been denied, and it would be strange,
at such a time, if the hearts of those who had been
saved from the angry flood were not overflowing with
gratitude to God for his mercy to them. Mr. Agneau,
whose sensitive nature had been keenly touched by the
events of the day, made a proper use of the occasion,
delivering a very effective address to the students
and to the shipwrecked voyagers, who formed his little
congregation.

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The next morning the wind came up fresh and warm from
the southward, knocking down the heavy sea, and giving
a delightful day to those on board the ship.
The passengers appeared on deck, and were greatly
interested in the Young America and her juvenile crew.
Captain Greely’s son and daughter were little
lions, of the first class, among the boys. All
hands vied with each other in their efforts to do something
for the guests of the ship, and it really seemed as
though the era of good feeling had dawned upon them.
Even Shuffles and Pelham forgot, for a time, the interests
of the Chain League, and joined with others in petting
the children of the wreck, and in laboring for the
happiness of the involuntary guests.

On this day, observations for latitude and longitude
were obtained, and at noon the ship was found to be
in latitude 42 deg., 37’, 5” N.; longitude
64 deg., 39’, 52” W. The position of the
ship was marked on the chart by the masters, in council
assembled, and the calculations made for the course.
Bowditch’s Navigator, an indispensable work to
the seaman, was consulted frequently both for the
rules and the nautical tables it contains. The
course, after allowing for the variation of the compass,
was found to be north-east by east, which, agreeing
with the calculations of Mr. Fluxion, was given out
to the quartermaster conning the wheel.

The wind continued to blow fresh from the south and
south-west during the rest of the day and the succeeding
night; and the log-slate showed ten and eleven knots
until midnight, when the wind hauled round to the
westward, and soon came strong from that quarter.
At noon on Tuesday, April 5, the Young America had
made two hundred and forty-four miles during the preceding
twenty-four hours, which was the best run she had
had during the voyage.

On the afternoon of this day, a ship, bound to the
westward, was seen, and Captain Greely expressed a
desire to be put on board of her, with his family,
as he did not wish to return to the point from which
he had just come. The Young America bore down
upon the sail, and spoke her at sundown. Her
captain was willing to take the shipwrecked voyagers
on board his ship, which was bound to New York, and
they were transferred in the barge and gig. Captain
Greely and his party were very grateful for the attentions
they had received; and the little boy and girl almost
rebelled at the idea of leaving their new and partial
friends.

As the two ships were filling away, after the transfer
of the passengers, the seamen of the New York ship,
having learned what the Young America was, gave three
cheers, and dipped her ensign in compliment to her.
All the young tars were immediately ordered into the
rigging by Captain Gordon, and “three times three”
were most lustily given. The American flag at
her peak was lowered three times, in reply to the
salute of the stranger. As the Academy Ship stood
off on her course, the two children of Captain Greely
were seen, on the poop-deck of the other vessel, waving
their handkerchiefs; and they continued to do so as
long as they could be seen.

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The departure of the guests had a saddening effect
upon the crew of the Young America, as they missed
the children and the ladies very much; for, during
their presence on board, the ship had assumed quite
a domestic aspect, and all the idlers on deck found
pleasing companions in the little boy and girl.

The limits of this volume do not permit a full detail
of the entire voyage across the ocean. Enough
has been given to show the discipline of the ship,
and the daily life of the boys on board of her.
For the next ten days the weather was generally favorable,
and she laid her course all the time. Some days
she made two hundred miles, and others less than one
hundred.

On the sixteenth day from her departure, she was in
latitude 51 deg., 4’, 28” N.; longitude
31 deg., 10’, 2” W.; course, E. by N. In
going from Cape Race, the southern point of Newfoundland,
to Cape Clear, the southern point of Ireland, the
Young America did not lay a straight course, as it
would appear when drawn on a map or chart. La
Rochelle, on the western coast of France, and Cape
Race are nearly on the same parallel of latitude,
and the former is exactly east of the latter.
But the parallel on which both points lie would not
be the shortest line between them. A great circle,
extending entirely around the earth in the broadest
part, going through both, would not coincide with
the parallel, but would run to the north of it a considerable
distance at a point half way between the two places,
the separation diminishing each way till the great
circle crosses the parallel at Cape Race and La Rochelle.
The shortest course between the two points, therefore,
would be the arc of the great circle lying between
them. A skilful navigator would find and follow
this track. This is called great circle sailing.

The Young America followed a great circle from Cape
Race to Cape Clear. Off the former point, her
course was two points north of east; off the latter,
it was half a point south of east. On her twentieth
day out she sailed due east.

After the excitement of the wreck and the departure
of the passengers, Shuffles and his confederates resumed
their operations in the Chain League, assisted somewhat
by a case of discipline which occurred at this time.
When the ship was sixteen days out the Chain consisted
of thirty-one links, in the cabalistic language of
the conspirators, and Shuffles was in favor of striking
the blow.

**CHAPTER XVII.**

PEAS AND BEANS.

The business of the Chain had been managed with extreme
caution by the conspirators, and more than one third
of the crew had been initiated without the knowledge
of the principal and professors, or of the officers
and seamen who were not members. Pelham and Shuffles
ordered the affairs of the League, and no “link”
was allowed to approach an outsider for the purpose
of inducing him to join without the consent of one
of these worthies.

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As the scheme progressed, various modifications had
been made in the plan to adapt it to circumstances,
the principal of which was the choice of two “shackles,”
who should be deemed the officers of the League until
a regular election had taken place. By this invention,
Shuffles and Pelham had been enabled to compromise
their differences, for they assumed the newly-created
offices, and labored as equals in the bad cause.
Each endeavored to make as many new “links”
as possible, for already the conspirators consisted
of two factions, one of which favored the election
of Shuffles, and the other that of Pelham, to the
captaincy. Each, in a measure, controlled his
own recruits, and was reasonably sure of their votes
when the election should be ordered.

These young gentlemen were not only plotting to take
the ship, but to “take in” each other.
While both worked for the League as a whole, each
worked for himself as an individual. Shuffles
was much more thorough than his rival in the making
of his converts. He told them the whole story,
and taught them to look full in the face the extreme
peril of the undertaking. He did not conceal
anything from them. On the other hand, Pelham
merely represented the project as a means of redressing
the grievances of the officers and crew; of having
their money restored to them, and abolishing certain
portions of the regulations which pressed hard upon
those who were disposed to be unruly.

Though the number of “links” in the “Chain”
has been mentioned, it was not known to either of
the rivals. Each knew his own peculiar followers,
but he did not know how many the other could muster.
Though there were signs and passwords by which the
members could know each other, there were no means
by which any one could precisely sum up the whole number
of “links.” Shuffles could count thirteen
including his rival, while Pelham could number nineteen
without his coequal in authority. The former
believed the list to consist of about twenty four,
while the latter estimated it above thirty. With
them it was a struggle for an office, as well as to
redress their fancied wrongs, and they mutually deceived
each other in order to obtain the advantage.

“How many do you suppose we can muster now?”
asked Shuffles, on the evening of the eighteenth day
out, as they met in the waist, when both were off
duty.

“About twenty,” replied Pelham.

“There are more than that.”

“Perhaps there are.”

“But it is time to stretch the Chain,”
added Shuffles, in a whisper.

“Not yet.”

“If we are ever going to do anything, we must
begin soon. We have so many members now that
the danger of exposure increases every day.”

“We can’t do anything here. Besides,
I am not in favor of having the time or the manner
of accomplishing the work talked about among the members.
I believe in one-man power in an affair of this sort.
There should be one head, who should plan and command;
all the rest should obey. If every step in the
thing must be discussed and agreed upon, we shall
never do anything. One fellow will want it done
in one way, and another in some other way.”

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“I think you are more than half right,”
replied Shuffles, who was confident that he should
be the person chosen to arrange the plans and issue
the commands.

“I know I am wholly right,” added Pelham,
who was equally confident that he should enjoy the
undivided sway of the League. “If you are
chosen captain I will cheerfully obey your orders.
I go a step farther: whoever is elected captain
should appoint his own officers.”

“I will agree to that also,” replied the
complaisant Shuffles.

“Very well, then; the understanding is, that
when one of us is elected captain, he shall appoint
his own officers, and do all the planning and all
the commanding,” answered Pelham.

“Exactly so; we are now in about longitude thirty-one,
and Cork Harbor is in longitude eight, according to
Bowditch, for I was looking the matter up in the steerage
to-day. We have to make about twenty-three degrees
more. A degree of longitude, in latitude fifty-one,
is thirty-seven and three quarters miles, which would
make it eight hundred and sixty-eight miles more to
run in order to reach Queenstown. You see I am
posted,” said Shuffles.

“I see you are. By the way, had you noticed
that Queenstown is not in the Navigator, or on the
older maps?” added Pelham.

“Yes; the place was called the Cove of Cork
until 1849, when, in honor of her majesty’s
visit to the town, the name was changed to Queenstown.”

“All right,” said Pelham.

It need not be supposed that the distance to Queenstown
and the change in the name of that place had anything
to do with the League. The fact was, that Mr.
Fluxion had passed near the conspirators, and had paused
a moment in the waist to glance up at the fore-top-gallant
sail, which was not in good trim; and the conversation
had been changed to suit the occasion. In talking
of the affairs of the “Chain,” it was required
that one of the party should look forward, and the
other aft, if there were two of them; and that the
third, if there were three, should stand back to the
nearest rail. It was further required that the
conversation should not take place in a situation
where it would be possible for any one to overhear
them. The lee side of the waist,—­the
midshipman of the watch always being on the weather
side,—­the top-gallant forecastle, and the
tops were the favorite resorts of the conspirators.
If any one approached, the parties in conversation
were instantly to change the topic, as Shuffles had
done.

“I think it is about time for the election to
take place,” continued Shuffles, when Mr. Fluxion
had gone aft.

“Whenever you are ready, I am,” replied
Pelham.

“I am ready now.”

“So am I.”

“Very well; it shall come off to-morrow, say.”

“To-morrow it is, then.”

“But how shall it be conducted?” asked
Shuffles.

“That will not be an easy matter. I think,
however we can hit upon some plan for having it fairly
done.”

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“Of course the matter lies between you and me,”
added Shuffles.

“To be sure.”

“I suppose both of us are ready to abide the
issue, whatever it may be,” said Shuffles, who
was not a little fearful that his powerful rival would
refuse to acknowledge him when he was chosen, as he
confidently expected to be.

“I pledge you my word and honor, that I will
obey you in all things if you are fairly elected captain,”
replied Pelham, who was equally sure of being chosen
himself.

“Fairly? Who is to decide whether it is
fairly done or not?” demanded Shuffles, unwilling
to leave a loop-hole through which his companion could
crawl out of the bargain.

“When we have agreed upon the means of electing
the captain, the choice shall be final.”

“Good! You and I shall have no difficulty!”
exclaimed Shuffles, rather astonished to find his
rival so easily managed, as he regarded it.

“We will make it a little more binding, if you
choose,” suggested Pelham, who, the reader has
already been assured by the figures given, was completely
outwitting the author and inventor of the Chain League.

“With all my heart!”

“We will toggle each other on this special question
if you like.”

“The stronger we make the bond the better,”
said Shuffles. “Repeat after me.”

“Not here, Shuffles. There is a steamer
on our weather bow. Let’s go up into the
mizzentop, and have a look at her with a night glass.”

