Oliver Optic

The Yacht Club Series. Little Bobtail; or, The Wreck of The Penobscot



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OLIVER OPTIC'S
YACHT CLUB
SERIES.
LITTLE BOBTAIL.
LEE & SHEPARD
BOSTON



THE YACHT CLUB SERIES.

# LITTLE BOBTAIL;

**or,**

## THE WRECK OF THE

# PENOBSCOT.

**BY**

# OLIVER OPTIC,

AUTHOR OF "YOUNG AMERICA ABROAD," "THE ARMY AND NAVY STORIES," "THE WOODVILLE STORIES," "THE BOAT CLUB STORIES," "THE STARRY FLAG SERIES," "THE LAKE SHORE SERIES," ETC.

***WITH THIRTEEN ILLUSTRATIONS.***

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TO

MY YOUNG FRIEND

*FRANK RICHARDSON*,

OF BROOKLYN, N. Y.,

This Book is Affectionately
Dedicated.

**The Yacht Club Series.**

1. LITTLE BOBTAIL; OR, THE WRECK OF THE PENOBSCOT.

2. THE YACHT CLUB; OR, THE YOUNG BOAT-BUILDER.

(Others in preparation.)

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# PREFACE.

"LITTLE BOBTAIL" is the first volume of the YACHT CLUB SERIES, each book of which will contain an entirely independent story, with a hero of its own, and having no necessary connection with any other story. The author hopes that this plan will commend itself to those who do not care to follow a young gentleman through half a dozen volumes in order to

know the issue of his adventures, or to learn whether or not he is faithful to himself, to God, and his fellow-beings to the end. God's truth is always the same, and good characters must be very much alike. Little Bobtail is not very different from any other hero, devoted to Truth and Duty, though the incidents of his life are various enough to satisfy any young person's craving for novelty.

The story was suggested by some actual incidents, which occurred during the brief summer residence of the writer at the locality of the principal events described. Though there was a "Little Bobtail" there, he was hardly the character who is the hero of this work. Penobscot Bay, its multitude of picturesque islands, and its beautiful shores, are the same in fact as in this fiction, and as for two seasons the author has lived upon the land and sailed upon the water, amid its beautiful scenery, he feels quite at home in the localities mentioned.

If Little Bobtail was loose in his ideas of "smuggling" at first, he was clear in all his other views of duty; and having corrected his wrong impressions, his example is worthy to be followed. The writer hopes that, while his stirring experience will be enjoyed by the reader, his excellent character will be appreciated and valued even more than the worldly fortune he obtains.

HARRISON SQUARE, BOSTON,

October 10, 1872.

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# LITTLE BOBTAIL;

## OR,

## THE WRECK OF THE PENOBSCOT.

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# CHAPTER I.

## SIXTEEN YEARS BEFORE.

"If you do, Edward, you are no son of mine," said the Honorable Peter Montague, wrathfully, to the young gentleman who stood before him with bowed head. "If you connect yourself in any manner with the family of Richard Medway, I will disown you; I will never speak to you; I will never permit you to come into my presence again!"

"But, father—"

"I won't argue the matter," interposed the irate old gentleman. "You know that Medway and I are sworn foes; that he has injured me in my prospects, in my name, and reputation. I wouldn't forgive him if he went down on his knees and sued for my pardon. He has injured me in that manner and to that degree that there is no possibility of reconciliation."

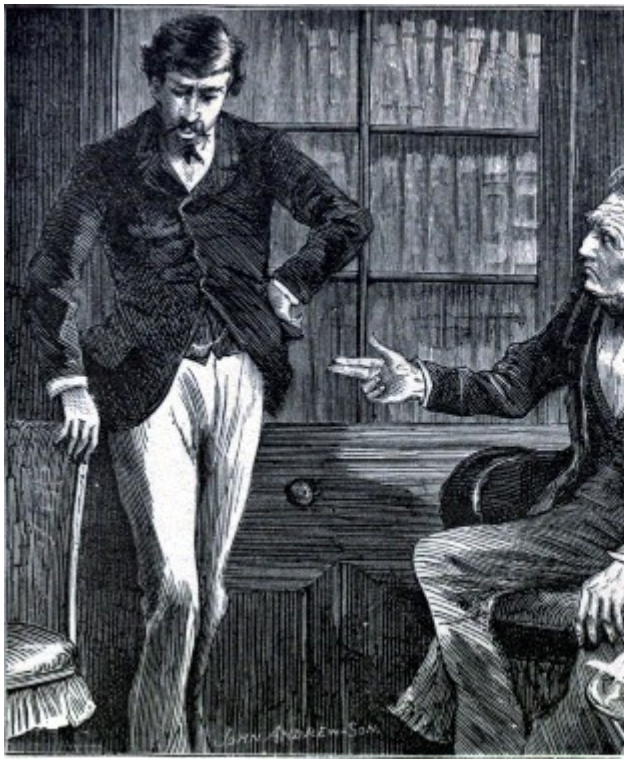
"But Mr. Medway has no such feelings towards you. He respects you, in spite of your differences," added Edward Montague, in the gentlest of tones.

"I don't care what his feelings are towards me. After injuring me as he has, he can afford to be magnanimous. After robbing me of my hopes and my reputation, he can talk very flippantly about burying the hatchet. I tell you again there must be no relations of any kind between his family and mine. I am astonished and indignant, Edward, to think that you should allow yourself to be caught in any such trap."

"Trap, father!" exclaimed the young man, a slight

flush of indignation spreading over his handsome face.

"Yes, a trap, Edward," stormed Mr. Montague. "I am a rich man,—all the world knows it,—and you are my only son. I am worth a million of dollars, at the least, —not in book accounts and bad debts, but in real estate, stocks, bonds, and mortgages. You are a prize in the lottery, Edward."



The old man looked at his son with a sneer on his face, which was called forth by the thought that any one, least of all his bitter personal enemy, should aspire to hold any relations with this paragon of

wealth.

"I do not think that Sara Medway or her father covets your wealth," added Edward, in a very mildly deprecatory tone.

"You are nothing but a boy! you don't know the world. You have been at your books till you are twenty-one years old, and now you are as innocent of all knowledge of the ways of men as a child in its cradle."

"But, father, I know that Sara Medway is not an adventurer," added Edward, who was more anxious to defend the lady implicated than himself.

"You don't know anything about it," raved the old gentleman, angered anew by the protest of the son.

"She is as gentle as she is beautiful; and I am sure she is not capable of thinking a mercenary thought."

"Stuff! You talk like a baby, that knows nothing of the world—that's all."

"But you don't know her," suggested Edward, who was actually so simple as to believe that this consideration ought to have some influence upon the sentence of his father.

"I know her father, and that's enough. The chances are, that she is like him. But, whether she is like him or not, there can be no relations between his family and mine. Do you understand me, Edward?" demanded the Honorable Mr. Montague, sternly.

"I think I do, sir."

"You think you do, you puppy!" thundered the old gentleman.

"I was not aware that you were prejudiced against Miss Medway," added Edward, musing, as though he did not desire to understand his father.

"I hate the whole race of them, and I will have nothing to do or say to any of them; and you shall not, either."

The young man made no reply; and silence is sometimes more impudent, and sometimes expresses more firmness, than speech. At any rate, at this time and under these circumstances, it indicated that Edward Montague had a mind, a will of his own, and that, though he did not wish to provoke his father to wrath, he intended to follow his own inclination, rather than consult the unreasonable prejudices of his father. Whether this was a correct interpretation of the son's purposes or not, the father so regarded it, and his wrath increased accordingly.

"If I haven't spoken plainly enough, I will leave you no chance of misunderstanding me. If you marry the girl, I will disown you. Can you understand that? If you marry her, I will never see you or speak to you again. Do you think you can understand that? If you marry her, not a dollar of my property shall ever be yours. Do you fully comprehend me? I mean all I say, literally and exactly. I won't leave you even the hope of breaking my will when I am dead. I will give away every penny before I die. I will found a hospital, or an insane asylum for just such lunatics as you are, and every dollar I possess shall be in its coffers before I am put in the ground. I hope you understand me, Edward."

"I think I do, sir," replied the young man, sadly.

"You *think* you do!"

"It is not possible to misunderstand you, father; I fully understand your views."

"Well, what have you to say?" stormed the father.

"I do not see that anything can be said."

"Your intentions?"

"Of course I can only submit."

"You begin to be sensible. You are my son, my only son, Edward," said the old gentleman, in a milder tone. "All my hopes are in you. I have never been hard with you."

"You have not, father."

"But I would rather lose every dollar I have in the world to-day, and begin life anew at the age of sixty, than see you the husband of Medway's daughter. I mean just what I say, and nothing less. It would break my heart."

The young man wanted to say that it would break his heart not to be the husband of Sara Medway; but he had learned to temporize and be insincere before the unreasonable wrath of his father, and he was silent.

"You are twenty-one now. You have gone through college, and have only to study your profession. You needn't make hard work of it, for you will not be obliged to drudge for a living; but you may wish to go into politics, and as a lawyer you will succeed better. You shall have all the money you want. I have already decided to give you an allowance of five thousand a year, and you can check it from the bank as you want it. Go to Europe for the next year or two, if you wish; travel in your own country first, if you like. Your health is somewhat shaken by your

confinement in college, and a couple of years' recreation will do you good. You needn't hurry about your profession. Please yourself, Edward, in everything except this Medway matter; and don't let me hear another word about this girl; don't go near her; don't write to her."

The Honorable Mr. Montague, having delivered himself of his harsh threat, and having smoothed it over in the most gingerly manner he could, walked out of the library, where the conversation had taken place. He evidently felt relieved, and, perhaps, thought that he had bravely met a great responsibility, and had done his whole duty faithfully to his son. He honestly believed that the Honorable Mr. Medway was a villain of the blackest dye, not only politically, but morally and socially; and, this postulate admitted, it followed, by his narrow reasoning, that Mrs. Medway, Miss Medway, and all that related to the fountain Medway were, utterly vile and villanous. He hated the father, and he could not help hating the daughter.

Mr. Montague was a Whig, and Mr. Medway was a Democrat; or, Mr. Montague was a Democrat, and Mr. Medway was a Whig; we cannot tell just how this was; it is enough to say that they were on opposite sides in politics. Mr. Montague was a wealthy man, and Mr. Medway was not; and both of them were nominated for Congress in the same district, in the State of Maine. It was a close contest, and party rancor was very bitter. Not only the public acts, but the private lives of the candidates were criticised in the severest manner by the opposition; and an unbiassed spectator, believing all that was said, would have promptly concluded that both of them were unmitigated scoundrels. Mr. Montague

had a skeleton in an almost forgotten closet, and, somehow, this skeleton stalked out into the political arena, and perhaps frightened away some of its owner's adherents. Perhaps it was a forgotten and repented sin; but Mr. Montague's opponents made the most of it. Now, this gentleman, from certain circumstances which need not be explained, was satisfied that Mr. Medway had trotted out this skeleton and held it up as a bugbear to the people, and he hated his rival with all his mind, heart, and soul.

The election came, and Mr. Montague was defeated by a very small majority. He had been sure that he should be chosen, and the result intensified his hatred of his successful opponent to a degree which made it little short of insanity. Years hardly moderated its fervor, though it ceased to find frequent expression. The hope of long years was frustrated; the crown of glory and success was denied him, he firmly believed, by the villany of his rival in exposing the skeleton in the closet. He was a defeated candidate. The prestige was against him; and, in the state of parties, he could not hope to be nominated again. His enemy had overwhelmed him once and for all.

It is fair to say that Mr. Medway knew nothing about the skeleton, had not brought it forward, and did not even believe in its existence.