Mr. Haven, the first lieutenant, who was in charge
of the deck, permitted them to go aloft with the glass,
for the officers were empowered to grant small favors.
On reaching the top, they glanced at the steamer,
and then resumed the conversation which had been suspended
on deck, it being too dark for the officers below to
see what they were doing.

“Now go ahead,” said Pelham.

“Repeat after me.”

“All right.”

“I promise, without any reservation, to acknowledge
Shuffles as captain, if he is chosen, and faithfully
to obey his orders, on penalty of falling overboard
accidentally.”

Pelham repeated these words, and then “toggled”
his rival in the same manner.

“Now we understand each other perfectly, and
there will be no chance of dragging the anchor,”
said Shuffles, satisfied that his sway would be undisputed.
“Let me say, in addition to this, that if I should
happen to be chosen, I shall make you my first officer,
Pelham.”

“And I will make you my first officer, if I
should happen to be chosen,” replied the obliging
Pelham. “Of course I don’t expect
to be chosen; you have had the swing of this affair,
and you will have all the advantage.”

“No, I think not; you are an officer now, and
you have more influence than I have,” added
the modest Shuffles.

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If both had been laboring for the organization of
the League on the same terms, Shuffles would certainly
have the better chance of an election; but Pelham
had been taking in members on false pretences, merely
representing to those whom he approached that the League
was an association having for its object the redress
of their grievances. To only a few had he mentioned
the fact that a regular mutiny was contemplated; that
the ship was to be taken out of the hands of the principal,
and an independent cruise commenced. He was afraid
the whole truth would be more than some of them could
bear; and perhaps he had so little faith in the extreme
measures to be carried out by the League, that he
was unwilling even to mention them.

Those who serve the evil one can neither trust each
other nor trust their master.

The only real confidence in each other which can exist
among men or boys must be based on moral and religious
principle.

The man who pays his debts, or who performs his obligations
to his fellow-men, for his reputation’s sake,
rather than from devotion to pure principle, will
fail of his duty when he can conceal his infidelity,
or when his reputation will not suffer from his acts.

A man or a boy without principle is not to be trusted
out of the line of his own interest.

While Shuffles and Pelham were pledging themselves
to a kind of romantic fidelity, they were plotting
each against the other, each being satisfied that
he had the advantage of the other.

“Now, I’m afraid the election will give
us some trouble,” continued Shuffles. “It
will not be an easy matter to conduct it fairly—­not
that any fellow means to cheat, but it must be conducted
with so much secrecy that we can’t superintend
the ballot properly.”

“I know there is all that difficulty, but I
have thought of a method which I believe will give
us a fair election,” replied Pelham.

“Have you? So have I.”

“Well, what is your plan? If it is better
than mine, I am willing to adopt it.”

“I was thinking, as you and I are the only candidates
that each of us might be represented by one side of
the ship. You shall be port, and I will be starboard
Then every link in the Chain shall hand his vote, on
which shall be written the single word port or starboard
either to you or me; and if there are more port than
starboard, you will be captain; if more starboard
than port, I shall be captain! How does that idea
strike you?”

“Pretty well; but the fellows have all got to
write their votes, and others will want to know what
it means. It will set outsiders to thinking,
and I don’t believe the plan is quite safe.”

“Well, what is your method?” asked Shuffles,
who was willing to acknowledge the force of his rival’s
objections.

“Perhaps my plan is as open to objection as
yours,” answered Pelham; “but it will
require no writing. Each of us shall get a handful
of beans and a handful of peas. We can easily
obtain them when the store rooms are opened.
You shall be beans, and I will be peas.”

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“How are you, Peas?” said Shuffles, laughing
at the idea.

“How are you, Beans?” added Pelham.

“Go on with your soup.”

“We will give to every fellow belonging to the
Chain one pea and one bean.”

“I understand the plan now; but where are the
fellows to deposit their vegetable ballots?”

“We can have a receiver; appoint some good fellow
for the purpose—­say, Greenway, the captain
of the forecastle; or Tom Ellis, the third master.”

“Tom Ellis! Does he belong?”

“Of course he does,” laughed Pelham, who
realized that he had been a little too fast in betraying
the strength of his faction.

“I wouldn’t appoint an officer.”

“Well, you mention some fellow,” said
the politic Pelham.

“Say Wilton.”

“Mention another.”

“Lynch.”

“No; try again.”

“Grossbeck.”

“Very well; I will agree to him.”

“But he might make some mistake.”

“If he does, it will be in your favor, I suppose;
for you nominated him, and, of course, he will give
you the benefit of any doubt,” replied Pelham.

“I want a fellow who will do it fairly.
I don’t wish to get in by any mistake,”
said Shuffles, magnanimously.

“Neither do I? and I don’t think there
will be any mistakes.”

“There is a chance for a great many. The
fellows may get mixed between beans and peas.
When they come to vote, there will be some who don’t
know beans,” laughed Shuffles.

“Well, if they don’t, they will know peas,
which will do just as well,” replied Pelham.

“It would not be pleasant for me to have them
know peas, when they ought to know beans.”

“We will give them P.P. as a clew to the whole
thing.”

“P.P.? That means P’s, I suppose.”

“It means that, and more. P. for Pelham,
and P. for peas. If they get one right, they
can’t very well get the other wrong.”

“That’s true,” answered Shuffles,
silenced, rather than convinced, by the tactics of
his fellow-conspirator.

It was settled that he who knew peas must certainly
“know beans.”

“When shall the fellows vote?” asked Shuffles.

“After dinner to-morrow afternoon. Every
fellow will be off duty an hour in the first or second
dog watch,” replied Pelham, who seemed to have
an answer ready for every question. “The
polls shall be kept open till eight o’clock.
The peas and beans shall be distributed before eight
bells in the forenoon watch, so that every fellow will
be ready to vote.”

“Where will Grossbeck stand when he receives
the ballots?”

“He won’t stand anywhere in particular.
We will see him together, and give him his instructions.
I think it will be better for him to walk about the
ship, and let the fellows hand him the votes on the
sly, which he must put in his pocket. He shall
count them in the presence of both of us.”

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“Suppose he should lose some of them?”
suggested Shuffles.

“If he does, he is as likely to lose peas as
beans.”

“I don’t want to be chosen in any such
manner as by the loss of the votes.”

“I can’t see that there is any more danger
of his losing them than there is of his losing his
head. I see you are not entirely satisfied with
the plan.”

“To tell you the truth, Pelham, I am not.
There is, at least, a chance for mistakes.”

“I’m willing to do anything you like,
that will make the election a fairer one.”

“I have it!” exclaimed Shuffles.
“We can give each fellow two peas and two beans,
and let him vote twice.”

“What good will that do?”

“I’ll tell you. We want another receiver;
then let each fellow vote twice, giving a pea or a
bean to both of the receivers. If the two results
don’t agree, it shall not be an election.”

“That’s a first-rate idea, Shuffles, and
I go in for it with all my might,” replied Pelham,
with so much warmth that his companion was put in
the best of humor. “Who shall be the other
receiver?”

“Name some one,” said Shuffles, generously
conceding the nomination to his confederate.

“Perth.”

“No.”

Shuffles objected because Pelham had done so when
he had mentioned two names.

“Richton.”

“Once more.”

“McKeon.”

“Right. McKeon is an honest, careful fellow,”
added Shuffles. “Now I think there can
be no mistake.”

The minor details of the election were carefully arranged,
and the boys went below again. They gave satisfactory
replies to the first lieutenant, who questioned them
in regard to the steamer they had gone aloft to examine.
Pelham thought she was a “Cunarder,” but
Shuffles was confident she belonged to the Inman line;
and it is quite certain neither of them had any opinion
whatever in regard to her, except that she was going
west; for the red light on her port side was visible.

On the following day, Grossbeck and McKeon, the receivers
who had been appointed, were waited upon, separately,
by the two “Shackles.” They accepted
the important trust which was confided to them, and
each was duly and solemnly admonished of the necessity
of entire fairness. They were informed that any
discrepancy in the number of ballots in the hands
of the two receivers would cause the vote to be rejected;
and they individually promised to be both faithful
and careful.

The beans and the peas were readily obtained, and
were distributed among the members of the League,
with the necessary secrecy. Some of the independent
voters needed a little persuasion to induce them to
vote, when informed that the choice was between the
“Shackles” only; but they yielded the
point, and entered heartily into the excitement of
the event; for, secret as were the proceedings, they
were attended with no little exhilaration of feeling.

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The voting commenced in the afternoon watch.
The second part of the starboard watch, being off
duty, gave in their peas and beans first. The
receivers, without even knowing all the members of
the League, took whatever was handed to them “on
the sly,” and looked as careless and indifferent
as though nothing was going on. The only responsibility
that rested upon them, besides the general duty of
carefulness and fidelity, was to see that no one voted
twice. “Vote early and vote often”
was not countenanced; and one receiver acted as a
check upon the other.

The election progressed so secretly that no occasion
for suspicion was given; and though the ballots were
deposited under the eyes of the principal and the
professors they saw nothing, and had not the remotest
idea that anything wrong was in progress.

In the last half of the first dog watch, Shuffles
began to be excited. He was too much of a politician
to be idle while any voting was going on? and so far
as his duty would permit, he had watched the receivers
since the balloting commenced. He had seen seven
or eight vote of whose membership in the Chain he
had no previous knowledge. He saw that Pelham
had made more initiates than he had been willing to
acknowledge, apparently concealing the facts for the
purpose of favoring his own election. He observed
that all the officers of his rival’s quarter
watch voted, and he was almost certain that he had
been defeated.

Shuffles was angry and indignant when he discovered
the treacherous shrewdness of his fellow-conspirator;
but he had solemnly promised to abide the result of
the election, and he could not recede from his position
without a violation of the “honor among thieves”
which is said to exist. The poll would not be
closed for half an hour; and as he had been cheated
he deemed it quite right to restore the equilibrium
by a resort to the same policy.

“Wilton, I have been cheated,” said he,
angrily, as he met his old crony in the waist.

“How do you know you have?”

“I know it. I will explain by and by.
Something must be done. I am beaten as sure as
you live.”

“Well, I can’t help it if you are.
You and Pelham have fixed things to suit yourselves,
and now you must fight it out between you,” replied
Wilton, as he turned on his heel, and left the mighty
mischief-maker alone and disconcerted.

“Where do all these beans come from?”
said Paul Kendall, as he noticed the rejected ballots
of the Pelhamites, which they had not even taken the
trouble to throw over the rail.

“It’s a new game the fellows are playing,”
replied Shuffles, with apparent indifference, as he
walked aft with the second lieutenant.

“What’s that?” asked Paul, curiously.

“It’s called ‘Don’t know Beans,’”
answered Shuffles in deep thought. “The
fellows have a good deal of sport out of it in the
off-time.”

“‘Don’t know Beans!’ I never
heard of such a game before. Tell me about it.”

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“You see Grossbeck and McKeon?”

“Yes.”

“Well, they are the *butts,* as we call
them. All the fellows in our watch have some
beans,” added Shuffles, taking a handful of them
from his pocket.

“What do they do with them?”

“You try it yourself. Take two of these
beans.”

Paul took them.