The Honorable Mr. Medway went to Congress, and was once re-elected, though he did not particularly distinguish himself as an orator or a blackguard. He was a quiet, sensible man, who always voted on party lines. He had a wife and one daughter, who endured Washington life for one term, but after this

preferred to spend the winters with Mrs. Medway's sister in Brunswick. This lady's husband was a professor in the college, and some of the students occasionally visited in his family. Edward Montague was one of this number.

Sara Medway was a beautiful girl of his own age; and the young man, having been absent during the political contest, and neither knowing nor caring anything about its merits or demerits, was stupid enough to fall in love with the professor's fair guest. He was very attentive to her, and the affair became town talk, as such affairs usually do. His father heard of it; but he had no opportunity to remonstrate with him in a very decided manner until after Edward was graduated. When he went home, the interview we have narrated occurred. The young man was confounded at the violence of his father, and astonished to find that the old gentleman, who had always been indulgent to the last degree, even to his follies and vices, could be so harsh and implacable. There could be no mistaking his father's meaning; and Edward was obliged to accept the issue.

Mr. Medway had finished his second congressional term, and come home with his family. Edward tried hard to obey his father, and travelled till October. When he returned he heard with dismay that Sara Medway was ill, and had some of the symptoms of incipient consumption. He had not seen her for three months. Though not engaged, he was confident that she reciprocated his affection; and his conscience smote him as he thought his abrupt termination of their acquaintance might have affected her health. But Edward dreaded his father's anger, while he could not wholly resist his impulses.

One evening he stealthily called at the house of Mr. Medway, and was cordially welcomed by all, and especially by Sara. More than ever before he realized the depth of her affection, and traced in her looks, her tones, and the blushes upon her pale cheek, the triumphal joy with which she again welcomed him to her presence. He could not tell her that he should come no more; but, while her mother left the room for a few moments, he spoke a whole volume in a few words, and she frankly declared her sentiments towards him. In a word, they were engaged.

Before he bade her adieu for the night, her father came home. Ho knew his daughter's preference,—not that she had in words betrayed the secret of her soul,—and was rejoiced to see the young man. He expressed his satisfaction without reserve. Edward was troubled, not alone at the prospect of losing his father's fortune, but with the fear of his father's wrath. He dreaded the rupture that would separate the only son from his father. Mr. Medway invited him to smoke a cigar in the library. Edward disclosed what had passed between himself and Sara, and detailed his interview with his father. Mr. Medway was astonished and shocked at the unreasonableness of his late rival. He knew that Mr. Montague disliked him, avoided him, and refused to take part in any enterprise with him; but he had no suspicion of the depth of his hatred. He was sorely troubled because his own presumed errors were visited upon his innocent daughter.

Sara was sad and moody after Edward ceased so suddenly to visit her, and her parents believed that her health had been impaired by her sorrow. Her father hoped and believed that the return of Edward would prove to be the panacea to restore her; and

the young man's confession appalled him. He could not counsel him to forsake fortune and family for his daughter's sake, even while he feared that his refusal to do so would be fatal to her. He could give no advice, though the young man asked for it. He volunteered to conceal the fact of Edward's visit, which was several times repeated with the same privacy.

Sara's health improved as her cheerfulness returned; but her physician dreaded the long, cold winter. About this time appeared a volume entitled Gan-Eden, or Pictures of Cuba, which fell into Mr. Medway's hands. He read it, and was fully impressed with the desirableness of Cuba as a winter residence for consumptives. He suggested the thought to the doctor, and the result was, that Mr. Medway went to the island with his wife and daughter. Edward saw her before her departure, and their plighting was renewed, with the hope of meeting in the spring.

When she had gone, he was moody and discontented. A few weeks later Tom Barkesdale, his chum in college, who resided in New Orleans, came to his home to spend a few days. Edward and his father were courteous and munificent hosts, and did all that was possible to make the guest happy. He was happy, but he could not help seeing that his old college friend was not.

"What's the matter with you, Ned?" said Tom, as they sailed in a small yacht on the bright waters of Penobscot Bay, on one of the soft days of the Indian summer. "You are as blue as a Yankee whetstone."

"Am I? I was not aware of it," replied Edward, shaking off his moodiness for the moment.

"Yes, you are. If I stop talking for a moment, you sink away into a gloomy dream. You seem to me to be half muddled. What ails you?"

"O, nothing."

"I don't believe you. You haven't seemed at all natural since I came. I hope I'm not in the way of anything."

"Certainly not, Tom. You are never in the way."

"But, candidly and seriously, now, what ails you?"

"Nothing at all ails me, my dear fellow. If anything did, I would tell you sooner than I would my own father."

"Not in love—are you, Ned?" added Tom, straightening up, and looking full into the face of his friend. "By the way, where is the daughter of that member of Congress whom you used to be sweet upon?"

"She has gone to Cuba to spend the winter," replied Edward.

"I see just how the land lies now. She has gone to Cuba for her health, and you are pining away in solitude in the frozen north. But, Ned, didn't you write me that the affair had slipped up, fallen through, or something of that sort?"

"I thought it had; but I didn't know myself," replied the lover, with a sigh.

"O, ho! I see. She's a beautiful girl. Upon my word, I envy you, Ned. If you hadn't stepped in before me, my dear fellow, I should have fallen into that trap myself."

"Don't say anything about a trap, Tom. You make me shudder."

"What ails you, Ned? Isn't it all smooth—the course of true love, and all that sort of thing? Has she given you the mitten?"

"No, no. Everything is lovely so far as she is concerned."

"Is her father inimical? Does her mother dislike you, or her grandmother frown upon your hopes?"

"No. Her father and mother are entirely satisfied to let the affair take its course."

"Then what are you moping about?" demanded Tom.

"The opposition comes from my father," answered Edward, as he tacked the boat, and stood off on a long stretch, evidently with the intention of telling his friend all about it.

"What has your father to do with it?" asked Tom.

"He dislikes her father."

"But, if I understand you correctly, you don't purpose to marry her father."

"There is an old feud, a political affair, between them. The row occurred while I was away from home, fitting for college," added Edward, as he proceeded to disclose his present relations with Sara Medway, and to explain the nature and intensity of his father's opposition to the match.

"That's awkward, Ned," said Tom. "Your governor is a hard case on a feud."

"But in everything else he is as indulgent as he can

be. I tried to be dutiful, even in a matter of this kind; and I did not see Miss Medway for three months. Then I heard she was ill, and my conscience reproached me. I called to see her. I shall never forget the expression of joy she bestowed upon me. She is as much attached to me as I am to her, and I know that if I desert her she will die of grief."

"You have a good opinion of yourself, Ned."

"I am in earnest. I think so. I made the first advances, not she."

"I should hope not," laughed Tom.

"And for that reason I feel a sense of responsibility, in addition to my devotion to Sara. Now you know all. What can I do?"

"Upon my word, Ned, that's a hard question; and a man must be a Solon to advise you."

"You are the sole un who can advise me, Tom," replied Edward, with a sickly smile.

"That's a lovesick pun. You are in a tight place. If you hold on, you will be frozen to death; if you let go, you will be burned to death. But I am inclined to think, my dear fellow, from what I have seen of you since I came here, that there is still a third consideration. If you obey your governor, the girl will die of grief; if you marry her, you lose fortune and father; but if you retain fortune and father, you may die of grief yourself. You are moping now; you look pale, and the situation is wearing upon you."

"But what can I do?"

"I'll tell you. I'm going to read law this winter with Colonel Bushnel, in New Orleans. Come with me,

and we will read law together. Before spring we shall be able to solve the problem."

The boat returned to the town. Edward liked the plan, for Louisiana was nearer Cuba than Maine was. His father did not seriously object; and in another fortnight both the young men were in the Crescent City.

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## CHAPTER II.

### THE END OF A SAD STORY.

In New York Edward Montague mailed a letter to Sara Medway. Before he had been in New Orleans a week her answer came to him. She was better; her cough had entirely left her, and she slept well. Nothing was needed to make her happy but his presence.

"Go, Ned; go, by all means," said Tom Barkesdale.

"But my father—"

"Never mind your father," interposed Tom, whose impetuous southern temperament could hardly brook the cold caution of his friend.

"I promised to write to him at least once a month."

"Do so, then."

"But my letters will betray me."

"Date them at New Orleans, a day or two ahead, and send them to me under cover. I will mail them here, and your father will believe you are in this city all the time."

"That's a mean deception," said Edward, whose impulses were rather above such conduct.

"All is fair in love and war," laughed Tom. "Your letters from home will come here, and I will forward them to you."

Under the temptation that beset him Edward did not long consider this scheme before he adopted it; and he went to Havana in the steamer which had brought the letter from Sara. The Medways were still in the city, for the cottage at Limonar, which was to be their residence, was not yet ready for their reception. On his arrival Edward found father and daughter plunged in the deepest grief. However the climate agreed with Sara, it did not agree with her mother. She was taken sick in a sudden and violent manner, and in less than three days she breathed her last, though she was attended by the most skilful resident and foreign physicians.

Edward's office was now that of comforter, and his presence alone seemed to save the stricken ones from utter despair. Both father and daughter leaned upon him, and he faithfully discharged the duties which devolved upon him. After the funeral of Mrs. Medway, Edward conducted Mr. Medway and Sara to their new home at Limonar. In a few weeks the poignancy of their grief was abated; but Edward's presence seemed to be even more necessary than ever. Tom Barkesdale forwarded his letters and cashed his drafts in New Orleans; and the Honorable Mr. Montague in Maine had no suspicion that his son

was not reading law in the Crescent City.

Two months after the death of Mrs. Medway, Edward Montague was privately married, by an English clergyman, to Sara Medway. The circumstances seemed to justify the breaking through of the ordinary proprieties which regulate the interval between a funeral and a wedding. This event seemed to sweep away all the clouds which lowered over the happiness of the young people.

Edward had made up his mind to face the wrath of his father, but he desired to postpone the tempest as long as possible. He wrote to Tom a full account of the step he had taken, and that worthy assured him he could conceal his marriage for an indefinite period. The young husband did not flatter himself that even a year could elapse before the momentous secret would be exposed. There were scores of invalids at Limonar, but, fortunately, none who recognized him or the Medways. He was very happy in his new relation, and the health of his wife appeared to be completely restored.

Letters came regularly from his father—brief, business-like epistles, in which the old gentleman, in his clumsy way, expressed his affection for his son. Edward used his spare time in reading law and studying the Spanish language.

In the spring Edward's letters, in accordance with a suggestion from Tom, began to hint at a trip to the Rocky Mountains, for it was hardly possible for the young couple to spend the summer in Cuba. In May Edward went to New Orleans with his wife, but was very careful to avoid public places. Two months later, attended by Tom, the party went up the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers, and spent the

summer in a quiet village. From this point Edward went home to pass a month with his father, in order to remove any suspicion in the old gentleman's mind, if any had been created; but the old gentleman had never received even a hint of the new relation of his son.

The news of Mrs. Medway's death had reached the town, and it was known that Sara and her father were spending the winter in the west. This intelligence had been communicated by Mr. Medway, who, of course, did not allude to the marriage of his daughter.

After spending a month at home, Edward departed for the west, saying that he was to meet Tom Barkesdale at St. Louis, and, after a trip to the Rocky Mountains, they would return to New Orleans, and resume their law studies. The young man wrote to his father from the place where he joined his wife and father-in-law. In the autumn the party went to the south, and, as soon as it was prudent to do so, Edward, his wife, and Mr. Medway returned to Cuba. The cottage at Limonar was just as they had left it, and they resumed their quiet domestic life as before. Edward had observed, with fear and trembling, that some of the consumptive symptoms of his wife appeared while she was at the north. Indeed, she had brought back with her a hacking cough, which, however, soon yielded to the softening influence of the climate.

Limonar is but a short distance from Matanzas, by railroad, and either Mr. Medway or Edward was obliged to visit the city occasionally, to procure the comforts and luxuries not to be had in a country village.

Sara's knowledge of Spanish was very limited, though by this time Edward spoke it quite fluently. Her Spanish servants were a constant perplexity to her, and she very much desired to obtain an English or American woman to perform the ordinary offices of the household. On one of his visits to the city Edward met an American woman in great distress. Her husband was a cooper, with whom she had come from a seaport town in Maine, to better their fortunes. High wages tempted him to remain through the summer; but as late as October he fell a victim to yellow fever. He had sent most of his surplus funds home, and his widow soon exhausted her scanty supply of money. Instead of applying to the American consul, she went to live with an English family as a nurse. But there she was taken sick herself, and was sent away from her comfortable home to a boarding-house, lest she should communicate some contagious disease to her employer's family. Here she had contracted a debt which she could not pay, and was seeking a friend to assist her, when she met Edward in a shop. Hearing him speak English, she addressed him.

Though Mrs. Wayland desired only to return to her home in Maine, Edward prevailed upon her to go with him to Limonar. He paid her debts, provided her with everything she needed, and offered her large wages. All were so kind and indulgent to her that she soon became much attached to her new friends. When she had been a month at the cottage, Edward Montague became the happy father of a fine boy.

But with this joy came the heaviest of sorrows. Sara's health began to fail, and the incipient malady which had been working upon her physical frame so

silently for years rapidly developed itself. The delicious climate had lost its influence; and when the boy was only three months old, his mother breathed her last. Edward and Mr. Medway were stunned by the blow, and wept as those without hope. The young wife was buried by the side of the mother in the cemetery in the vicinity of Havana.

There was no longer any motive for the survivors to remain in Cuba. Limonar had lost all its glory now, and Edward could not endure the sight of the familiar localities which had been hallowed by the presence of his lost wife. Mr. Medway was alone in the world. His own health was feeble, and he desired only to return to his native land. His spirit was broken, and all this world seemed to have passed away. It was decided that Mr. Medway, with Mrs. Wayland and the child, should take the steamer for New York, and return to Maine, while Edward went home by the way of New Orleans.

Much as the young father had loved his boy before, he appeared to be in a measure indifferent to him now. His wife and child were a real joy; but the boy alone only reminded him of her whom he had lost.

When the steamer arrived at New York, Mr. Medway was too feeble to travel. Mrs. Wayland was a faithful nurse to him; but her charge died in a week after he landed. The last of the family was gone. His remains were sent home, and Mrs. Wayland and the child went with them. She knew the whole of the story we have related; and, in his last illness, Mr. Medway had impressed upon her mind, in the strongest manner, the necessity of entire secrecy in regard to his daughter's marriage and the paternity of the child. If Edward chose to acknowledge it, he would do so in

due time.

Mrs. Wayland had no relations to trouble themselves about her affairs; and when she appeared in Camden, which had been the residence of her husband, no one thought of asking whether or not the child was her own. She volunteered no information on this subject; and, recovering the money which her husband had sent home, she was comfortably situated for the present. She found a good boarding-place, and devoted herself wholly to the little one, who already occupied a large place in her affections.

Edward Montague went to New Orleans, and when he presented himself before his college friend, he looked like another man, so severe had been the workings of his grief upon him. Tom Barkesdale pressed his hand in silence, for he had already been informed by letter of the sad event of the last month.

"It is all over with me now, Tom," said he, gloomily, as the tears gathered in his hollow eyes.

"Don't take it so hardly, Ned. Time softens the severest trials."

"Not mine. I am ready to die myself now."

"No you are not. Don't give up the battle so. Be a man."

"I can be nothing now. I shall go home, and let my life ebb out with my sorrows."

"Don't go home as you are now. You will only make your father miserable. You have no right to do that."

"I must tell him all."

"Don't do it, Ned."

"Why not?"

"It will only vex and torment your governor to no purpose. He is an old man, and cannot live many years more. Don't disturb him with the reflection that you have disobeyed him."

"But my child!"

"Keep the child in the shade for a few years," said Tom; and Edward fully understood him. "One of these days you can acknowledge it, and all will be well. Out of regard to your father's happiness you ought to keep still."

"As my wife is dead now, I hope he will forgive me."

"Perhaps he would, perhaps not. What is the use of stirring up the waters and making a storm, when everything is quiet now?"

"But my father cannot help seeing that something has happened to me. I can never be as I was before."

"Wait and see," replied the more philosophic young man.

A letter came from Mr. Montague a few days later. It was in the usual quiet tone, with the gossip and news of the town. Edward dreaded the thought of disturbing the serenity of his father's life. He felt now that he ought not to have deceived the old gentleman; that it would have been better to face his wrath. He was sure that his own and Sara's happiness required that he should marry her; and he could not reproach himself for this step. But by this miserable deception—successful as it had been—he had stepped from the high plane of honor and truth. He was utterly dissatisfied with himself; and all the

more so because he realized that his wife was worthy of all the sacrifice he could have made for her sake. Tom Barkesdale reasoned from a different point of view, and insisted that the matter was best as it was. Edward had done right in marrying Sara, and it was quite proper to save Mr. Montague from the pain and misery of a useless opposition.

Then came another letter from Mrs. Wayland, announcing her safe arrival in New York and the illness of Mr. Medway.

"I must go to New York at once," said Edward.

"Don't you do it. You will undo everything that has been done, if you do. Probably Mr. Medway has been seasick overmuch. He will be all right in a few days. Wait till you hear again, at least."

He did wait, and the next letter informed him of the death of his father-in-law, and that his remains had been sent to his friends in Maine. Mrs. Wayland added that she should go to Camden at once, where a letter from him would reach her.

"It is no use for you to go now, Ned," said Tom. "You can do no good."

"I ought to have gone before."

"As you didn't go before, it cannot be helped. Your father thinks you are diligently reading law in the office of Colonel Bushnell, in New Orleans. We can't help the past; but I advise you to deceive him no longer."

"What do you mean?"

"Go into the office and read law with all your might. Then you will be deceiving him no longer. You will

be doing just what he thinks you are doing," replied Tom, lightly.

"And not tell him of the past?"

"Certainly not."

Edward felt the need of some occupation, and he accepted the counsel of his friend. He studied day and night, for he could not join in any of the pleasures of the city, or go into the gay society which Tom frequented. He wrote to Mrs. Wayland, enclosing a considerable sum of money; but he forbade her writing to him, lest the fact of a letter to him from Camden should connect him with the child. It was a groundless fear; but he had now fully resolved not to disturb his father's peace by acknowledging his own disobedience.

For four months he studied so diligently that his friend began to fear he would impair his health. Every day found him more cheerful than the last; and it was plain enough that youth and time were rapidly conquering his grief. He began to go into society again, and the presence of the ladies was not altogether repulsive to him. In June, with Tom as his companion, he went home to spend the summer.

His father commented upon his altered appearance, but Tom insisted that it was because he had studied so hard. He had not only read law, but had learned the Spanish language, so that he could converse fluently in it. The vacation wonderfully recruited his health, and in the autumn the students returned to their southern home. Edward studied as diligently as ever. Youth had wholly conquered his grief, and he was as before. He sent money regularly to Mrs. Wayland; but he expressed no desire to see his child,

though he declared to Tom that the little one still had a place in his heart, and that he intended at some future time to acknowledge it.

Edward boarded with his friend's father, who had a daughter. She was but sixteen when Edward first became a member of the family. She was nineteen now, and the young northerner began to be tenderly impressed towards her, though his attentions did not begin till his wife had been dead over a year. The attraction was mutual, and Edward wrote to his father about it. The old gentleman was pleased, and facetiously remarked that he had all along supposed there was something or somebody in New Orleans, besides Tom or the law, that had drawn him there for three winters. He hadn't the slightest objection. Edward could *now* please himself in that respect, as in every other. The "now" was heavily underscored, and the son had no difficulty in understanding his meaning. It was known that all the Medways were dead, and the Honorable Mr. Montague could no longer object to any match his heir might choose to make.

The marriage was deferred till the next year, when Edward's father and mother made a winter tour to New Orleans. The great event was duly chronicled in the newspapers, and the young couple made a bridal tour to Europe, where they spent a year. On their return an elegant residence, next to the Honorable Mr. Montague's, in one of the finest towns on Penobscot Bay, awaited them.

Edward practised law in a mild way, but never made any great figure in his profession. He was an officer in the war, has been to the state legislature as a representative, and the honors of a senatorship are

still before him. Like the other distinguished men we have introduced, he is the father of only one child by his second marriage, a pretty daughter, who is the idol of both parents, and particularly of the Honorable Mr. Montague.

Edward Montague has all of this world's goods which are required to make a man happy, he has a beautiful and loving wife, a beautiful and affectionate daughter, a kind and indulgent father still. All the world regards him as a happy man; but he is not entirely so, for he cannot be satisfied with his past life. He cannot help thinking of the deception he practised upon his father, and still fears that some unexpected event will disclose his misconduct. His wife shares his great secret, for, before he married her, a sense of honor compelled him to make her his confidante, which he did in the presence of her brother, who vouched for the truth of all he said. He can never be entirely at peace while his father lives.

Mrs. Wayland married again, but Edward continued to send her at the rate of ten dollars a week for the care of his son, who still passes as her own child. After this marriage of the nurse, the father of the boy was vexed by a new fear. He saw that it was possible for her husband to probe the secret through his letters and remittances; so he ceased to write letters, or to send money by mail as before. Once a year, when Tom Barkesdale came north to spend his summer vacation, he sent him with the money to deliver into her own hands.

Strange as it may seem, Edward has not seen his boy since he parted with him on board of the steamer at Havana. When he thinks of the little one he cannot

but reproach himself for the past. He feels that he has wronged the boy, and fears that his own emotions might betray him in the presence of the child. He is vexed by a score of fears which he cannot define. The guide and standard of his life is honor rather than religious principle, which is the only safe guide and standard. His conscience reproaches him for what he has done and for what he has left undone. He feels that he has dishonored the memory of his lost wife, and that his conduct is a continued wrong to his child. Like thousands of others, he shuns that which might lead him into the path of truth and right. He pays liberally for the support of his boy, and tries to persuade himself that he is doing all that honor requires of him.

All this is but the introduction to our story; and with the next chapter we step over a period of more than a dozen years.

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# CHAPTER III.

## LITTLE BOBTAIL.

"What have you done with it, Robert?" demanded Ezekiel Taylor, a coarse, rough man of forty, who was partially intoxicated and very angry. "You and your mother've hid that jug of rum."

Robert looked at Mrs. Taylor, who was making bread at the table, but he did not deem it prudent to make any reply. That jug was the evil genius of the little

household. It had transformed Ezekiel Taylor from an honest, industrious, and thriving man, into a mean, lazy, and thriftless drunkard. It had brought misery and contention into the little house which he had bought and paid for before his marriage. He was a cooper by trade, and had set up in business for himself; but his dissolute habit had robbed him of his shop, and reduced him first to a journeyman and then to a vagabond. He earned hardly enough to pay for the liquor he consumed; but, somehow,—and how was the mystery which perplexed everybody who knew the Taylors,—the family always had enough to eat and good clothes to wear. Years before, he had, under the pretence of buying a shop in which to set up in business again, mortgaged his house for five hundred dollars, and his wife had signed away her right of dower in the premises, without a suspicion of anything wrong. But the money was quickly squandered, and Squire Gilfilian, who had the mortgage, threatened to take the place, though the interest was paid with tolerable regularity by the wife.