“Now you must give one to Grossbeck, and the
other to McKeon, without letting any fellow see you
do it. If any fellow does see you give it to
either of them, he will say, in a low tone, ‘Don’t
know Beans,’ and then the butt must drop it
on deck. When the even bell strikes, Grossbeck
and McKeon must count their beans. The one who
has the most must appoint the next two bean-pots,
or butts; and the one who has the smaller number must
pick up all the beans that have been dropped on the
deck. There is fun in it; though, perhaps, you
wouldn’t think so.”

“I will try it, at any rate.”

Paul did try it, and succeeded, as all others did,
in giving the beans to the receivers without any one
uttering the warning words. He was rather pleased
with the game, so suddenly invented, and the two officers
of his watch were induced to try the experiment.
Then Blackburn, Endicott, and Bennington were supplied
with beans by Shuffles, who instructed his auditors
that not a word must be said about the matter to the
“butts,” or to any one in the waist.
The last three were as successful as the first three.
Then Thompson and Cartwright were equally fortunate.
Finally, Captain Gordon’s attention was attracted,
and he descended so far from his dignity as to deposit
the beans.

Shuffles was satisfied. He had procured nine
votes, and he was confident that he had thus defeated
his rival. As a matter of precaution, he directed
McKeon to pick up the beans scattered in the waist;
and the “outsiders” who had cast the nine
votes believed that he was the unlucky butt, who had
been beaten in the game.

“The captain and half the officers voted,”
whispered Grossbeck at four bells.

“Certainly; that’s all right. You
and McKeon will meet Pelham and me in the waist at
eight bells,” replied Shuffles, as he went below.

**CHAPTER XVIII.**

THE RESULT OF THE BALLOT.

The first part of the port watch went on duty at eight
o’clock, when the secret poll for the choice
of a captain, under the new order of events, was closed.
Shuffles was in this watch, but as neither his “trick
at the wheel” nor his turn on the lookout came
within the first hour, he had an opportunity to attend
to the important business of the League. Pelham
and the two receivers of votes belonged in the second
part of the port watch, and there was nothing to prevent
them from attending the conference which Shuffles
had appointed.

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While Shuffles had been teaching the “outsiders”
the game of “Don’t know Beans,”
Pelham, as officer of the deck, remained abaft the
mizzenmast, and had failed to notice what was taking
place in the waist. The officers who were off
duty, and who had unconsciously voted for Shuffles,
said nothing to those in charge of the ship. In
accordance with the requirements of man-of-war discipline,
the weather side of the deck was given up to the captain
and the officers on duty, while all the idlers were
required to keep on the lee side. Captain Gordon
was a privileged person. On the weather side,
even the denizens of the after cabin did not presume
to address him on any question not connected with
the discipline of the ship. When he went over
to the lee side, it was understood that he was simply
a student, and even an ordinary seaman might speak
to him when he walked forward.

Shuffles had explained the game to the outsiders on
the lee side, out of the hearing of the officer of
the deck; and Pelham, entirely satisfied that he was
already elected, did not trouble himself about the
matter.

If “Don’t know Beans” was not much
of a game, it was better than nothing, and Shuffles
soon found that there was danger of his little scheme
being exposed. During the second dog watch, at
supper time, and as other opportunities were presented,
he told Wilton, Monroe, Adler, and others, that the
second lieutenant, seeing so many beans on the deck,
wished to know where they came from, and that, to deceive
him and the rest of the officers, he had invented
the game which he described, and wished them to play
while off duty on deck. “Our fellows”
thought this was a good joke, and the new pastime
was soon understood throughout the ship, and “butts”
were appointed in each quarter watch to play it the
next day.

“The fellows have all voted, I suppose,”
said Pelham when the party had obtained a good position
for the conference.

“The time is out, whether they have or not,”
replied Grossbeck.

“All we have to do now is to count the votes,”
added Shuffles, impatiently, for he was afraid his
little trick would be exposed before the result of
the ballot was obtained.

“Well, let us have it counted at once,”
said Pelham, who, having no doubt of the result, had
no thought of offering any objection to the fairness
of the election.

“We can’t count the votes here,”
suggested McKeon. “Some one would see us,
and want to know what we were doing.”

“I can’t leave the deck; I’m on
duty,” replied Shuffles.

“Let the receivers count it themselves.”

“We ought to see them do it.”

“That is not necessary. They don’t
know how many votes they have.”

“I’m sure I don’t,” said Grossbeck.

“Neither do I,” added McKeon.

“I’ll tell you how we can manage it, without
exciting the attention of any one.”

“I will agree to anything that is fair,”
replied Shuffles.

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“Grossbeck shall go forward, and McKeon aft
as far as the mainmast, so that each cannot know what
the other is about. They can count the votes
separately without being seen.”

“I don’t see how we can,” said McKeon.

“Can you tell a pea from a bean by the feeling?”

“Of course we can.”

“Where did you put the votes, Grossbeck?”
asked Pelham.

“In my trousers’ pocket.”

“So did I,” added McKeon.

“Both of you have on your pea-jackets now, and
there is a pocket on each side of them. Take
out all the peas first, and put them in the right-hand
pocket of your pea-jacket; then all the beans, and
put them in the left-hand pocket; then count each.”

“Some fellow may see us counting them,”
said Grossbeck.

“You must take care of that,” answered
Pelham.

“If they do, it will not make much difference.
Some of the fellows were careless, and threw their
beans on the deck.”

“Did they?” laughed Pelham? “I
suppose they had no use for them.”

“The second lieutenant saw them, and wanted
to know what they meant,” added Shuffles.

“Whew!” exclaimed Pelham.

“I made it all right, though I was obliged to
invent a new game to throw him off the track.”

“Good!” said Pelham. “But we
must go on with the counting. When you have found
the number of peas and of beans, you will write the
result on a piece of paper, each of you. McKeon,
you will hand your paper to Shuffles, and, Grossbeck,
you will hand yours to me. That’s fair—­isn’t
it?”

“Certainly,” replied Shuffles.

“Then we will put the two papers together; if
they agree, the election is made; if they do not agree,
we must do it all over again,” continued Pelham.

“All right,” added Shuffles.

The two receivers were sent away to count the votes.
As one went forward, and the other aft, and the two
“Shackles” stood between, no communication
whatever could pass from one to the other. It
was now quite dark, and most of those off duty had
turned in, for the students had become so well accustomed
to sea life that they could sleep whenever their presence
was not required on deck.

“I hope this thing will be settled now once
for all,” said Pelham, who feared that some
mistake might defeat his hopes.

“So do I,” replied Shuffles, who was disturbed
by the same dread.

“Have you any idea what the result will be?”
asked Pelham, who, in spite of the mutual “toggling,”
and the mutual assurances of good faith, had some
doubts whether his rival would be willing to accept
the result.

“Well, I don’t know,” replied Shuffles,
cautiously, and with the same want of confidence which
disturbed his companion. “There is no knowing
who will be governor till after election.”

“Of course not, but you might have some idea
of the way the thing is going?”

“I might, but what’s the use of talking
when we shall know all about it in ten or fifteen
minutes?”

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“Of course you have some hopes.”

“To be sure I have; and I suppose you have,
too.”

“Certainly I have; if I hadn’t, I should
have given the thing up without the trouble and risk
of a ballot,” replied Pelham.

“We both expect it, and it follows that one
of us must be disappointed.”

“You know the bond.”

“I do.”

“Here is my hand, Shuffles. I pledge myself
over again to abide the result of the vote, whether
it is for me or against me,” continued Pelham,
extending his hand.

“And here is my hand, Pelham, with the same
pledge, honor bright,” replied Shuffles, as
he took the offered hand.

“I am tolerably confident of the result,”
added Pelham.

“I am quite confident that I shall be chosen,”
replied Shuffles.

“Don’t be too certain, my dear fellow,”
laughed the fourth lieutenant. “I have
taken in a great many recruits.”

“I’m glad you have—­the more
the better. I have also taken in a good many.
Pelham, do you know this is very shaky business?”

“Shaky?”

“Yes—­between you and me, I mean.
If either of us should back down, the whole thing
would fall to the ground.”

“Back down!” exclaimed Pelham. “Why,
after what has passed between us, I consider it impossible
that either of us should back down. I am pledged;
so are you; and if either of us should back down, I
hope he will—­fall overboard accidentally.”

“So do I,” replied Shuffles, heartily.

“My dear fellow, if you should back out, I should
be mad enough to help you over the rail, some dark
evening, if I had a good chance.”

“I don’t believe I should feel any better-natured
if you should break your agreement. One of us
is doomed to disappointment. We have tried to
make this thing as fair as possible.”

“Certainly we have, and it will be as fair as
anything can be. I am entirely satisfied with
the voting.”

“Are you?”

“Of course I am.”

Shuffles was very glad of this acknowledgment in advance
of the reception of the result.

“But, after all, Pelham,” said he, “there
may be an appearance of unfairness in the voting,
after the result is declared.”

“There may be; but each of us is pledged not
to claim anything on account of such an appearance.
If the figures of the two receivers agree, that is
the end of the whole thing, and you or I will be the
captain.”

“That’s so; but here comes McKeon,”
replied Shuffles, as the receiver gave him the paper
on which the result of the votes he had received was
written.

It was too dark to see it, and the rivals waited,
in great excitement of mind, for the appearance of
Grossbeck. He came, and his paper was handed
to Pelham. The conditions of the agreement had
now all been complied with, and the two papers were
to be placed side by side, where both of the candidates
could see them at the same instant. It was necessary,
in the darkness, to obtain the use of a light for
a moment and they decided to wait till the midshipman
on duty in the waist went into the steerage to make
the half-hourly inspection.

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When one bell struck, the officer left his post, and
the conspirators walked up to the binnacle in the
waist. By raising one of the slides in the side
of the machine, the lamp which threw its light on the
face of the compass would enable them to examine the
papers.

“Hold your paper by the side of mine,”
said Pelham as he placed the important document in
a position to receive the light from the binnacle
when the slide should be moved.

“Open it,” replied Shuffles, nervously,
as he complied with the direction of his rival.

Pelham raised the slide, and the contents of the papers
were read by both.

Peas,........19

Beans,........22

The results given in by the two receivers were the
same, and by the terms of the bond, it was an election.

“Shut the slide,” said Shuffles.

“Who opened that binnacle?” demanded the
first master, walking aft from his station on the
forecastle.

“I did, sir,” replied Shuffles, unwilling
to permit the fourth lieutenant to answer the question.
“We were looking at some figures I had made.”

The master, finding that the fourth lieutenant was
one of the party gathered around the binnacle, said
no more, and returned to his place.

“Are you satisfied, Pelham?” asked Shuffles,
in the softest of tones.

“I don’t understand it,” answered
the disappointed candidate.

“Don’t you? Well, you will remember
that neither of us was to raise any question about
the fairness of the ballot.”

“I don’t say a word about its fairness;
I only said I did not understand it,” answered
Pelham, in surly tones.

“I don’t understand it any better than
you do; but the point just now is, whether you acknowledge
me as captain, or not.”

“Of course I do. When I pledge myself to
do a thing, I always do it, I hail you as captain.”

“All right,” added Shuffles. “Then
nothing more need be said. You have kept your
bond like a gentleman and I now appoint you my first
officer, as I promised to do.”

“Thank you,” replied Pelham, in a sneering
tone.

“What’s the matter, my dear fellow?
Are you not satisfied?” demanded Shuffles.

“Entirely satisfied with the result;”
but he talked like one who was anything but satisfied.

“It was a fair thing—­wasn’t
it?”

“I suppose it was; I don’t know.”

“You speak as though you were not satisfied,
Pelham.”

“I am not disposed to grumble. I only say
that I don’t understand it.”

“What don’t you understand?” asked
Shuffles, sharply. “The election was conducted
on a plan furnished by yourself; the receivers were
of your own choice; the results agree; and I can’t
see, for the life of me, that there is any chance
to find fault.”

“I don’t find fault. The result perplexes
me, because I can’t see through it.”

“What do you mean by that?”

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“I don’t see where your twenty-two votes
came from.”

“And I don’t see where your nineteen came
from,” retorted the successful candidate.

“The whole number of votes was forty-one,”
added Pelham, who was quite sure there was something
wrong.

“The long and short of it is, that there are
more fellows on board that ‘know beans,’
than you thought there were,” laughed Shuffles.

“Can you tell me where the forty-one votes came
from, Shuffles?” demanded Pelham.

“Came from the fellows, of course.”

“It’s no use to snuff at it, my dear fellow.
I do not purpose to set aside the election. I
acknowledge you as captain. Can I do any more?”

“You can’t; but you seem disposed to do
something more.”

“I merely wish to inquire into this thing, and
find out how we stand. Had you any idea that
forty-one fellows belonged to the Chain?”

“I had not,” replied Shuffles, honestly.
“I was never more surprised in my life, than
when I saw Tom Ellis and Andy Groom vote.”

“That was all right. Both of them joined.”

“I can tell you what took me all aback,”
interposed McKeon, who, with Grossbeck, had been walking
back and forth in the waist.

“No matter what took you all aback,” added
Shuffles sharply. “The question is settled;
what’s the use of raking up every thing that
may seem to be strange?”

“What was it that took you aback, McKeon?”
demanded Pelham.

“It was when the captain voted,” replied
the receiver.

“The captain!” exclaimed Pelham.

“Yes.”

“Do you mean Captain Gordon, McKeon?”
asked Pelham, with intense surprise.

“Of course I do."’

“All the officers of the first part of the port
watch voted,” added Grossbeck.

“They did!” exclaimed Pelham.

“Well, was it any stranger that the officers
of the first part of the port watch voted, than it
was that those of the second part did so?” inquired
Shuffles, with earnestness.

“I think it was,” replied Pelham, decidedly.

“Paul Kendall was one of them,” said McKeon.

“Paul Kendall! Does any fellow suppose
he has joined the Chain?” demanded the defeated
candidate.

“Why not?”

“And Captain Gordon?”

“Why not?”

“How did the captain vote?” asked Pelham.

“No matter how he voted,” said Shuffles,
indignantly “I protest against this raking up
of matters which are already settled.”

“He voted beans,” replied McKeon, who,
it is hardly necessary to add, was a Pelham man.

“Then he is one of your friends, Shuffles,”
continued Pelham, who was beginning to understand
how his rival had been elected.

“I don’t claim him.”

“Did you take the captain into the Chain, Shuffles?”

“I won’t answer,” replied the captain
elect.

“If Captain Gordon and Paul Kendall are members,
I would like to know it. I am first officer of
the ship under the new order of things, and if I command
Gordon to do anything, I mean that he shall obey me.”

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“Of course you will give him no orders till
we are in possession of the ship,” added Shuffles,
not a little alarmed.

“Well, as Gordon and Kendall are members of
the Chain—­of course they are, or they wouldn’t
have voted—­we can talk over the matter freely
with them,” said Pelham, chuckling.

“If you make the signs, and they make them,
of course you can,” replied Shuffles. “No
member can speak to another about the business of the
Chain until both of them have proved that they belong,
by giving the required signals.”

“Shuffles, do you suppose Captain Gordon knows
the signs?”

“How should I know? I never tried him.
I don’t know why he shouldn’t make them
as well as Tom Ellis.”

“Tom Ellis is all right. I vouch for him,
for I admitted him myself. Who will vouch for
the captain? Who took him in?”

“I don’t know.”

“I don’t; but if anybody has admitted
him, and not given him the signs, he ought to be instructed
in them. Of course he must have been admitted,
or he would not have voted,” added Pelham, sarcastically.

“I have nothing more to say about this matter,”
replied Shuffles, disgusted with the cavils of his
first officer.

“Nor I; but I shall satisfy myself whether the
captain is a member or not,” said Pelham, decidedly.

“Well, you must be very cautious what you do.”

“Certainly I shall. I will give him the
first sign; if he don’t answer it, I shall conclude
he is not a member; or, if he is, that he has not
been properly instructed.”

“Better not say anything to him,” said
Shuffles.

“Why not? He voted, and it must be all
right.”

“Don’t you say a word to him, unless he
proves that he is a member.”

“I think he has proved that already by voting.”

“You know our rule.”

“I do; it requires me to satisfy myself that
the person to whom I speak is a member. I am
entirely satisfied now that the captain and Paul Kendall
belong; they would not have voted if they had not belonged.”

This was a “clincher,” and even Shuffles
had not wit enough to escape the conclusion of the
dogmatic reasoner. The captain elect of the League
knew very well that nine persons who were not members
had voted—­that he had secured his election
by a gross fraud. He was afraid that Pelham,
disappointed by his defeat, would do something to compromise
the enterprise; but his own treachery had placed him
in such a position that he could say nothing without
exposing himself.

“Of course it’s all right,” added
Pelham, “I find we have plenty of friends in
the after cabin. As soon as you have any orders
to give, Captain Shuffles, I am in a position to execute
them to the best advantage.”

“When I am ready, I will give them to you.”

“It will be an easy matter now to obtain possession
of the ship; in fact, all you have to do is to order
Captain Gordon to turn the command over to you.
He has been ‘toggled,’ and must obey his
superiors—­of course he has been toggled;
he couldn’t have voted if he hadn’t been.”

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Shuffles was terribly exercised by the repeated flings
of his disconcerted rival. He was already satisfied
that the enterprise had come to an end, unless Pelham
could be quieted; and he was about to propose a new
ballot, when he was ordered by the quartermaster on
duty to take his trick at the wheel.

“What does all this mean?” demanded Pelham
of the receivers, when the captain-elect had gone
to his duty.

“I only know that the captain and all the officers
of the first part of the port watch voted, and other
fellows who would no more join this thing than they
would jump overboard,” replied McKeon.

“How could they vote—­how could the
captain vote—­without understanding the
whole thing?” demanded Pelham, perplexed at the
inconsistency of the facts.

“I think I know something about it,” added
Grossbeck.

“What do you know?”

“Haven’t you heard of the new game?”

“What new game?”

“‘Don’t know Beans.’”

“Shuffles said something about it, but I did
not comprehend his meaning.”

Grossbeck explained the game, whose history had been
circulated among “our fellows.”

“And this game was played while the voting was
going on?” said Pelham, who began to see the
trick which his rival had put upon him.

“I didn’t know anything about it till
supper time,” answered Grossbeck.

“I see it all,” continued Pelham.
“The receivers were the ‘butts,’
and about a dozen fellows voted for Shuffles, including
Gordon and Kendall, supposing they were simply playing
‘Don’t know Beans.’”

It did not require a great deal of penetration on
the part of the fourth lieutenant to comprehend the
trick of his rival. He was indignant and angry,
and all the more so because he had been outwitted,
even while he was attempting to outwit his unscrupulous
competitor.

The next day, the quarter watches off duty played
“Don’t know Beans” to their satisfaction.
It was found, when everybody was watching the “butts,”
that very few could deposit their beans without detection.
A few hours’ trial of the new pastime convinced
all except “our fellows” that it was a
senseless game, and it was speedily abandoned.

On the nineteenth day of the voyage, the Young America
encountered another gale, but it was not nearly so
severe as the one through which she had passed when
off Cape Sable. The ship ran for twelve hours
under close-reefed topsails; but as the gale came
from the south-west, she laid her course during the
whole of it, and behaved herself to the entire satisfaction
of all on board. On the following day, the wind
had hauled round to the north-west, and the sea subsided,
so that the ship went along very comfortably.

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Notwithstanding his doubts of the good faith of Pelham,
who, however, nominally adhered to the terms of the
compact, Shuffles arranged his plans for the capture
of the ship. He had decided to defer the grand
strike until the ship had come up with Cape Clear,
so that the faculty, and all the students who would
not take a part in the enterprise, might be put on
shore immediately. In the course of three days,
the land would probably be sighted. The rising
was to take place in Pelham’s watch, the officers
of which were members of the League. All the details
had been carefully arranged, and trusty “links”
appointed to perform the heavy work. As soon
as the “old folks” had been locked up in
the cabin, and the new captain had taken the command,
the ship was to be headed for the shore. The
great event was to come off at six o’clock in
the afternoon of the twenty-third or twenty-fifth
day. The ship would be near the coast for at
least a part of two days. If she was within six
hours’ sail of the land on the twenty-third
day out, when Pelham would have the second part of
the first dog watch, the rising was to take place then;
if not, it was to be deferred till the twenty-fifth
day, when the watches were again favorable.

Shuffles communicated with his discontented first
officer as often as he could, and unfolded his plans
without reserve. Pelham listened, and, still
professing his willingness to obey his superior officer,
promised to do all that was required of him.

“In your watch, Pelham, you will see that the
helm is in the hands of some of our fellows,”
said Shuffles.

“Certainly,” replied Pelham, with more
indifference than suited the enthusiastic chief of
the enterprise “By the way, Captain Shuffles,
have you laid out any work for Captain Gordon to do?”

“What’s the use of talking to me about
him now that we are on the very point of accomplishing
our purpose?” demanded Shuffles, with deep disgust.

“You can’t deny that Gordon is an able
fellow, and, as a good commander, of course you intend
to give him some important position,” chuckled
Pelham. “Have you appointed the rest of
your officers yet?”

“To be sure I have.”

“Have you given Gordon anything?”

“No!” growled Shuffles.

“No? Why, do you think the present captain
of the ship will be content to go into the steerage
under the new arrangement?”

“He may go into the steerage or go overboard,”
answered the chief, angrily.

“Accidentally, you mean.”

“Pelham, if you intend to be a traitor, say
so.”

“I! My dear fellow, I don’t mean
anything of the kind. I am as true as the pole
star.”

“Have you spoken to the captain about our affairs?”

“Not a word.”

“Have you tried him by the signs?”

“I have, and he made no sign,” laughed
Pelham, who was not much enamoured of the cabalistic
clap-trap of the Chain.

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“Then, of course, he is not a member.”

“He must be; he voted,” replied Pelham,
maliciously.

“How many more times will you say that?”

“Perhaps fifty; perhaps a hundred,” answered
the fourth lieutenant, coolly. “I shall
say it until you are willing to acknowledge the trick
you put upon me.”

“What trick?”

“O, I know all about it! Didn’t you
tell Kendall, the captain, and seven or eight others,
how to play ’Don’t know Beans’?”

“If I did, it was to cheat them when they wanted
to know what the beans meant.”

“You saw that the fellows threw away the beans,
instead of voting for you with them, and you invented
your game to make the thing come out right. No
matter, Shuffles; I am bound by the compact we made,
but I shall persist in regarding Gordon, Kendall Foster,
and others as members. As you made them vote,
you are responsible for them. That’s all.”