Ezekiel worked a little when he was sober; but a day of industry was sure to be followed by a spree. He could procure a few drinks at the saloons; but as soon as he began to be tipsy, even the saloon keepers refused to furnish him more, for the public sentiment of the place fiercely condemned them. The cooper had worked a day and obtained a jug of rum. After breakfast he had gone into the village and drank two or three times, and when he could procure no more liquor there, he came home to continue his spree on the stock he had before laid in. The jug had been concealed in the wood-shed, where Robert had discovered it. It suggested evil to himself and his mother, abuse and even personal violence. As he

afterwards explained it, he saw a storm brewing, and, like a prudent sailor, he had prepared for it, or prepared to avert it, by taking the jug down to the steamboat wharf and dropping it upon the rocks below, where the rising tide soon covered the pieces, and for a time concealed the evidences of the deed.

"What have you done with it, you villain?" repeated the angry head of the family, looking first at the boy and then at his wife.

"I haven't seen it, and didn't know you had any jug," replied Mrs. Taylor.

"Don't lie to me about it," stormed Ezekiel. "You can't fool me. I left that jug in the wood-shed, and 'tain't there now. It couldn't have gone off without any help."

"I haven't touched it," repeated Mrs. Taylor.

"Yes, you have; you know you have," added the tippler, demonstrating with a clinched fist towards her.

"I tell you I haven't seen it."

"I say you have," said Ezekiel, shaking his fist in her face; "you know you have; and if you don't tell me what you've done with it, it'll go hard with you."

"She hasn't seen it, and don't know anything at all about it," interposed Robert, in order to turn the wrath of the inebriate from his mother.

"Then *you* do, you villain," said Ezekiel, turning sharply upon the youth.

The boy did not make any reply.

"What have you done with it?" cried the angry cooper.

"Mother knows nothing at all about it; she hasn't touched it, and didn't know there was any jug there."

Mrs. Taylor suspended work and looked earnestly at the boy. She understood by his manner that he had removed the jug, and she dreaded the consequences of her husband's wrath. Ezekiel continued to repeat his question in his drunken frenzy, and to demonstrate violently with his fist at the youth. He turned again upon his wife, and accused her of being a party to the removal of the jug; but Robert's only object seemed to be to shield her from his wrath.

"I tell you again she don't know anything at all about it," said he, at last. "I did the business myself; and that jug has gone up. It won't hold any more rum."

"What did you do with it, you villain?" gasped Ezekiel.

"I dropped it off the railroad wharf upon the rocks; and there isn't a piece left of it big enough to stop a mouse hole."

"You did—did you?"

"I did," added Robert, desperately, as he braced himself to brave the consequences of his bold deed.

"What business had you to meddle with my property?" demanded Ezekiel, furiously.

"It was a kind of property that don't make any man the richer," replied the youth.

"Who told you to do it?" asked the inebriate, glancing at his wife.

"No one told me, and no one knew anything about it."

"Then I'll teach you to steal my property! I'll take it out of your hide, you rascal."

"There isn't any of it in my hide, and I don't mean there ever shall be."

Ezekiel took down a clothes-stick which was hanging against the wall, and with it he made a dive and a plunge at Robert. The boy was too active to be caught by a man whose footing was none too steady. He easily dodged the blows which were aimed at him, till the tippler, out of breath from his exertions, placed himself before the door to prevent the escape of the culprit, and there rested himself from the fatigue of the onslaught.

"Don't you strike that boy," said Mrs. Taylor, warmly; and she had before essayed to suspend the strife.

"Yes I will! I'll flog him within an inch of his life. I'll teach him to meddle with my property," gasped Ezekiel.

"If you do, I'll leave this house, and never come into it again. I won't have no such goings on where I am," said the woman, warmly and energetically.

"That's right, mother; you leave," added Robert, who had remained in the room only to turn the wrath of the husband from her to himself.

"He shan't hurt you, Robert. I'll stand up for you to the end," added Mrs. Taylor, as she passed into her chamber, which was next to the "living-room."

"I don't care who goes, nor who stays. I ain't a going to have any such works as this," continued Ezekiel, as

he gathered himself up for another attack. "I ain't a going to have my property, that cost money, destroyed, and you won't want to do such a thing again, I can tell you."

The angry man rushed towards Robert, who stood near the door which opened into the front entry; but he knew that it was locked, and so he did not attempt to escape in that direction. Being in the corner, his furious assailant attempted to pin him there; but Robert, by a flank movement, reached the door which led to the wood-shed, and passed out. He was closely pursued by Ezekiel; but the tipsy man might as well have attempted to catch a wild antelope. The boy dodged around the wood-shed and other buildings till he had thrown his pursuer off the track; then he went to the back window of his mother's chamber to assure himself that she was still safe. She was putting on her bonnet and shawl, with the evident intention of leaving the house.

"Did he strike you, Robert?" she asked, through the open window, with more of indignation than terror in her manner.

"Not he," replied Robert. "I can keep out of his way easy enough."

"Don't go near him again—that's a good boy. There's no knowing what he may do. He's as ugly as sin when he has had two or three glasses and wants more."

"But where are you going, mother?" asked the boy.

"I don't know where to go yet; but I'm not going to stay here to-day. I can't bear it any longer. You will keep out of his way—won't you, Robert?"

"I'm not afraid of him; but I'm going out a fishing as soon as the tide makes enough to get the boat off."

"Well, I'll go up and spend the day with Mrs. Paine," added Mrs. Taylor. "I hope your father will get over it before night."

"I've got about enough of this, mother; and if it wasn't for you, I'd clear out this very day."

"Don't leave me yet, Robert," pleaded the poor woman. "I mean to leave him myself if he don't behave better. He shan't abuse you."

"I don't mean he shall. But I think I can take care of myself better than you can of yourself."

Mrs. Taylor did not think so; but she did not dispute the point. The approach of Ezekiel caused the youth to beat another retreat; but, from the other side of the street, he saw his mother leave the house and walk towards the village. Satisfied that she was safe from the wrath of her brutal husband, he soon followed her, though he did not overtake her, for his course, after a short distance, led him in another direction.

"I'm glad that man is not my father," muttered Robert to himself, as he walked towards the village.

A knowledge of this fact had come to him only a few days before, and it was a great relief to him, for certainly there was no meaner man in Camden than Ezekiel Taylor. He was sorry that he had ever been permitted even to bear his name. He was sixteen years old, though, for his age, he was rather short. But he was a stout, wiry, athletic little fellow. He was just as much puzzled as the rest of the town's people to know how his mother contrived to feed

and clothe herself and him, when it was patent to everybody that her husband spent all that he earned for rum. She always had money enough to buy a beefsteak and to pay her store bill. When everything seemed to have "gone to the dogs," and his last suit of clothes was out at the elbows, she astonished him by getting a new suit. The coat had very brief skirts, after the fashion then prevailing. On his short, stubbed form, it gave him a peculiar appearance, which promptly attracted the attention of his companions, when he went to church and Sunday school, after a long absence caused by the want of suitable clothing. The boys called him "Bob Taylor;" but when this coat appeared, they cut off one syllable, and made his cognomen "Bobtail," which soon became "Little Bobtail," for he was often called little Bob Taylor before, by the larger boys.

Robert was disposed to resent all these liberties with his name; but as Squire Gilfilian, the hotel keeper, and the deputy collector of the port, good-naturedly adopted the fashion of the youngsters, he was compelled to acquiesce. After all, there was not much difference between Little Bobtail and little Bob Taylor, certainly not enough to quarrel about.

Robert went to the post-office, not because he expected any letters,—for he had no correspondence, —but because a great many people went there when the mail arrived. He was always ready to make a quarter when an opportunity presented. He spent half his time on the water in the summer, and knew all about a boat. Sometimes the strangers at the hotel wanted him to go out with them, and indicate the best places to catch cod, haddock, and mackerel, and sometimes there was an errand to be done.

"Little Bobtail!" shouted the post-master through his window, as Robert entered the office.

He went up to the window, and asked what was wanted.

"Here is a letter for Squire Gilfilian, who was in a desperate hurry to get it, if one came," added the post-master. "Will you carry it up to his office?"

"Yes, sir," replied Little Bobtail, promptly.

"Here is another for Captain Chinks. I think he is at the squire's office, for they just went up the street together. You may as well take it along."

Robert took the two letters, and hastened to the squire's office. As he entered, Captain Chinks came out of the rear apartment, where the lawyer held his private conferences with his clients.

"Here's a letter for you, sir," said Robert, as he handed one of them to the captain, who immediately tore it open.

"Thank you, Little Bobtail," said Captain Chinks, taking a quarter in scrip from his vest pocket, and giving it to him.

"I am very much obliged to you, Captain Chinks," replied Robert, glad to earn a quarter so easily. "Is Squire Gilfilian in that room?"

"Yes; but he's busy."

"I have a letter for him."

"Put it on the table, and he will find it when he comes out; on his writing desk there."

Little Bobtail tossed the letter on the desk, and left

the office, thinking only of the quarter he had just made, and how he should invest it to the best advantage in provisioning the old boat with which he intended to go a fishing that day. A sheet of gingerbread and a "hunk of cheese," as he expressed it, seemed to suit the emergencies of the occasion; and after purchasing these articles, he walked down the road leading to the Portland steamboat wharf. He had gone but a short distance before he overtook Captain Chinks, who was reading the letter he just received as he walked along the plank sidewalk.

Captain Chinks, who was, possibly, a distant relative of him of the horse-marines, though his name had become corrupted, was a man of doubtful reputation. The officials of the custom-house kept a sharp eye upon him, and endeavored to connect him with certain irregular transactions, whereby sundry cases of brandy and sundry boxes of cigars had come into Camden without paying tribute to the majesty of the custom-house. The goods were seized, and duly confiscated; but there was a link wanting in the chain of testimony which connected Captain Chinks with the affair. Robert supposed he had been consulting Squire Gilfilian about the matter; and the youth judged from the angry look of the captain that the lawyer had not been able to afford him any satisfaction.

Captain Chinks read his letter, and made his way down to the steamboat wharf. As Bobtail ran his old boat by the end of the pier, he saw the man of doubtful reputation go on board of the steamer, and noticed him on her deck when she started.

That afternoon Robert sold a good mess of fish at the market, and went home to the cottage, which was on

the road leading to the steamboat wharf. Ezekiel was not there, but his mother was. As the tippler could not obtain the liquor for a spree, he had become sober. He went to work the next day, and a temporary peace was patched up. He offered no violence to the boy while he was sober, but this was only for a brief period. In a few days he obtained another jug of rum, and Robert and his mother were obliged to abandon the house to him.

On this afternoon Robert went to the post-office as usual. He had not been on the water since the day he had carried the letters to Squire Gilfilian's office, for the reason that he could not obtain a boat, for he was not the owner of the old craft in which he generally sailed. She belonged to a boatman by the name of Prince, who managed a larger Newport boat, in which he conveyed passengers from the hotel, and others, upon excursions on the bay. Anybody who wanted the old boat took her, without the formality of asking the owner's leave, though Robert, being a boy, was not quite so independent as others; but Prince was a good fellow, and allowed him to use her whenever she was not taken by somebody else. But Robert had borrowed her for the day, and secured her near the cottage the night before, so that she could not be used till the tide served.

"Little Bobtail!" shouted the post-master.

"What, sir?"

"Didn't I give you a letter for Squire Gilfilian, about a week ago?"

"Yes, sir, you did."

"What did you do with it?"

"Laid it on the desk in his office," replied Robert, wondering what all these questions could mean.

"He never got it."

"Didn't he? Well, I put it on his desk," added the boy, startled and annoyed at the situation.

Just then the squire himself entered the office, and confirmed the statement of the post-master. The lawyer questioned Little Bobtail sharply, perhaps rather from his professional habit than because he suspected the youth of anything wrong.

"I put it on your desk, sir; and that is all I know about it. Captain Chinks was in your office at the time, and he told me to put it on the desk," said Robert, stoutly.

"Now I remember, I gave Bobtail a letter for Captain Chinks at the same time," added the post-master.

"Yes, sir; and I gave it to him in the squire's office."