“Don’t let us quarrel about it, my dear
fellow,” said Shuffles, in soft, insinuating
tones.

“By no means.”

“We will have a new election,” suggested
the chief.

“If we should, I’m afraid all the fellows
would want to play ’Don’t know Beans.’”

“You shall conduct it any way you please.”

“If I did, you would say I cheated you.
I agreed to abide by the election, and I shall do
so. The fact is, Shuffles, you and I are too
smart to play in the same game. I shall stick
to the bond. When you order me to do anything,
I shall do it,” replied Pelham as he turned on
his heel and walked off.

He retreated into the after cabin, where Shuffles
could not follow him.
At the cabin table, studying his French lesson, sat
Paul Kendall.

**CHAPTER XIX.**

MAN OVERBOARD!

“Do you know how to play ’Don’t
know Beans’?” asked Pelham, as he seated
himself by the side of the second lieutenant.

“Yes; I know how to play it, but it’s
a stupid game. Shuffles told me how.”

“Did he, indeed?”

“There was some fun in it the first time I tried
it; but the second time was enough to satisfy me.
I don’t think there is any sense in it.”

“Of course there isn’t, Kendall,”
laughed Pelham. “It was no game at all.”

“What are you laughing at?”

“You were sold on that game,” added the
conspirator indulging in more laughter than the occasion
seemed to require.

“How was I sold? I don’t see anything
so very funny about it.”

“I do.”

“Tell me about it; if there is any joke I think
I shall enjoy it. You say I was sold.”

“You were; and so was I.”

“Well, what was it?” asked Paul, impatiently.

“When you gave those fellows the beans that
day, you were voting!”

“Voting! Voting for what, or whom?”
exclaimed the second lieutenant.

“For Shuffles.”

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“Did my vote count?”

“To be sure it did; and he was elected to a
certain position by your vote and those of seven or
eight others who did not understand the trick,”
replied Pelham laughing all the time.

“What was the position? I don’t understand
what you are talking about, and therefore I can’t
appreciate the joke.”

“I’ll tell you, Kendall; but you must
keep still about it for the present.”

“It looks to me, on the face of it, like a dishonest
trick. It seems that Shuffles lied to us when
he made us believe that we were playing a game.
I like a joke well enough, but I don’t believe
in a fellow’s lying for the sake of any fun.”

“You are right, Kendall. It was not only
a dishonest trick, but it was a mean one.”

“What was the position?” repeated Paul.

“Some of the fellows are going to make Mr. Lowington
a present of a silver pitcher as soon as we get to
some port where we can obtain one.”

“Why didn’t you tell of it?” demanded
Paul. “I should like to join in the presentation,
for I don’t think there is a fellow on board
who likes Mr. Lowington better than I do.”

“Yes; but, you see, there’s something
peculiar about this thing. The contribution is
to be confined to those fellows who have been disciplined
in one way or another. A good many of us, you
know, were mad when Mr. Lowington took our money away;
we are satisfied now that he was right. We made
him feel rather uncomfortable by our looks and actions,
and some of us were positively impudent to him.
We purpose to show that our feelings are all right.”

“Precisely so!” replied Paul, with enthusiasm.
“That’s splendid! Mr. Lowington will
appreciate the gift when he sees the names of the
subscribers.”

“Certainly he will.”

“But you have no money,” laughed the second
lieutenant.

“We have put our names down for ten shillings
apiece—­about thirty of us. When we
get into port, we shall tell Mr. Lowington that we
wish to present a silver pitcher to a gentleman on
board, in token of our appreciation of his kindness,
&c., and ask him for half a sovereign each from our
funds.”

“He will wish to know who the gentleman is.”

“We can ask to be excused from telling him.”

“I can manage that part of the business for
you. Each of the fellows shall give me an order
on the principal for ten shillings, to be paid to
Dr. Winstock, who will buy the pitcher for you, if
you like. He is acquainted in Cork. I will
give all the orders to the doctor, and he will get
the present without saying a word to Mr. Lowington
until after the presentation. Then he will have
no chance to object, on the suspicion that the gift
is intended for him—­don’t you see?”

Paul Kendall entered into the project with a degree
of enthusiasm which was rather embarrassing to the
conspirator.

“The fellows have been very secret about the
thing,” added Pelham.

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“They must have been, or I should have heard
something about it,” replied Paul, innocently.

“No one but ourselves has known a thing about
it till now. They have formed a kind of secret
society, and know each other by certain signs.”

“But what was the voting for?”

“For orator of the day.”

“For the fellow who is to present the pitcher
and make the speech?” added Paul.

“Yes.”

“And Shuffles was chosen?”

“Yes, by a trick.”

“You mean that no one but subscribers ought
to have voted?”

“Precisely so.”

“It was a mean trick.”

“It was a sort of practical joke upon me, I
suppose”

“I don’t believe in practical jokes which
need a lie to carry them through.”

“Well, Shuffles has the position, unless some
of you fellows will help me out. I wanted to
make the speech, and without the nine votes which
you and other outsiders put in, I should have been
chosen.”

“What can we do?”

“I have a right to consider all the fellows
that voted as members of the society. The fact
of their voting makes them members.”

“I don’t know anything about that.”

“It’s clear enough to me, and in a talk
I had with Shuffles just now, he didn’t pretend
to deny the correctness of my position.”

“If he agrees, it must be all right,”
laughed Paul.

“If you had understood the matter, for whom
should you have voted?”

“I don’t know? but after the trick Shuffles
played off upon you, I should not vote for him.”

“Very well; then you can change your vote.”

“How shall I change it?”

“Go to Shuffles; and the other eight fellows
who voted in the dark must do the same.”

“What shall I say to him?”

“You must go to him as a member of the society,
and salute him as such.”

“I don’t know how.”

“I’ll tell you. When you meet him,
scratch the tip end of your nose with the nail of
your second finger on the right hand; in this manner,”
continued Pelham giving the first sign.

“That’s it—­is it?” said
Paul, as he imitated the action of Pelham.

“Yes; that’s right He will reply by taking
the lower part of his left ear between the thumb and
first finger of the left hand—­so,”
added Pelham.

“I have it,” answered Paul, as he made
the motions.

“Then you will scratch your chin with the thumb
nail of the left hand, and he will reply by blowing
his nose.”

“Let’s see if I can do all that,”
laughed Paul, very much amused at the mystic indications
of membership In the secret association.

He made the signs to Pelham, who replied to them,
several times, until he was perfect in his part.

“All right. I will remember them,”
said Paul.

“But you haven’t got the whole of it yet.
When you have made the signs, and he has answered
them, he will say, ‘*Is* that so?’
with strong emphasis on the first word.”

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“*Is* that so?” repeated Paul.

“Then you will reply, ‘*That* is
so,’ with the stress on *that*.”

“*That* is so,” added Paul.

“Then you must place yourself so as to look
directly forward or aft. If you look forward,
he must look aft.”

“I understand you.”

“Now I want to know who the other fellows were
that played ’Don’t know Beans’ that
day.”

“Captain Gordon was one.”

“Will you post him up in what I have told you?”

“I will, and the other fellows who voted for
Shuffles, if you say so.”

“Thank you. I wish you would. Let
them all tell him they desire to change their votes;
but have them do it one at a time.”

Paul Kendall promised to do what was required of him;
and in the course of the following forenoon he initiated
“the outsiders who had voted for Shuffles”
in the secret machinery of the supposed society, but
in fact of the Chain League. Being off duty during
the second part of the afternoon watch, he encountered
Shuffles in the lee side of the waist.

“Well, Shuffles, we are almost up with the coast
of Ireland,” said Paul, as he scratched the
tip of his nose with the second finger of his right
hand, agreeably to the instructions given him by Pelham.

“Yes; and I suppose by Saturday, if the wind
holds fair, we shall be off Cape Clear,” replied
the captain-elect, as he took the lower part of his
left ear between the thumb and forefinger of the left
hand.

Shuffles did not suppose that the second lieutenant
was a member of the league, and pledged to assist
in the capture of the ship; but as he had made the
sign, probably accidentally, he replied to it.

“There is a prospect of fair weather for some
days to come,” continued Paul, as he scratched
his chin with his left hand, which was the second
step towards a recognition in the “Chain.”

Shuffles was duly and properly astonished at this
exhibition of intelligence on the part of the officer;
and it was now quite certain that Paul had joined
the league, or that he had obtained its tremendous
secrets.

“I hope it will be good weather now during the
rest of the passage,” added the captain-elect,
as he took his handkerchief from his breast pocket
and blew his nose, for he was determined to satisfy
himself whether or not the second lieutenant was a
member of the League.

“*Is* that so?” demanded Shuffles.

“*That* is so,” answered Paul.

Shuffles was almost overwhelmed with astonishment
to find that one who was a model of fidelity and propriety
had actually joined the Chain.

“Shuffles, I voted for you the other day,”
added Paul.

“I know you did.”

“I wish to change my vote.”

“Change it!” exclaimed Shuffles.

“Yes? I voted in the dark. I wish
now to vote for the other candidate.”

“For whom?”

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“For Pelham, of course.”

“You are too late.”

“I think, under the circumstances, that my vote
ought to be counted on the other side, even if it
reverses the result,” said Paul, earnestly.

“Why do you wish to vote for Pelham?”
demanded Shuffles, rather because he had nothing else
to say than because he was interested in the anticipated
reply.

“I don’t think it was quite fair for you
to obtain my vote as you did.”

“No matter for that. Do you think Pelham
would make a better captain than I should?”

“A better what?”

“Do you think he will command the ship any better
than I shall.”

“Command the ship!” repeated Paul, bewildered
by this extraordinary question. “I wasn’t
aware that either of you were to command the ship.”

Shuffles, in his turn, was confounded when he found
that the second lieutenant was a member of the “Chain”
without any knowledge of its objects. Though
he had used all the precautions required by the League,
a hint had unwittingly been given to Paul, whose simple
integrity rendered him the most dangerous person on
board to the interests of such an institution as the
Chain.

“Mr. Kendall, may I ask what you now suppose
you were voting for?” asked Shuffles, with easy
assurance.

“For the orator of the day, of course,”
replied Paul, who was too free from wiles or arts
to make any use of the advantage gained.

Indeed, he was so true himself that he was not suspicious
of others; and he did not even perceive that he had
obtained an advantage.

“Exactly so,” added Shuffles; “for
orator of the day? but we don’t speak the idea
out loud, or call it by its proper name.”

“What did you mean by commanding the ship, Shuffles?”
laughed Kendall.

“I meant orator of the day. We keep this
thing to ourselves,” added Shuffles, who had
no idea what was meant by his companion.

“Of course; I understand all about that,”
said Paul, knowingly. “I don’t think
I had any right to vote; and in my opinion the trick
you played on Pelham was decidedly wrong.”

“It was merely a joke,” answered Shuffles.

“But do you intend to use the advantage you
gained by this trick?”

“Certainly not.”

“I’m very glad of that.”

“It was only for the fun of the thing,”
added Shuffles at a venture.

“It may have been funny; but I don’t think
it was honest.”

“I didn’t intend to make any use of it,”
continued Shuffles. “What did
Mr. Pelham say to you, Mr. Kendall?”

“He told me all about it,” replied Paul.

“Did he, indeed?”

“He said that you, by causing me to vote, had
made me a member.”

“Just so.”

Shuffles did not dare to say much, though it was evident,
from the words and the manner of the second lieutenant,
that Pelham had not yet betrayed the real object of
the Chain. If he had, the captain elect was satisfied
he would have been in irons, confined in the brig,
before that time.

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“I told Mr. Pelham I fully approved the purpose,
and would help him out with it.”

“What purpose?” asked Shuffles, anxious
to know what Paul meant.

“Why, don’t you know?”

“Of course I do; but I wish to know precisely
what Mr. Pelham told you.”

“He will tell you himself,” laughed Paul,
as he walked aft, in order to afford the other “outsiders”
who had voted an opportunity to communicate with Shuffles,
for he perceived that they were waiting their turns.

As the second lieutenant went aft, the captain went
forward on the lee side of the deck.

“Shuffles!” called Captain Gordon, as
the chief conspirator was going forward.

The captain elect turned and walked towards the commander,
and touched his cap with becoming respect.

“What do you think of the weather?” demanded
Captain Gordon, scratching the tip of his nose.

Paul had instructed the “outsiders” to
talk about the weather while they went through with
the mystic routine of the signs.

“I think we shall have good weather,”
replied Shuffles, who, though he was confounded and
amazed to be saluted from this quarter with the language
of the “Chain,” dared not refuse to give
the signs, after he had done so with the second lieutenant.

“I wish to change my vote? for I don’t
think it was fairly given before,” said the
captain, when he had gone through all the forms of
the recognition.

“Certainly, Captain Gordon, if you desire to
do so.”

Fortunately for Shuffles, the captain did not prolong
the conversation; for others were waiting an opportunity
to make themselves known to the conspirator.
One after another, they saluted Shuffles in the waist,
inquiring about the weather, and making the requisite
signs. The captain elect was filled with indignation
and rage against Pelham, who had played off this trick
upon him; but he was compelled to meet all who came,
and go through the signs with them, while the “outsiders,”
scattered about the deck, stood watching the motions
with intense delight. He would fain have fled,
but he could not leave the deck; and he was afraid
that any impatience, or a refusal to answer the signs,
would involve him in a worse difficulty.

At last the nine illegal voters had “made themselves
known,” and having requested that their votes
might be changed, Shuffles was released from torture.
He was both alarmed and indignant. He had not
been able to ascertain what was meant by “the
orator of the day;” and he began to fear that
Pelham had exposed the whole, or a part, of the real
purposes of the League. He was enraged that he
had revealed anything. Even the captain and the
second lieutenant had made all the signs, and they
could not have done so without the assistance of a
traitor.

“It’s all up with us, Wilton,” said
Shuffles, as they met near the foremast.

“What is?”

“Pelham has blowed the whole thing.”

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“No!” exclaimed Wilton, almost paralyzed
by the information.

“He has. The captain and several of the
officers made all the signs to me just now. We
shall spend our time in the brig for the next month.”

“Did Pelham do it?”

“Yes.”

“That was mean,” added Wilton, his face
pale with terror.

“He will fall overboard accidentally some day,”
added Shuffles, shaking his head.

“Don’t do that, Shuffles,” protested
the frightened confederate.

“I will, if I get a chance.”

“You will only make the matter ten times worse
than it is.”

Monroe joined them, and was informed of the desperate
situation of the League.

“It’s all your fault, Shuffles,”
said Monroe, indignantly “I don’t blame
Pelham.”

“You don’t! He has told a dozen outsiders
how to make the signs, and let them into the secrets
of the Chain, for all I know.”

“If he has, we may thank you for it, Shuffles.
You cheated him, and played a mean trick upon him,”
replied Monroe. “I wouldn’t have stood
it if I had been he.”

“Pelham is a traitor, and you are another.”

“No matter what he is, or what I am. You
got all those fellows to vote for you, and cheated
him out of the place that belonged to him.”

“Did you think I was going to have him captain,
after I had got up the Chain, and done all the work?”

“You agreed to leave it out to the fellows who
should be captain. They voted, and you cheated,”
added Monroe. “I’ve had enough of
the Chain; and if any fellow makes the signs again,
I shall not notice them.”

“Humph! It’s a pretty time to talk
so, after the whole thing is let out.”

“Well, I will face the music, and get out of
it the best way I can. I was a fool to join the
Chain.”

“So was I,” said Wilton.

There was no difficulty in arriving at such a conclusion
after the affair had been exposed; and the sentiments
of Wilton and Monroe were, or would soon be, the sentiments
of all the members of the League. Shuffles realized
the truth of the old adage, that rats desert a sinking
ship, and he began to feel lonely in his guilt and
his fear of exposure. But he could not forgive
Pelham for his perfidy, forgetting that each had been
treacherous to the other.

In the first dog watch on that day, while Shuffles’
heart was still rankling with hatred towards the alleged
traitor, the rivals met in the waist, which was common
ground to officers off duty and seamen.

“I want to see you, Pelham,” said Shuffles,
in a low tone.

“Well, you do see me—­don’t
you?” laughed Pelham who, feeling that he was
now even with his rival, was in excellent humor.

“Things are going wrong with us.”

“O, no; I think not.”

“Will you meet me on the top-gallant forecastle,
where we shall not be disturbed?” asked Shuffles.

“That is not exactly the place for an officer.”

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“You are off duty, and you can go where you
please.”

“What do you want of me?”

“I want to have an understanding.”

“I suppose you think we have too many members—­don’t
you?” asked Pelham, lightly.

“The more the better.”

“I’ll meet you there.”

Shuffles went to the place designated at once, where
he was soon followed by the fourth lieutenant.

“Well, Shuffles, what is it?” demanded
Pelham, as, with one hand on the sheet of the fore-topmast
staysail, he looked over the bow at the bone in the
teeth of the ship.

“What is it? Don’t you know what
it is?” replied Shuffles, angrily.

“Upon my life, I don’t know.”

“You have been a traitor,” exclaimed Shuffles,
with savage earnestness.

“O! have I?”

“You know you have.”

“Perhaps you would be willing to tell me wherein
I have been a traitor,” added Pelham, laughing;
for he was enjoying the scene he had witnessed in
the waist, when, one after another, the “outsiders”
had made the signs to his rival.

“You have betrayed the secrets of the Chain.”

“Have I?”

“Didn’t you give the signs to Paul Kendall,
the captain, and half a dozen others?”

“But, my dear fellow, they are members,”
replied Pelham, chuckling.

“They are not? and you know they are not.”

“But, Shuffles, just consider that all of them
voted for you.”

“I don’t care for that.”

“I do. You recognized them as members first,
and I couldn’t do less than you did.”

“You are a traitor!” said Shuffles, red
in the face with passion; and the word hissed through
his closed teeth.

“Well, just as you like: we won’t
quarrel about the meaning of words,” replied
Pelham, gayly; for he enjoyed the discomfiture of his
rival, and felt that Shuffles deserved all he got,
for the foul play of which he had been guilty on the
ballot.

“You pledged yourself to be honest, and stand
by the vote, fair or foul.”

“Very true, my dear fellow? and I do so.
Give me your orders, and I will obey them.”

“But you have exposed the whole thing,”
retorted Shuffles. “What can we do now,
when Kendall and the captain know all about it?”

“They don’t know any more than the law
allows. Besides, they are members. Didn’t
they vote for you? Didn’t they know beans?”
continued Pelham, in the most tantalizing of tones.

“Do you mean to insult me?” demanded Shuffles,
unable to control his rage.

“Not I. I respect you too much. You are
the captain—­that is to be—­of
the ship,” laughed Pelham. “The captain,
the second lieutenant, and all the flunkies, voted
for you? and, of course, I couldn’t be so deficient
in politeness as to insult one who——­”

At that moment Pelham removed his hand from the sheet,
and Shuffles, irritated beyond control at the badinage
of his companion, gave him a sudden push, and the
fourth lieutenant went down into the surges, under
the bow of the ship.

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As Pelham disappeared beneath the waves, Shuffles
was appalled at his own act; for even he had not sunk
so low as to contemplate murder. The deed was
not premeditated. It was done on the spur of angry
excitement, which dethroned his reason. The chief
conspirator had so often and so lightly used the language
of the League, about “falling overboard accidentally,”
that he had become familiar with the idea; and, perhaps,
the deed seemed less terrible to him than it really
was. When the act was done, on the impulse of
the moment, he realized his own situation, and that
of his victim. He would have given anything at
that instant, as he looked down upon the dark waves,
to have recalled the deed; but it was too late.
Self-reproach and terror overwhelmed him.

“Man overboard!” he shouted with desperation,
as he threw off his pea-jacket, and dived, head foremost,
from the forecastle into the sea.

His first impulse had been to do a foul deed; his
next, to undo it. Shuffles was a powerful swimmer.
The ocean was his element. He struck the water
hardly an instant after Pelham; and the ship, which
was under all sail, making nine knots, hurried on
her course, leaving the rivals to buffet the waves
unaided.

“Man overboard!” cried officers and seamen,
on all parts of the ship’s deck.

“Hard down the helm, quartermaster! Let
go the life-buoys!” shouted Kendall, who was
the officer of the deck.

“Hard down, sir. Buoy overboard,”
replied Bennington the quartermaster at the helm.

“Clear away the third cutter!” added Kendall.

The orders were rapidly given for backing the main-topsail,
while the courses were clewed up; but the ship went
on a considerable distance before her headway could
be arrested.

When Pelham went down into the water, he had been
injured by the fall; and though he struck out to save
himself, it was not with his usual skill and vigor;
for, like his companion in the water, he was a good
swimmer. Shuffles had struck the waves in proper
attitude, and was in condition to exert all his powers
when he came to the surface. He swam towards
Pelham, intent upon rendering him the assistance he
might require.

“Do you mean to drown me?” gasped Pelham,
who supposed his rival had followed him overboard
for the purpose of completing his work.

“I mean to save you, Pelham,” replied
Shuffles. “Can you swim?”

“I’m hurt.”

“Give me your hand, and I will support you.”

Shuffles took the offered hand of Pelham, who was
able to swim a little, and supported him till they
could reach the life-buoy, which had been dropped
from the stern of the ship when the alarming cry was
given.

“Where are you hurt?” asked Shuffles,
as soon as they had grasped the buoy.

“My stomach struck the water,” replied
Pelham, faintly.

The third cutter had been lowered into the water as
soon as the ship’s headway was stopped, and
was now within a few yards of the buoy.

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“Will you forgive me, Pelham? I was beside
myself,” said Shuffles, when his companion had
recovered breath after his exertions.

“You have saved me, Shuffles. I should
have gone down without you.”

“Will you forgive me?” pleaded the penitent.
“I did not mean to injure you.”

“Never mind it; we won’t say a word about
it,” answered Pelham, as the boat came up.

They were assisted into the cutter, and the oarsmen
pulled back to the ship. When the party reached
the deck, a cheer burst from a portion of the crew;
but Wilton, Monroe, and a few others, believing that
Pelham had “fallen overboard accidentally,”
were appalled at the probable consequences of the
event.

Pelham was assisted to the after cabin, where Dr.
Winstock immediately attended him. He was not
seriously injured; and the next day he was able to
be on deck, and do duty.