"Well, we will look the matter up when Captain Chinks comes back. He has been away a week now," added the lawyer.

Robert was vexed. He was not directly accused of stealing the letter, but he did not like the sharp questions which the squire asked him. He left the office, and, after buying a sheet of gingerbread and some cheese, he hastened down to the old boat, which was now afloat. He had put a bucket of clams into her the night before, for bait, and otherwise prepared the boat for a cruise. The wind was pretty fresh from the westward, and he went off wing-and-wing before it. He tried the usual places, but the fish

did not bite, and he kept sailing farther and farther out from the shore; but he caught hardly any fish. He was in no hurry to go home, for Ezekiel was in his tantrums, and his mother had gone to Rockport to spend two or three days. The wind, instead of subsiding as the day advanced, increased in force. The sea was heavy out in the bay, and it was utterly impossible to beat the old boat up to windward, for she made more leeway than headway.

"No matter; I'll make a night of it," said he to himself, when he realized that it was impossible for him to beat back to Camden.

The bay is full of islands, and Little Bobtail concluded to get under the lee of one of them, and wait for better weather. He took in his jib and mainsail, and the old boat went along very well, taking in very little water. The sun went down, and it was dark before he had made a harbor. He was approaching Blank Island, where he knew a good place to anchor for the night, when he discovered a large sail-boat, drifting down the bay. Her sails were all lowered, but had not been secured, and were flapping about in the wind.

"Boat, ahoy!" shouted Little Bobtail.

No answer came to his repeated hails; and, throwing the old craft up into the wind, he awaited the approach of the abandoned boat. Placing himself In the bow, with the painter in his hand, he leaped on board of the stranger, as she drifted upon his old craft. The abandoned boat was worthy to be called a yacht. She was about thirty-two feet in length, with eleven feet beam. Two thirds of her length was decked over, with a trunk cabin, in which were transoms large enough for four berths, with a cook-

room forward. She was handsomely fitted up, and Little Bobtail wondered how she happened to be adrift. He hoisted the mainsail, and in a few moments ran her into a little bay under the lee of Blank Island, where he anchored her. As she had an anchor it was evident that she had not broken away from her anchorage. Having secured the old boat at a safe distance from the yacht, the young boatman had an opportunity to examine his prize, for such it proved to be.

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# CHAPTER IV.

## THE JANTY YACHT.

It was very dark, and Little Bobtail was unable to obtain a very clear idea of the craft he had picked up; but he had brought her to a secure anchorage under the lee of Blank Island, and, quite exhausted with his energetic efforts, both in boarding the yacht and in mooring the boats, he was content to rest himself for a while on the cushioned seats of the standing-room. The fresh wind which had blown all day had not permitted him to pay much attention to the dietary department, which is always an important one in a boat; and, not being over sentimental, he was positively hungry. Even the half of his sheet of gingerbread and his "hunk of cheese" remained untouched.

Little Bobtail was an ingenious youth, and when he

anchored the old boat he had taken a line from her stern to the yacht, so that he could haul the former alongside the latter at his pleasure. By this means he was enabled to recover his provision box and jug of cold water without any difficulty. He devoured the balance of what had been intended only for his dinner, which, expanded into both dinner and supper, did not half cover the needs of the occasion. He was still hungry, but he had recovered his breath, and was in condition to make another effort, if another were required of him.

We confess that we have written very coolly and composedly of the event in Little Bobtail's experience which had just transpired, hardly attempting to describe his wonder and exhilaration; but it is not to be supposed that he was unmoved by the discovery and recovery of the abandoned yacht. He was so tremendously excited, that he had worked all the breath out of his body, and had hardly an opportunity to consider the nature and extent of his achievement till he had regained his wind, and partially filled the vacuum in his stomach, which prudent Nature abhors.

We said he was ready for another effort; but before he put forth his strength again, he indulged in a series of speculations in regard to the immediate history of the yacht he had picked up under such singular circumstances. He had not been into the cabin yet to obtain whatever evidence might be available in solving the problem; he had not yet had time to do so. But people speculate and construct theories even before there are any premises on which to base them.

The yacht was fine enough to be a pleasure craft, and

he leaped at once to the conclusion that some gay party had landed on an island to have a good time, and, having run the yacht aground, the fresh breeze had blown her off as the tide rose. Entirely satisfied with this solution, the history of the fair craft seemed to be no longer a mystery to him. In the morning he would run her over to Camden and anchor there. The owner would soon appear; and, as he was fairly entitled to salvage, he thought he could reasonably hope to receive as much as ten dollars for his services, for the yacht might have been thrown upon the rocks and utterly smashed, if he had not picked her up. Indeed, she was not three miles from Deer Island when he discovered her, and in an hour or two more nothing could have saved her from destruction.

To Little Bobtail ten dollars was a vast sum of money, and the very first thought of obtaining it suggested, as the next one, the use to which it should be applied. That old tub of a boat in which he had been sailing all day could be bought for thirty dollars. It is true she was not much of a boat; but it would afford Little Bobtail almost as much pleasure to repair her and put a proper keel upon her, so that he could beat to windward in her, as it would to sail her. Prince, who owned her, would take ten dollars as the first payment, and in time he could earn enough with her to pay the other twenty. Altogether the dream was a brilliant one to him, and as he gazed through the gloom of the night at the old tub, his fancy kindled with the glowing future. He wished the old thing was bigger, so that he could have a cabin and a place to sleep in her, when the drunken fury of Ezekiel drove him from the cottage.

Now, really, our hero did not think half so much of

the janty yacht he had captured as he did of the old tub, and we do not know that he would have taken the trouble to enter her cabin before he wanted a place to sleep, if he had not been hungry. Half a sheet of gingerbread and "half a hunk of cheese" for supper were altogether insufficient for a growing boy. If the party which had lost the yacht had been on a pleasure excursion, of course they had brought provisions with them; for, to the imagination of a boy of sixteen, eating is one of the chief pleasures of existence, especially on the salt water. If the excursionists had gone on shore,—as they must have done, since they were not on board,—probably they had taken their provisions with them. It was a startling thought; but then perhaps the yacht had broken adrift before they were removed from the lockers. The alternative was very pleasant to Little Bobtail, though it suggested the miserable condition of the excursionists left on the island, perhaps to pass the night there, without food. Our hero thought they could stand it better without any supper than he could, for he had had only half a dinner, and besides, everybody thinks his own misfortunes are infinitely more trying than those of other people. But we must do our young skipper the justice to add that he sympathized with the excursionists in case they had no supper.

The doors of the cabin were closed, but they were not locked. Little Bobtail threw them open, and gazed down into the darkness. He could not see anything but the faint light through the round ports in the trunk. He descended the steps, and then stumbled against some boxes. Feeling his way overhead, he placed his hand upon a lantern suspended from above.

"All right!" exclaimed he. "That lantern is the right thing in the right place. We will have some light on the subject."

He was an early riser, and made the fire in the cook-stove every morning at home, which may account for the fact that he had a quantity of matches in his pocket. He always carried them with him, for he had been blown off once before, when he had a boat full of fish, and had to go hungry all night because he could not make a fire to cook one or two of them. Besides, when he sailed with strangers or with town's people, most of them smoked, and he often found that a match was the one thing needed in a boat. On account of this wise forecast and this prudent habit, Little Bobtail had plenty of matches in his pocket; and having them, he lighted one, and communicated the flame to the lamp in the lantern.

Excitedly he waited the revelations which the lamp was to make to him. It was a beautiful cabin. The transoms were all cushioned, and there was a table between them. Forward was the door which opened into the cook-room. Over the table was a rack for bottles and glasses, and there was a score of lockers filled with dishes and other table ware, with charts, books, compasses, and other nautical necessaries. A handsome spy-glass hung on a pair of brackets. At the end of the transoms were several cushions, used as pillows, and some robes to cover the sleepers.

After this general survey of the interior of the cabin, Little Bobtail turned his attention to the boxes upon which he had stumbled. All the cabin floor, except a small portion aft, was covered with these boxes, of which he counted twenty. The theory he had adopted that the yacht had been used for a pleasure

excursion, crumbled away as he saw these boxes, for no party would go out sailing with the cabin lumbered up in this manner. He overhauled one of the boxes, without being any the wiser, and Little Bobtail was sorely puzzled. Taking the lantern in his hand, he crawled over the boxes to the cook-room. It was very small, but it was admirably fitted up, with a tiny stove and plenty of lockers. In one corner hung a log of bacon, from which a few slices had been out at some recent period.

"That suits my case exactly," said the explorer, as he took down the bacon. "I shall treat myself to a slice of fried ham before I bother my head any more about this craft or any other."

In a locker on which the cook sat while engaged in his duties was a supply of wood; and in five minutes Little Bobtail had a good fire in the stove. A frying-pan lay by the side of the locker. Indeed, our hero could want nothing which he did not immediately find ready for use, just as though a multitude of fairies stood at his elbows to meet his every wish. In another locker he found a kid of cold potatoes, and there was an abundance of hard-tack in a keg on the transom. The slice of bacon hissed and sizzled in the pan on the stove, and the odor was delightful to the hungry boy. It was soon "done to a turn," and the fried potatoes were as brown and nice as those prepared by his mother. He might have had tea or coffee, but he did not care for them. At his age they are not reckoned among the substantials for a good meal. Procuring a plate, knife, and fork from the cabin, he helped himself from the pan on the stove.

"That's what I call first rate!" exclaimed he, when he had duly tested the bacon and the potatoes. "I shall

be ready to hire out as a cook after this. That's tip-top bacon, and I respect the pig that left this leg I see to me."

Little Bobtail glanced up at the leg of bacon in the corner, and thought he had made a good pun; but it was fearfully old and stale to be printed in a book, and we do so only out of deference to his feelings. No right-minded and highly moral person will make puns; and our hero is only excusable on the ground that he was alone, and did not force it upon other people. He ate all he wanted; nay, more—all he could. He devoured the entire slice he had cooked, leaving none for a lunch, in case he wanted one, when he had not time to cook. He was entirely satisfied, and that is saying a great deal of a boy of sixteen, growing, and sailing on the salt water, too. He could not eat any more, or he would; and, being too full for utterance, he made no more speeches to himself. Doubtless he had endangered the peace of his dreams by overloading his stomach at that hour in the evening, for by this time it was ten o'clock; but it so happened that he had time to digest his supper before he put himself in the way of dreaming.

Having satisfied his hunger, he felt entirely satisfied with himself, and especially with the person or persons who had fitted out the yacht in the commissary department. Taking his lantern, he crawled over the boxes to the after part of the cabin, where there was space enough for him to sit comfortably. He looked at the boxes, and wondered what was in them. We do not know that he had more curiosity than boys in general; but he felt that a knowledge of their contents might enable him to establish another theory in regard to the previous history of the yacht. He had seen a shingling hatchet

in the cook-room, used for splitting up the kindling wood. He went for it, and, with no great difficulty, opened one of the boxes. It was filled with bottles, packed in straw, and each one enclosed in a curious case made of the same material. He slipped one of the bottles out of its casing. It was labeled "JAMES HENNESSY & CO.—COGNAC." The name of the firm, so well known to old topers and moderate drinkers, afforded him no light; but he knew that "Cognac" meant brandy.



"Oho! aha!" said Little Bobtail, knowingly; "I smell a mice now. This boat wasn't used for a pleasure party."

He had heard about those mysterious custom-house inspectors and detectives, who poke their noses into grocery stores, cellars, and all the sly places where contraband goods were supposed to be concealed. Promptly he arrived at the conclusion that the brandy in the yacht had come "thus far into the bowels of the land" without paying its respects to the custom-house, or any of the heavy duties which go to support the army and navy, and a host of beneficent institutions which make our country "the land of the free and the home of the brave," and the collection of which affords a multitude of officials an opportunity to steal. But Little Bobtail did not trouble himself to discuss any of the vexed questions about free trade and tariff, or even to weigh carefully the immorality of smuggling.