“How was that?” asked Wilton, when Shuffles
had changed his clothes, and warmed himself at the
stove, as they met in the waist.

Shuffles looked sad and solemn. He made no reply.

“Did he fall overboard accidentally?”
demanded Wilton.

“Don’t ask me.”

“You jumped in after him, and saved him, they
say,” added Wilton; “so, I suppose, it
was really an accident.”

Shuffles still made no reply.

**CHAPTER XX.**

THE END OF THE CHAIN LEAGUE.

The fact that Shuffles had plunged into the sea, and
labored so effectively for the rescue of the fourth
lieutenant, blinded the eyes of “our fellows,”
who, knowing the penalty of treachery to the “Chain,”
might otherwise have suspected that he had “fallen
overboard accidentally,” or, in other words,
that he had been pushed into the water by his unscrupulous
rival. Wilton, Monroe, and Adler, had discussed
the matter, and reached the conclusion that Pelham
had been knocked over by the shaking of the staysail
sheet, or that he had really fallen accidentally.
They had been appalled and horrified by the event;
and those who were disgusted with the League were not
disposed to betray its secrets; for it was possible,
though not probable, that the mishap which had befallen
Pelham was an incident in the history of the “Chain.”

When a wicked man or a wicked boy exceeds his average
wickedness, the excess sometimes produces a moral
reaction. A person who tipples moderately may
have the drunkard’s fate vividly foreshadowed
to him by getting absolutely drunk himself, and thus
be induced to abandon a dangerous practice. That
loathsome disease, small pox, sometimes leaves the
patient better than it finds him; and through, and
on account of, the vilest sin may come the sinner’s
reformation.

Shuffles had exceeded himself in wickedness; and the
fact that his foul design was not even suspected by
any other person than his intended victim did not
diminish his self-reproaches. He shuddered when
he thought of the remorse which must have gnawed his
soul during the rest of his lifetime if Pelham had
been drowned. He would have been a murderer;
and while so many knew the penalty of treachery to
the League, he could hardly have escaped suspicion
and detection.

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A reaction had been produced in his mind; but it was
not a healthy movement of the moral nature. It
was not so much the awful crime he had impulsively
committed, as the terrible consequences which would
have followed, that caused him to shrink from it.
It was an awful crime, and his nature revolted at
it. He could not have done it without the impulse
of an insane passion; but it was dreadful because it
would have shut him out from society; because it would
have placed the mark of Cain upon him; because the
dungeon and the gallows were beyond it,—­rather
than because it was the sacrifice of a human life,
of one created in the image of God.

Shuffles was in a state of terror, as one who has
just escaped from an awful gulf that yawned before
him. He was not sincerely penitent, as one who
feels the enormity of his offence. He was not
prepared to acknowledge his sin before God, whose
law he had outraged.

When Pelham came on deck, on the day after the exciting
event, he greeted Shuffles with his accustomed suavity,
and seemed not to bear any malice in his heart against
the author of his misfortune. Officers and seamen
as well as the principal and the professors, congratulated
him upon his escape from the peril which had menaced
him; and all commended Shuffles for his prompt and
noble efforts in rescuing him. Pelham dissented
from none of their conclusions, and was as generous
in his praise of the deliverer as the occasion required.

Shuffles was rather astonished to find himself a lion
on board, and at being specially thanked by Mr. Lowington
for his humane exertions in saving a shipmate.
He was so warmly and so generously commended that he
almost reached the conclusion himself that he had done
a good thing. He was not satisfied with himself.
He was in the power of Pelham, who, by a word, could
change the current of popular sentiment and arraign
him for the gravest of crimes. If the fourth
lieutenant spoke, Shuffles realized that he should
be shunned and despised, as well as hated and feared,
by all on board the ship. It was quite natural,
therefore, for him to desire a better understanding
with Pelham.

The League had fallen into contempt, at least for
the present. Even “our fellows” would
not have spirit enough to strike the blow; besides,
the terrible gulf from which Shuffles had just escaped
was too vivid in his mind to permit him to place himself
on the brink of another. So far the reaction
was salutary.

“When may I see you, Mr. Pelham?” said
Shuffles as they came together in the waist.

“We will visit the top-gallant forecastle again,
and see if we can understand how I happened to fall
overboard for really I’m not in the habit of
doing such things,” replied Pelham, with a smile.

They walked forward together, and mounted the ladder
to the place indicated.

“Shuffles, I never paid much attention to the
snapper of the toggle before, and never supposed it
meant anything in particular,” continued Pelham,
as he placed himself in the position he had occupied
before he went over the bow. “Am I in any
danger now?”

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“No, Pelham, no!” replied Shuffles, earnestly.
“You provoked me so by your cool taunts that
I pushed you over before I thought what I was about.”

“Did you really mean to drown me?”

“Upon my soul, I did not. If you knew how
I felt when I saw you strike the water, and realized
what I had done, you would forgive me.”

“I have done that already, Shuffles.”

“I would have given my own life for yours at
that instant, Pelham.”

“You saved me, after all, Shuffles. When
I went over, I either hit the side of the ship, or
struck my stomach on the water, for all the breath
seemed to be knocked out of me. I hardly knew
what I was about in the water till I saw you.
At first I supposed you had jumped overboard to finish
your job.”

“You wronged me; I would have saved you, if
I had been sure of perishing myself.”

“You did save me, and I am willing to let that
act offset the other.”

“I’m grateful to you for this, Pelham.
You treat me better than I deserve.”

“Never mind it now; we will call it square,”
replied Pelham, lightly. “How about the
Chain, Shuffles? We shall be in sight of land
by to-morrow.”

“We can’t do anything now.”

“Why not?”

“How can we? After what has happened, I
will not reproach you for what you did. You know
how you provoked me. You have exposed the whole
affair to the officers.”

“Not a bit of it.”

“No.”

“Certainly not. Did you ever know Augustus
Pelham to violate his obligations?” demanded
Pelham with dignity.

“Never before; but the captain, the second lieutenant
and seven others, who would no more join the League
than they would steal your pocket-book, went through
all the signs with me.”

“They all voted too,” laughed Pelham.

“I am willing to confess that I played off a
mean trick upon you.”

“And I have only made myself even with you.
I have not betrayed a single secret of the Chain to
any one not posted—­except the signs.
If I had, of course you and I would both have been
in the brig before this time.”

“I was puzzled to find nothing was said,”
added Shuffles.

“No one knows anything. The Chain is as
perfect as ever. Give me your orders, and I will
carry them out.”

“The fellows have backed out now.”

“Then, of course, we must do the same.
I doubt whether we could have carried the thing out.”

“No matter whether we could or not; we must
drop it for the present. The fellows all suppose
they are caught now, and expect every moment to be
hauled up to the mast for an investigation.”

“They are all safe; at least we can purchase
their safety for ten shillings apiece,” laughed
Pelham.

“Purchase it!” exclaimed Shuffles, mystified
by the language of his companion.

“Just so—­purchase it,” added
Pelham; and he proceeded to inform his late rival
of the trick he had invented in retaliation for the
one Shuffles had put upon him.

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“It was tit for tat,” said Shuffles.

“I told nothing which would harm either of us,
for I am just as deep in the mud as you are in the
mire.”

“That’s true. We must hang together.”

“I hope not,” replied Pelham, laughing.
“We have got into this scrape, and we must get
out of it.”

“Suppose the captain or the second lieutenant
should make the signs to one of our fellows, and he
should tell what we were going to do.”

“I told all my recruits not to answer any signs
now, whoever made them.”

“I did the same, when I found the captain knew
them.”

“Then we are safe; but the silver pitcher must
be forthcoming.”

“The fellows will all be glad enough to get
out of this scrape by paying ten shillings.”

“Very well; then every one of them must sign
an order on Mr. Lowington for ten shillings, payable
to Dr. Winstock,” added Pelham.

“They will do it. Are you sure nothing
has leaked out?”

“Very sure; there would have been a tremendous
commotion before this time, if our real object had
been even suspected.”

“No doubt of that.”

“After all, Shuffles, do you really think we
intended to take the ship?”

“I did; I know that.”

“I don’t believe I did,” said the
fourth lieutenant. “Nothing seemed exactly
real to me, until I went overboard.”

“It was more real to me then than ever before,”
replied Shuffles. “What shall we do with
the Chain now?”

“Nothing; we may want to use it again, some
time. Let every fellow keep still. When
the principal gets his silver pitcher, which the doctor
will procure as soon as he can go up to Cork, he will
think the members of the Chain are the best fellows
on board.”

“I think you have sold the whole of us, Pelham,”
continued Shuffles, with a sheepish smile. “Here’s
the end of the Chain——­”

“Yes, and we may be thankful that it isn’t
the end of a rope instead of a chain,” laughed
Pelham. “The penalty of mutiny is death.”

“I have had no fear of that; it would have been
regarded only as a lark. But it is really amusing
to think where we have come out,” added Shuffles.
“We formed the ‘Chain’ because Lowington
was tyrannical; most of the fellows joined it because
he took their money from them.”

“Precisely so.”

“And we are going to end it by giving Lowington
a silver pitcher, in token of our respect and esteem!”

“In other words, Shuffles, we have played this
game, and whipped out each other, without any help
from the principal. It was mean business—­I
really think so; and while we were trying to overreach
each other, the game slipped through our fingers.
I am really grateful when I think what an awful scrape
we have avoided.”

“Perhaps you are right,” replied Shuffles,
thoughtfully; “but there was fun in the scheme.”

“There might have been, if we had succeeded;
but it would have been anything but fun if we had
failed. Some of us would have found quarters
in the brig, and we should not have been allowed to
go on shore when we reached Queenstown.”

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“A fellow won’t want to go on shore without
any money,” growled Shuffles, who was not wholly
cured of his discontent.

“Since I went overboard I have been thinking
a great deal of this matter. I have come to the
conclusion that Mr. Lowington is not the worst man
in the world.”

“He is harsh and tyrannical.”

“I don’t think he ought to have taken
our money from us; but I judge him from all his acts,
not by one alone.”

Pelham seemed to have turned over a new leaf, and
to be sincerely sorry for his attitude of rebellion.
Shuffles was not to be convinced; he was to be overwhelmed
in another manner.

The rivals separated, with their differences removed
and with full confidence in each other. Pelham
wrote thirty-one orders on the principal for ten shillings
each, in favor of the surgeon, during his off-time
on that day, which were to be signed and handed to
Paul Kendall. As opportunity occurred, the “situation”
was explained to the members of the League; and though
many of them growled at the idea of giving a present
to Mr. Lowington for taking their money from them,
not one of them refused to sign the orders; none of
them dared to refuse.

In due time Dr. Winstock had possession of all these
little drafts, amounting in the aggregate to fifteen
pounds, ten shillings, which would purchase quite
a respectable piece of plate. Paul Kendall was
the happiest student on board, for the presentation
heralded the era of good feeling. The League
was virtually dead for the present, if not forever.
The inherent evil of the organization, with the bickerings
and bad passions of its members, had killed it—­the
turtle had swallowed his own head.

The weather continued fine; the routine of ship’s
duty and the studies went on without interruption.
On the twenty-fourth day out, at three bells in the
afternoon watch, a tremendous excitement was created
on board.

“Land on the port bow!” shouted one of
the crew, who had been stationed on the fore yard-arm
as a lookout.

All on deck sprang into the rigging, to get a sight
of the welcome shore. It looked like a fog bank
in the distance; there was really nothing to be seen,
but the fact that the ship was in sight of land was
enough to create an excitement among the boys.

At three bells, in the first dog watch, the land was
distinctly visible. It was the Island of Dursey,
and was now seen on the beam, while other land appeared
in sight ahead. It was Sunday, and all hands were
at liberty to enjoy this first view of the new continent.
The boys thought the land looked just like that they
had last seen on the shore of the western continent,
and perhaps some of them were disappointed because
everything looked so natural.

The officers and crew were impatient to make their
destined port; but the wind subsided as the sun went
down on that quiet Sabbath day on the ocean.
The ship hardly made twenty miles before daylight in
the morning.

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At eight o’clock, on Monday, when Paul Kendall
had the deck, the Young America was off Fastnet Rock,
and not more than half a mile from it. It is
about ten miles from Cape Clear, and is a solitary
rock rising out of the sea, on which a lighthouse
is located. The water around it was covered with
small boats engaged in fishing. The port watch
were all on deck, and the scene was full of interest
to them. The people whom they saw belonged to
another continent than that in which they lived.
All was new and strange to them, and all were interested
in observing the distant shore, and the objects near
the ship.

At one bell in the afternoon watch, when the Young
America was off Gally Head, all hands were piped to
muster. Mr. Lowington, on taking the rostrum,
said that he had received a petition signed by a majority
of the officers and crew.

“A petition to go ashore, I suppose,”
said Shuffles to Pelham.

“I think not,” laughed the fourth lieutenant,
who appeared to know what was coming.

“Young gentlemen,” continued the principal,
whose face wore an unusually pleasant smile, “a
few days since you were all filled with admiration
at the noble conduct of one of your number, who saved
the life of another at the peril of his own.”

“Want to go ashore, Shuffles?” whispered
Pelham.

Shuffles was too much confused to make any reply;
he did not know whether he was to be praised or blamed.

“I have received a petition, requesting me to
appoint Robert Shuffles second lieutenant of the ship,
in place of Paul Kendall, resigned,” added Mr.
Lowington.

Shuffles was overwhelmed with astonishment, and a
large proportion of the students received the announcement
with hearty applause.

“Young gentlemen, I have only to say that the
petition is granted. I ought to add, however,
that no officer will lose his rank, except Mr. Kendall,
who, at his own desire, will take the vacant number
in the steerage, now belonging to Robert Shuffles,
promoted. I take great pleasure in granting this
petition, because the request is honorable to you,
and shows a proper appreciation of the noble conduct
of your shipmate. But let me add, that you should
divide your admiration between the one who rescued
his friend from death, and him who voluntarily resigned
his honorable position in the after cabin, in order
to make a place in which merit could be acknowledged
and rewarded. Nothing but a matter of life and
death could have induced me to vary the discipline
of the ship. Young gentlemen, you are dismissed
from muster.”

“Three cheers for Paul Kendall!” shouted
one of the boys.

They were given.

“Three cheers for Robert Shuffles!” added
Paul; and they were given.

“Mr. Shuffles will repair to the after cabin,
where he will be qualified, and take his position
at once.”

“Mr. Lowington, I must decline Mr. Kendall’s
generous offer,” interposed Shuffles, who was
actually choking with emotion.

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“This matter has been well considered, Shuffles,”
replied the principal; “and as it is the desire
of a large majority of your shipmates that you should
accept the position, I think you had better do so.”

“There isn’t a student in the ship who
desires it so much as I do,” added Paul, with
generous enthusiasm “You know I told you I would
like to be in the steerage, for I have always been
an officer.”

“Allow me till to-night, if you please, to consider
it, Mr. Lowington,” replied Shuffles, as he
grasped the hand of Paul.

“Certainly, if you desire it.”

Shuffles was overwhelmed by the magnanimity of Paul
and the kindness of the principal. At that moment
he would have given everything to be such a young
man as the second lieutenant; to be as good and true,
as free from evil thoughts and evil purposes, as he
was. A light had dawned upon the rebel and the
plotter which he had never seen before. Goodness
and truth had vindicated themselves, and overwhelmed
the guilty one.

“Mr. Shuffles, I congratulate you on your promotion,”
said the chaplain, extending his hand.

“I cannot accept it, sir,” replied the
repentant malcontent “I would like to speak
with you alone, Mr. Agneau.”

The chaplain took him to his state room in the main
cabin? and there, Shuffles, conquered and subdued
by the kindness of his friends, confessed the terrible
crime he had committed—­that he had pushed
Pelham overboard.

The chaplain was confounded at this confession, but
still more so when the self-convicted conspirator
revealed all the secrets of “The Chain.”
Shuffles mentioned no names; he took all the guilt
upon himself.

“I am astonished, my dear young friend,”
said the chaplain. “Is it possible the
life you saved was imperilled by your own violent
passions?”

“It is true, sir,” replied Shuffles, hardly
able to control his feelings.

“Then I think you had better not accept the
promotion that has been offered to you.”

“I will not; I would jump overboard first.
I am willing to be punished; I deserve it.”

“Shuffles, you have almost atoned for your errors
by confessing them; and your courageous conduct, after
you had pushed Pelham into the sea, proves that you
sincerely repented that act. Shall I tell Mr.
Lowington what you have said?”

“Yes, sir; let him know me as I am; let him
despise me as I deserve,” replied Shuffles,
wiping away a genuine tear of repentance.

Mr. Agneau talked to the penitent for two hours; and
finally he prayed with him and for him. If never
before, the moral condition of the culprit was now
hopeful, and the chaplain labored earnestly and faithfully
to give him right views of his relations to God and
his fellow-beings.

“Paul,” said Shuffles, when he met his
generous and self-sacrificing friend in the waist,
after the conference in the state room, “I am
the meanest and vilest fellow on board.”

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“No, you are not!” exclaimed Paul.

“I would give the world to be like you.”

“No, no! You wrong yourself, and overdo
me.”

“I have confessed all to the chaplain, and you
will soon know me as I am, Paul. I will not take
your place in the cabin. Your kindness and generosity
have overcome me. You have convinced me that doing
right is always the best way.”

Paul did not know what to make of this remarkable
confession; but, after supper, all hands were piped
to muster again, the ship being off Kinsale Head,
nearly becalmed. The chaplain had informed the
principal of the substance of Shuffles’ confession.
Mr. Lowington laughed at “The Chain League,”
the signs and the passwords, and regarded the mutiny
as a matter of little consequence. He did not
believe that Shuffles or his followers, had really
intended to take the ship. The project was too
monstrous to be credible. The fact that the conspirator
had attempted the life of his companion was a grave
matter, and it was treated as such. Mr. Agneau
was entirely confident of the sincerity of the culprit’s
repentance. Shuffles had refused to take the proffered
promotion, which was abundant evidence that he was
in earnest.

The penitent was sent for, and repeated his confession
to the principal. He did not ask to be exempted
from punishment; but he did ask to be forgiven.
He was forgiven; but when the crew were piped to muster
all the particulars of the intended mutiny were exposed
to the astonished “outsiders.” Paul
understood it now. Mr. Lowington ridiculed the
mutiny; but he spoke very seriously of the consequences
of insubordination.

“Young gentlemen, Shuffles has not mentioned
the name of a single student in connection with this
silly conspiracy; he has asked to be excused from
doing so. I grant his request, and I hope that
all who have engaged in the affair are as sincerely
sorry for their connection with it as he is.
Under the circumstances, Shuffles will not be promoted.
Young gentlemen, you are dismissed.”

“Shuffles was a good fellow to keep us in the
dark,” whispered Sanborn to Wilton.

“Keep still,” replied Wilton. “We
are lucky to get out of the scrape on any terms.”

So thought all of them; and it was certainly magnanimous
on the part of the chief conspirator to be willing
to assume all the guilt, and suffer all the punishment.
There was enough of good in Shuffles to save him from
the evil of his nature.

“Paul, there is one more thing I must tell you,”
said Shuffles, that evening, while the ship lay becalmed
off Kinsale. “You remember when I told
you about the gambling in the steerage?”

“I do.”

“I was deceiving you then. I only exposed
the fellows in order to make trouble. I knew
that the students would be closely watched, and the
rules more strictly enforced, which would make them
mad.”

“What did you want to make them mad for?”

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“So that they would join the League.”

“Well, you did a good thing for the ship and
for the fellows, if your motives were not good,”
replied Paul. “It was good out of evil,
any way.”

“I don’t think half so many fellows would
have joined if Mr. Lowington hadn’t taken their
money from them.”

“Have you seen any gambling since?”

“Not a bit of it, Paul.”

“I am glad to know that.”

“One thing more; you know all the members of
the League, Paul.”

“I?”

“Yes? you have their names on the orders, for
ten shillings each.”

“So I have; but we will make a general affair
of the presentation, and that will cover up the whole
of them.”

“Thank you, Paul. You despise me as much
as I like and respect you.”

“I don’t despise you, Shuffles. You
have done wrong, but I respect you for undoing the
evil you had meditated. We are all weak and erring,
and we can’t afford to despise any one.
On the contrary I like you,” replied Paul, giving
Shuffles his hand.

“You treat me better than I deserve, Paul; but
if you are my friend, I shall be all the better for
it; and I hope you will not be worse.”

The end of the conspiracy had been reached. Before
the ship came to anchor in the Cove, every boy on
board had drawn his order on the principal for ten
shillings, and the members of the League were veiled
beneath the mass of names.

At sunrise, on Tuesday morning, the ship had a gentle
breeze; and at three bells in the forenoon watch,
she was off Roches Point, with the Union Jack at the
foremast-head, as a signal for a pilot. On this
exciting occasion, the studies and recitations were
suspended to enable all the students to see the shores,
and enjoy the scene. The pilot made his appearance,
gave Mr. Lowington the latest Cork papers, and took
charge of the ship. The honest Irishman was not
a little surprised to find the vessel manned “wid
nothing in the wide wurld but by’s;” but
he found they were good seamen.

The Young America ran into the beautiful bay through
the narrow opening, with Carlisle Fort on the starboard
and Camden Fort on the port hand. The students
were intensely excited by the near view of the land,
of the odd little steamers that: went whisking
about, and the distant view of Queenstown, on the
slope of the hill at the head of the bay. They
were in Europe now.

“All hands to bring ship to anchor!” said
the first lieutenant, when the ship was approaching
the town.

The light sails were furled, the port anchor cleared
away, and every preparation made for the mooring Then
the orders to let go the topsail sheets, clew up the
topsails, and haul down the jib, were given.

“Port the helm! Stand clear of the cable!
Let go the port anchor!”

The cable rattled through the hawse-hole, the anchor
went to the bottom, the Young America swung round,
and her voyage across the ocean was happily terminated.
Three rousing cheers were given in honor of the auspicious
event, and when the sails had been furled, the crew
were piped to dinner.

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And here, at the close of the voyage, we leave the
Young America, with her officers and crew wiser and
better, we trust, than when they sailed from the shores
of their native country. They were now to enter
upon a new life in foreign lands; and what they saw
and what they did, on sea and shore, during the following
weeks, will be related in “SHAMROCK AND THISTLE,
or *Young America in Ireland and Scotland*!”

**THE END**