Our hero did not believe in brandy, abstractly or concretely. It was liquor, and liquor had been a curse to his home, a curse to his mother, and a curse to himself; and he was tempted to take the boxes on deck, open them, and spill the contents of the bottles into the sea. Possibly—not probably—he would have done so, if he had not been afraid the liquor would destroy the fish, or drive them away to prohibition waters. The problem of the yacht had become intricate, and he was puzzled to determine what to do with her. If he had been properly instructed in regard to the duty of the citizens to his government, and properly inspired to discharge this duty, he would have sailed the yacht and her cargo over to Camden, and delivered her to the deputy collector in charge of the port. He knew what smuggling meant; but his views were very indefinite. According to the fishermen, and most of the traders, to whose conversation on this subject he had listened, smuggling was hardly to be regarded as a sin, or, if a

sin, it was one of the most trivial character.

It is a melancholy truth, becoming more and more familiar to us every year, that cheating the government is hardly considered a crime; that respectable men, as the world measures them, and even members of the church, defraud the revenues of the government without compunction.

We are sorry to acknowledge that Little Bobtail did not think of such a thing as handing over the yacht and her contraband cargo—as he was fully satisfied it was—to the custom-house officials. He had not been educated up to a point which compelled him to do so. His conscience was not sensitive on this point above the average of the town's people. He was afraid, if he did so, that the government would coolly ignore him because he was a boy, and he should lose his ten dollars. Perhaps he thought he could make better terms with the smugglers than he could with the honorable and high-minded deputy-collector. While he was thinking of the matter, the moon rose in the clear sky, and shed a welcome light over the bay. It occurred to him that those who had lost the yacht might be in search of her. They might blunder upon him in the morning, and, being reckless smugglers, might even kill him to prevent his bearing testimony against them. He did not like the idea of meeting any such men alone. He preferred that the interview should take place in Camden harbor. The wind was still fresh, and in the yacht he could beat over to Camden in three or four hours; but he thought the breeze was hauling to the southward, which would give him a slant so that he could run over without tacking.

Moved by these considerations, he hoisted the

mainsail of the yacht, which required all his strength and skill. He then weighed the anchor of the old tub, and carried her painter to the larger craft. He had a hard pull at the anchor of the yacht, but he got it up after a while, and stowed it securely forward. Rushing to the helm, he hauled in the sheet, and taking the wind on the quarter, he stood to the northward, in order to pass around the island. The yacht worked beautifully, even without her jib. Hauling in the sheet when she was clear of the island, he laid her up to the wind as close as she would go. In a short time he got the bearings of the lights, and found that he could let out his sheet a little. The yacht seemed to fly under the fresh breeze, and Little Bobtail watched her motions with perfect delight. After a while he discovered the light on Negro Island, and it was all plain sailing to him.

If the yacht went so fast with only her main-sail, what would she not do with her jib also? The young skipper was determined to test the question, and, lashing the helm, he hoisted her headsail. Trimming the sail by the sheets which led aft, the yacht increased her speed, and tossed the water over her boughs at a fearful rate; but Little Bobtail had closed the fore scuttle, and he let it toss. It was wild excitement to him, and he enjoyed it to the utmost. In two hours he was approaching the Spindles off the Point, where he deemed it prudent to take in the jib; but the wind was not so fresh in shore, and he went up the harbor quite leisurely. He had time to think again; and a disagreeable consideration was forced upon him, as he heard the clock of the Baptist Church strike one.

He was in Camden harbor; he must come to anchor; and the next morning everybody would wonder what

boat the stranger was. The boatmen and bummers about town would board her, and want to know what those boxes contained. Little Bobtail was worried; but it was high tide, and he anchored close up to the rocks in front of the cottage. He was not willing to "face the music" the next day, and he was determined to get rid of the boxes, even if he threw them overboard. Landing in the old boat, he went up to the cottage. Ezekiel was in a drunken sleep in his chamber. Nothing could wake him, as he knew from former experience, when he was in this condition. He went up stairs to his own chamber. The cottage was a one-story building, with two rooms finished in the middle of the roof. On each side of these chambers there was a space for old rubbish, which no one ever explored. The young skipper decided, after a careful examination of the premises, to store the boxes in these spaces. To will was to do with him, and he went to work at once.

In a couple of hours he had conveyed the twenty boxes from the boat, and packed them away in these lumber-holes, and covered them with old traps, so that even his mother would not suspect their presence in the house. Having done all this, he sailed the yacht out into the deep water near the Portland Pier, where he anchored her. Tired out after the long day and the long night, he stretched himself on one of the transoms, and went to sleep.

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## CHAPTER V.

## MONKEY.

Little Bobtail slept as soundly on the transom of the yacht as Ezekiel Taylor did in the cottage; and, as he did not retire till after three in the morning, he did not turn out till nine. He had worked all day and nearly all night, and he was very tired. While he was slumbering soundly in the cabin, many an eye was directed from the shore, and from the boats and vessels in the harbor, at the trim and janty yacht which had come in during the night. She was not there the evening before, and she was there now. Scores of boatmen asked what she was and where she came from; but no one could answer. No one had seen her before, and all were confident that she did not belong anywhere in the bay. The gossips concluded that she was a yacht from Boston or Portland, with a party on board; and, as she had come in during the night, they supposed her crew were making up for lost time in the matter of sleep. Those who were out in boats, though they sailed around the stranger and examined her carefully, were considerate enough not to go on board of her, and thus waken the tired sleepers.

So Little Bobtail was permitted to finish his nap in peace. The clock on the Baptist Church was striking nine when he woke. He leaped upon the cabin floor with a start when he saw the sunlight streaming in through the round port-holes in the trunk. He had no toilet to make, for he had turned in without removing even his shoes; and, putting on his cap, he was ready for business at once, though he did wash his face and hands, and comb his hair, when a wash-basin at the forward part of the cabin suggested these operations to him. He had an opportunity to

see the yacht now by daylight, and his previous impressions of her were more than confirmed. She was even trimmer and more janty than he had supposed.

The experience of the preceding night seemed to him very like a dream. He went on deck, and examined with a critical eye the standing and running rigging, than which nothing could be neater or better. The old tub in which he had been blown off the day before was anchored near her, with a slack line from her stern to the yacht, as he had left her. The dingy old craft looked so mean and insignificant compared with the yacht, that the contrast put him almost out of conceit with the brilliant plan he had considered to purchase the former. He was rather doubtful whether he should be willing to invest the ten dollars —if he should obtain it—in such an enterprise.

Just then it occurred to him that he did not even know the name of the yacht. He walked out on the foot-rope at the end of the main boom, in order to see if it was painted on the stern. There it was—SKYLARK; only this, and nothing more. The port from which she hailed was not there. Skylark was a very good name, though it was not particularly appropriate for a thing that was to sail on the water, and not in the air. But "skylarking" was a term applied to frolicking, to rude play; and in this sense "Skylark" was entirely proper. On the whole, he did not object to the name, and would not if the owner had appeared at that moment and made him a present of her. He was entirely satisfied both with the yacht and her name; and, having completed his survey by daylight, he again pondered the subject of smuggling in a general way, and then in its relations to the incidents of the previous night. No higher

views, no better resolutions, came to him. The contraband cargo was safe under the eaves of the cottage, where no one would be likely to find it; though he could not help thinking what a disaster it would be if Ezekiel should happen to discover those boxes, which doubtless contained liquor enough to keep him drunk for a whole year.

Turning away from the great moral question which confronted him, Little Bobtail began to feel—distinctly to feel, rather than to think—that it was about breakfast time. He went forward and removed the scuttle from over the cook-room. Jumping down into the little apartment, he made a fire in the stove, and put on the tea-kettle. While it was warming up, he went on deck again, for he heard the dip of a pair of oars near the yacht.

"Hullo, Monkey!" he shouted, as he recognized the occupant of a dilapidated old dory, who was taking a leisurely survey of the trim yacht.

"Hullo, Bob! Is that you?" replied the person in the boat, who was a boy of about the age of Little Bobtail, though not half so handsome.

Robert had called him "Monkey," and it was not difficult to determine where he had obtained his sobriquet, for, looking at the youth, Darwinism seemed to be made easy, without distorting either facts or logic. In his case, no long ages appeared to have elapsed between the monkey and the man, and the transition seemed to have been easy and natural. In a word, he looked like a monkey in the face, while no one could possibly have suspected that he was one. Above his mouth his face abruptly receded, so that the end of his nose was not far from plumb with his lips. In the middle of his forehead the hair

seemed to grow down to the bridge of his nose. A stranger, who was not of a melancholy turn of mind, could hardly have refrained from laughing when looking at him for the first time. But Bobtail did not laugh, for Monkey was a friend, and a brother, in the generic sense.

"Come on board, Monkey," added Little Bobtail.

"What boat's this?" asked the representative of Darwinism, as he leaped upon the deck with the painter of the dory in his hand.

"The Skylark," replied Bobtail.

As the new arrival stepped upon the deck of the yacht, he was not unlike the traditional monkey of the circus, for his dress was almost as fantastic as his face. His father, who was a fisherman, had been lost at sea, and his mother was a poor woman, with neither energy nor gumption, who occupied a miserable shanty about a mile from the village, in which hardly a mean dwelling could be found. The woman was believed to be a little "daft," for she always hid herself when any of the town's people appeared near her shanty. She had a garden, in which she raised potatoes and corn, and kept a pig and a cow; and these furnished her subsistence, with the trifle which her son earned by odd jobs. The woman's name was Nancy Monk, and her boy's was Peter Monk, though certainly the surname was not needed to suggest the nickname by which he was universally called.

Of course Peter Monk's unfortunate affinity to the ape subjected him to no little annoyance from the sneers and insults of other boys, whose sense of decency was below their sense of the ludicrous.

Though Peter was, in the main, a good-natured fellow, there was a point of endurance beyond which he was not proof against the coarse jeers of his companions; and more than once Little Bobtail had been his protector when borne under by the force of numbers; for our hero had a hard fist as well as a kind heart. So Monkey was his friend for life, not so much because Bobtail had fought his battles, as because he treated him well, and made more of him than any one else did.

"Never heard of the Skylark before," said the visitor. "Where does she come from?"

"I don't know."

"Who owns her?"

"I don't know."

"Where does she belong?"

"I don't know."

"O, you don't?" grinned Monkey, exhibiting another affinity to the origin of the race.

"No, I don't."

"Where are the folks that belong to her?"

"I don't know."

"What you doing on board of her, Bob?"

"I'm looking out for her till somebody comes who has a better right to do so."

"How come she here?"

"I brought her here."

"Where from?"

"Blank Island."

"Nobody lives there."

"I know it."

And Little Bobtail smiled at the perplexity of the visitor.

"Well, then, how come she over there, where nobody don't live?"

"I picked her up adrift."

"O, you did—did you?"

"I did. But come below; I want to get my breakfast," added Bobtail, as he led the way down into the cabin.

Monkey stared, and exclaimed as he viewed the comfortable, and even luxurious, furnishings of the yacht. He asked a thousand questions which Bobtail could not answer, and a thousand more which he did answer.

"Have you been to breakfast, Monkey?" asked Bobtail, as he seated himself before the stove in the cook-room, while the guest remained at the door in the cabin.

"Yes, I had something," replied Monkey, glancing at the leg of bacon.

The host knew very well that Monkey did not live much better at home than the pigs in the sty of the first-class farmer; that he was always a hungry waif, who could make a meal at any time. He resolved to give his visitor a treat on the present occasion; and

he anticipated his own breakfast with double pleasure when he thought of the satisfaction which the meal would give his companion.

"Monkey, will you take Prince's boat over to her moorings for me? Somebody may want her," said he, as he put the coffee-pot on the stove, and took down the leg of bacon.

"To be sure I will, Bob. I'll do anything for you."

"I wish you would; and then come back and have some breakfast with me."

Monkey grinned, and even chattered, as he hastened to execute his errand. By the time he returned, Bobtail had set the table in the cabin; for, as he had company, he decided to take the meal in state. He had fried all the rest of the kid of potatoes, and two large slices of ham. He made the coffee, and mixed up a pitcher of condensed milk.

"Sit down, Monkey," said Little Bobtail, as he wiped the perspiration from his brow, for the cook-room was a hot place, even with the scuttle open.

"Yes," replied Monkey, showing all the teeth in his head, for when the mouths were given out he had been supplied with a very liberal share.

The host helped him to a big piece of ham and a great heap of fried potatoes. The guest was not very elegant in his manners; but what he lacked in refinement he made up in zeal. Fingers seemed to come handier to him than a fork, or, rather, a "slit spoon," as he called it. He did not often make two parts of a slice of potato, and his mouthfuls of ham were big enough to bait a large cod. Fortunately there was enough to fill him up.

"Somebody's looking for you, Bob, up in the village," said Monkey, when he began to be gorged, which, however, was not till both the slices of ham were nearly consumed.

"For me?" asked Little Bobtail.

"Squire Gilfilian asked me if I'd seen you; and I told him I hadn't. He was askin' everybody for you. Some on 'em said you wan't to home; and the old man said he hadn't seen you sence yesterday mornin'."

"Who wants me?"

"I don't know; but the squire wanted to see you powerful bad," grinned Monkey.

"All right. I'll go up and see him by and by," said Bobtail, as he left the table.

With the assistance of his new ally he washed the dishes, cleaned up the stove and cooking utensils, and swept out the cabin. Everything was put into the neatest condition. When this was done, the decks were washed down, the sails stowed more trimly than the skipper could do it in the dark, all the running rigging hauled taut, and the ends coiled away, so that the yacht was in man-of-war style. He found a padlock, with a key in it, to fasten the cabin door; and having put the tiller below, so that no one could sail the Skylark in his absence, he secured the door, and went on shore with Monkey. He stopped at the cottage to see if his mother had returned from Rockport, but neither she nor Ezekiel was there.

Walking towards the village, he wondered what Squire Gilfilian could want of him. He began to be a little troubled about the letter again, for, in the excitement of his cruise over to Blank Island, he

hardly thought of the disagreeable circumstances connected with it. He found the squire in his office, with a stranger, a flashy-looking and ill-visaged fellow.

"I hear you want to see me," said Little Bobtail.

"I do," replied the lawyer, sternly and decidedly. "Come in here;" and he led the way to his private office in the rear. "Now, boy, I want to know what you did with that letter."

"I told you before what I did with it. I put it on your desk," answered Bobtail, promptly; and it is not strange that his brown cheek flushed a little, but it was with indignation, not guilt.

"So you told me before; but I don't believe it," added the squire, with a terrible frown, and in a very loud tone, doubtless involuntarily resorting to one of the tricks of his trade to intimidate the youth.

"Do you think I would lie about a letter?" demanded Bobtail, warmly.

"Do you know what was in that letter?"

"How should I know?"

"Because you opened it," sharply retorted the lawyer, as though he intended to overwhelm a contumacious and guilty witness.

"I didn't open it," protested the boy, stoutly. "I put it on your desk; and that's all I know about it."

"It is easier for you to say that than it is for me to believe it."

"I can't help it, if you don't believe me. I have told

the truth. I had a letter for you, and another for Captain Chinks. I gave him his here in your office, and chucked yours on your desk. That's the whole truth, and all I know about the letters. If Captain Chinks was here he would tell you the same thing, for he said you was busy in here, and told me to put the letter on the desk; and that's just what I did, and just all I did."

"Captain Chinks isn't here, and has been gone a week."

"He'll come back some time, I suppose."

"I don't know whether he will or not. He's mixed up with a smuggling case, and he may not deem it prudent to come back."

"Whether he does or not, I never saw the letter after I put it on your desk."

The lawyer bit his lips. There was nothing in the tones or the manner of the youth to excite suspicion, and Little Bobtail's reputation for honesty was first class. A year before, he had found the wallet of a stranger, which he might have kept, but had taken great pains to find the owner. In fact, everybody that knew him knew that he was honest.

"Now, Little Bobtail, you stand very well in the village," continued Squire Gilfilian, with a smile, as he suddenly changed his tactics.

"I always mean to keep myself straight, sir," added Bobtail.

"Of course you do. But the best of us are sometimes tempted to do wrong. If you have been led away, and —"

"I haven't been led away, sir."

"You may have made a mistake. If you opened that letter by accident or otherwise—"

"I didn't open it by accident or otherwise. I didn't open it at all," interposed the boy, with energy.

"Hear what I have to say, Little Bobtail. The best of folks are sometimes led away. Even ministers of the gospel once in a great while do a wicked deed."

"I don't care if they do; I haven't opened your letter."

"But I'm only supposing a case."

"Well, sir, you needn't suppose I opened that letter, for I didn't."

"Suppose you had opened it—"

"I didn't."

"It is only an hypothesis."

"I don't care if it is; I didn't open the letter," persisted Bobtail, who had not the least idea what an hypothesis was.

"If somebody else, then, had opened that letter, and taken out the money. He might have been sorely tempted; he might have opened it by accident," said the squire, in soft, oily tones.

"Somebody else *might*, but I *didn't*."

"If he don't feel bad about it now, he will, as sure as he lives, for the truth will come out. Don't you think so?"

"I do think so."

"It will ruin his reputation, send him to the state prison, and spoil his prospects forever. Now, don't you think it would be better for him to give up the money, if I should say to him that I wouldn't mention the matter?"

"I think he had better give it up, whether you mention it or not," answered Bobtail, more calmly.

"Then don't you think *you* had better give it up?"

"I tell you again, I didn't open the letter, and haven't seen the money," protested Bobtail, violently.

"You had better think it over."

"I don't want to think it over."

"You will have to go to jail if you don't."

"I can go to jail, but I can't give up what I haven't got, nor own up to what I didn't do."

"The letter which you brought to my office that morning contained five hundred dollars in one bill. It was my advance fee for defending the Buckingham Bank robbers. Their friends raised the money; but only a rogue would have sent it in cash. The letter is gone. It was last in your hands. Now you had better think it all over, and you may stay here and do so, while I talk with the gentleman in the other room." And the squire opened the door.

There was another person in the front room now, who had entered during this interview. In spite of the suspicion of the attorney, this person was Captain Chinks, who was promptly summoned to the private office, and the conference renewed.

The ill-visaged person in the front room was

probably a bank robber himself, though he was not yet implicated in the Buckingham affair. He was a friend of the robbers who had been arrested, and had employed Squire Gilfilian—who was as eloquent in speech as he was skilful in the intricacies of the law—to defend his unfortunate friends. The lawyer would not do so without a fee in advance; and the five hundred dollars had been sent in the letter which had so strangely disappeared. Either the sender knew no better than to trust so large a sum in the mail, or his criminal associations made him diffident about applying for a check or draft.

Hearing nothing from the lawyer, he had written again, stating that he had sent the money at the time agreed upon. The squire had expected the letter, and intended immediately to start for the county town in the jail of which the robbers were confined, in order to examine his case. In reply to the second letter, he telegraphed to his correspondent in Portland that he had not received the first; and then the robbers' agent had come himself. There he was in the front room.

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# CHAPTER VI.

## CAPTAIN CHINKS.

"I'm very glad to see you, Captain Chinks," said Squire Gilfilian, as he conducted the gentleman of doubtful reputation into his private office.

"Is my case likely to come up soon?" asked the captain.

"No, I don't think it will ever come up," answered the lawyer.

"Well, you have changed your tune since I was here before," added Captain Chinks, with a satisfied smile. "Then everything was going to be proved against me; now, nothing."

"I have sifted down all the evidence the government has; and you needn't trouble yourself any more about that matter."

"I suppose an innocent man never need fear," said the captain.

Squire Gilfilian looked at the gentleman of doubtful reputation, opened his eyes with a jerk, and a faint smile played about the corners of his mouth. But professionally he dealt with evidence and questions of law, rather than with truth itself. He did not ask what was true, only what could be proved.

Little Bobtail listened attentively to this conversation, though he had very little interest in it. But he could not help indorsing, in his own mind, the remark of Captain Chinks, that the innocent never need fear. He was under suspicion himself; but he was not afraid.

"Ah, Bobtail! are you a witness for the prosecution?" said the captain, appearing now to see the youth for the first time.

"No, sir. I'm the defendant myself," replied Bobtail, pleasantly; for the arrival of the captain seemed to settle all his trouble. "I am in stays just now, caught

in going about, and there I hang. If you will just give me a pull on the lee side, I shall go about handsomely."

"Certainly, my lad. If you miss stay in this law business, there's always a lee shore to drift on to, and no room to wear round."

"Captain Chinks," interposed the lawyer, who did not so clearly comprehend the nautical view of the case, "I lost a letter the day you went away."

"And Bobtail found it," suggested the captain.

"Not exactly. I never received it."

"Then I don't see how you lost it."

"Little Bobtail and the post-master agree perfectly on one point—that two letters were given him, one to carry to you and the other to me, on the day you went away."

"And I perfectly agree with Little Bobtail and the post-master. He gave me my letter in your front office, only two minutes after you told me that I was certain to be arrested in less than twenty-four hours for being concerned in that smuggling case, when it was as plain as the nose on a man's face that I had nothing whatever to do with it. He gave me that letter, and that letter called me on business down to Mount Desert. You see, squire, when a man is innocent—"

"Exactly so," interposed Squire Gilfilian. "We will grant that you are entirely innocent. But the smuggling case is not before the court just now. We were speaking of the letters. We will grant that Bobtail delivered your letter to you all right. Do you

happen to know anything about the other letter?"

The squire glanced at Little Bobtail, to discover any evidences of guilt or confusion in his face. Certainly he was deeply interested, and even anxious; but, being young and inexperienced, he had an undoubting confidence in the ultimate triumph of truth and innocence.

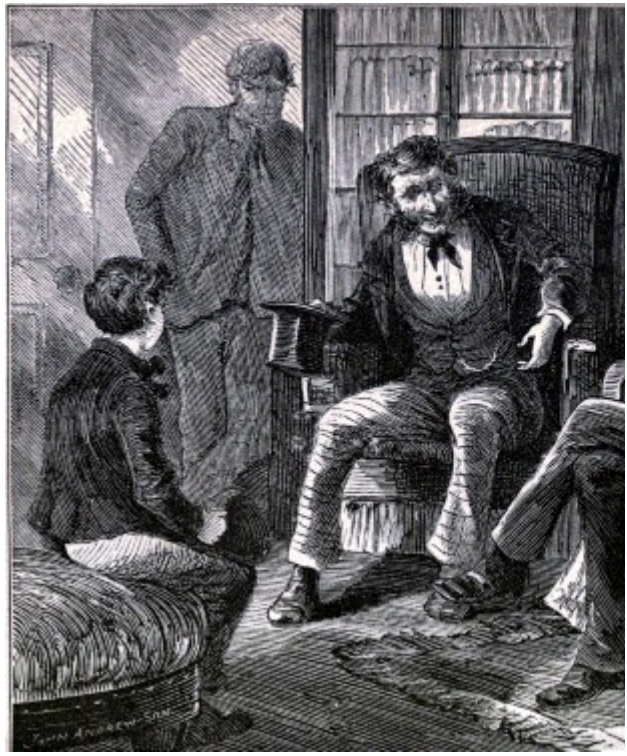
"I do happen to know all about it," replied Captain Chinks, after he also had glanced at the boy.

"Well, what do you know about it?" demanded the lawyer, rather impatiently, as the captain paused, and looked again at the alleged culprit.

"Bobtail gave me my letter, and I opened it at once, for I was expecting that letter, and had asked for it at the post-office, for it was getting rather late for the steamer, and I had some business in Rockland. I was expecting to meet a man down to Bar Harbor."

"We will grant that your letter was all right, captain. We were speaking of the other letter."

"I thought we were speaking of both of them," laughed the captain.



"It is all settled in regard to your letter; and you have been to Rockland, Bar Harbor, and down into the provinces, for aught I know."

"No, I haven't. I was in St. John—let me see—two years ago; and I haven't been there since. You seem to think I have business down in the provinces, squire."

"I don't know anything at all about your business, captain. But they say that a great deal of brandy finds its way into the States without paying any duties," chuckled the squire.

"You don't mean to say that I have anything to do

with bringing it in—do you, Squire Gilfilian?" demanded the captain, who seemed to be damaged in his feelings by the lawyer's thrust.

"Certainly not."

"Because you have just proved that I have not."

"Hardly; only failed to prove that you have. But the letter, captain. Bobtail says you were here when he brought it into the office."

"I was here, squire," answered the captain, dropping into an arm-chair.

"I asked you, Captain Chinks—" Little Bobtail began.

"Never mind what you asked him," interposed the squire, sharply. "I have heard your story, and now I want to hear the captain's, without any leading questions."

"Don't be so snappy with the boy, squire. I'll tell you all about the letter without any questions at all," added Captain Chinks.

"Well, I really wish you would. I have been trying for some time to get at the facts, and you have talked about everything except the one thing I wish to know," said the lawyer, impatiently.

"Steady as she is, squire, and I'll tell you all about it. When I came out of this office, the day I went away, I met Little Bobtail coming into the front one with two letters in his hand, he gave me mine, and then asked where you were, squire. I told him you were in this office, and that you were busy. Then Bobtail said he had a letter for you, and I told him to put it on your desk. He tossed it on your desk, and then left. I can tell you just where it lay on the cover."

"So can I," said the boy, as cheerful as a lark now, for the captain had precisely confirmed all his story.

"Can you? Come and show me, then.—Stay here a moment, captain," said the squire, as he conducted the boy to the front office, closing the door behind him.

Little Bobtail indicated the precise spot where the letter lay when he had thrown it upon the desk. Captain Chinks was called in, and pointed to exactly the same place. There was not a variation of two inches between them.

"I can swear that the letter lay on the desk after Bobtail went out of the office," said Captain Chinks, decidedly.

"I am willing to grant that Little Bobtail has told the truth, and that he is entirely exculpated from the charge; for if either or both of you have been lying, your testimony would have conflicted in some point, as it does not now."

"That's handsome, squire," added the captain.

"By the way, when did you see Bobtail last, captain?" asked the lawyer.

"I haven't seen him since the day I went away."

"You may go, Bobtail," added the squire.

"I'm in no hurry, sir. Perhaps you will want to ask me some more questions," replied the boy.

"If the letter was left on my desk, I ought to have found it there," continued the lawyer.

"That's so. But you don't always find things where

you put them," said Captain Chinks, sagely.

A long conversation about the missing letter followed; but no clew to it was obtained. The ill-visaged man, who wished to save the Buckingham Bank robbers from a long term in the state prison, thought it was very hard that his friends should suffer because somebody had stolen the letter, or the squire had lost it by his carelessness. But the lawyer thought his correspondent was to blame for not sending a check or draft; to which the ill-visaged replied that a check or draft would have been lost in the same manner the money had been.

Finally Squire Gilfilian agreed to defend the bank robbers, and their friend agreed to raise the money to pay him before the trial came on. He did defend them; but even he was not smart enough to save them from a long term in the state prison.

Little Bobtail was entirely satisfied with the result of the examination, so far as he was personally concerned, though, as the squire seemed to be very fair about it, he was sorry that he should lose so large a sum of money. More than this, he had more respect than ever before for Captain Chinks, who, he was quite sure, had told the truth in this instance. He might have given him a world of trouble if he had simply declined to tell the truth, or had distorted it even a little. Bobtail was, therefore, very grateful to him for doing what it was plainly his duty to do. Still our hero could not help wondering, as hundreds of others wondered, whether or not the captain really smuggled goods into the state. Perhaps he would not have thought much the worse of him if he had known that such was the fact; for, as we have before stated, Bobtail's views of smuggling were not very

definite. He had never considered the subject enough to have any fixed opinions.

Captain Chinks was a thriving, driving, enterprising man, who did any kind of business which promised an adequate remuneration. He went a fishing, he traded horses, traded boats, traded vehicles. He had been in the salmon business, importing it from the provinces, and sending it to Boston; he had been in the pogy oil business; he had been in the staging business; he had been in the hotel business in a small way. He owned a farm, and was a mechanic besides. He sometimes built a boat during the winter season, and ran it during the summer, or sold it, if an opportunity presented. If there was a camp-meeting, he carried passengers in his craft to and from the grounds. He was, or had been, in all these occupations. They were visible and tangible; and some people insisted that he was engaged in other occupations which were not so visible and tangible.

Little Bobtail left Captain Chinks in the lawyer's office, and walked down the shore road to the cottage. He went in and found Ezekiel drunk on the bed. He did not disturb him, but went up stairs to see if the boxes he had removed from the Skylark were still securely hidden from the observation of any one who might visit the upper part of the house. He adjusted the rubbish which covered them, and then left the cottage. Monkey was paddling about the harbor in the old dory, which he had borrowed at the head of the bay. The moment his grateful friend saw him, he pulled to the rocks where he stood, and they went on board of the yacht together. Little Bobtail looked her over again, and began to wonder that no one appeared to claim her. He could not help asking if any one would ever appear to claim her.

Whoever did so would have to account for the presence of those cases of brandy in her cabin. If the owner had any regard for his reputation, he might choose rather to sacrifice the boat and her cargo, than to subject himself to the penalty of his transgression. If he claimed the boat, he was reasonably sure that both would be confiscated, and he would make nothing by doing so, pecuniarily, and was liable to punishment besides. Bobtail thought it would be a fine thing to own the Skylark, or even to have the use of her for a season or two; and hoped the legal owner of her would have a proper regard for his reputation, and not risk it by putting forward his claim to her.

Certainly for the present Bobtail was in charge of her, and there was no one to dictate what he should or should not do with her. He was willing that everybody should see the boat; and, to enable any one who might possibly throw light upon her ownership to do so, he thought it best to sail her about the harbor. The tide was up now, and, with the assistance of Monkey, he hoisted the mainsail and got up the anchor.

"Now, stand by the jib-halyards, Monkey," shouted the skipper, as he took the helm.

"All clear, Bob," replied the hand before the mast.

"Hoist the jib."

Monkey knew all about a boat, and did his work well. The Skylark went off with the fresh breeze on her quarter, and Bobtail felt like a lord at the helm.

"Don't she spin!" said Monkey, as he seated himself in the standing-room, and fixed his gaze on the swelling

sails.

"She goes it like a locomotive," replied the skipper. "Now haul in on the main sheet, and we will run up the harbor."

The Skylark, close-hauled, ran up to the head of the little bay, and coming about, stood over close to the wharf, at the head of which the fish market and several stores were located.

"Hollo, Bobtail!" shouted the skipper of the Islesboro' packet, which had come in that morning, and lay alongside the wharf. "What boat's that?"

"The Skylark," replied the skipper.

"Where did she come from?"

"I don't know. I picked her up yesterday, and want to find the owner," replied Bobtail, who, while he was looking for an owner, did not really wish to find one, though he was prepared to do all that was fair and right in the premises.

"Where did you pick her up?" asked the skipper of the packet.

As the Skylark was now almost out of hailing distance, Bobtail came about, and ran up alongside the packet, skilfully spilling the sail at the right moment, so that she hardly bumped against the other vessel, though Monkey stood ready with the fenders.

"I picked her up near Blank Island," replied Bobtail.

"I seen a boat like her just about sundown last night. I couldn't make her out, but I cal'late that's the craft I see," added the skipper. "But how on airth came she adrift?"

"That's more than I know."

"Don't Captain Chinks know nothin' about her? He come over with me from Isleboro' this mornin'."

"I saw him up in town this morning, but he didn't say anything about her," answered Bobtail.

"I don't know's he knows anything about her; but he's pooty well acquainted with all the boats in these parts. Was there anything on board of her?"

"She's a pleasure craft. Come on board and look at her," replied Bobtail, evasively.

The skipper of the packet accepted the invitation, and looked over the Skylark. He was critical in his observations, and did not believe that any of these fancy craft amounted to much in heavy weather. She was "fixed up smart," and was "handsome's a picture;" but "he'd rather have his homely boat when it blowed than a thousand sech highflyers." They could "chalk a line up in to the wind in light weather, but they wan't nothin' in a sea."

Bobtail did not indorse these critical remarks, for he had tried the Skylark in a sea, and knew that she was equal to anything.

"I hope you'll find the owner, and I ca'late you'll make somethin' out of the job," said the skipper, as he returned to his vessel.

Bobtail did not particularly hope so, for even if he made something out of the job, he was afraid he should never be satisfied with the old tub in which he had sailed the day before, if he bought her, now that he had realized the glories of the Skylark.

"Shove her off, Monkey," said he, as he resumed his

place at the helm.

Running along close to the wharves, he answered several hails of persons who wished to know about the boat. It would soon be all over town that he had picked up the yacht; and having in this manner sufficiently advertised her, he stood off towards the open bay, passing between the Spindles off the point.

"Where are you going to now, Bob?" asked Monkey.

"We will take a little sail, just to see how the boat works."

"She works fust rate, and no mistake," added Monkey, with admiration.

"I'd give more to own this boat than I would to be one of the selectmen," continued Bobtail. "She's a tip-top sea boat. Take the helm, Monkey, and see how nice she steers."

The Darwinian opened his mouth from ear to ear with pleasure as he complied with the request. Of course he fully agreed with all the skipper said. Bobtail walked forward, and then went below. It was about time to be thinking of dinner, though he was not very hungry yet. He looked over the stores of the yacht, to see if there was anything besides bacon for the meal. In a small tub he found some salt pork. One of the lockers under the transom was half full of potatoes; but he discovered no other meat. After this survey he concluded to dine on fish, for he had his lines and salt clams on deck. Returning to the helm, he put the yacht about, and stood up to one of the best of the fishing-grounds.

"Lower the jib," he called to his crew; and when this was done, he directed him to throw over the anchor.

"Now, Monkey, catch some fish while I go below and make a fire."

In a few moments Bobtail had a fire in the stove. Washing some potatoes, he pared and sliced them. Three big slices of salt pork in the pan soon produced fat enough to fry them. By this time there was a movement on deck. The Darwinian was pulling in a fish.

"A cod!" shouted Monkey. "He's a nice one, too."

"How big is he?" asked Bobtail.

"Five or six pounds."

"That's enough. Dress him, and cut him up to fry."

By the time the potatoes were cooked the fish was ready for the pan. The cook covered the pieces with Indian meal, and the dinner was soon ready. Bobtail had already set the table. He had put on plates, knives and forks, and glasses for two, a pitcher of water, a plate of pickles, and a dish of hard bread. The fish was placed on the casing of the centre-board, in the middle of the table, consisting of two leaves, which could be dropped down when not in use. Monkey was called, and the dinner proceeded in due form. The Darwinian did not seem to be quite so enthusiastic as at breakfast, perhaps because his table at home was oftener garnished with fish and salt pork than with any other food. However, he did ample justice to the bill of fare, and liberally praised the cook for his skill in the art.

While they were thus pleasantly engaged, they heard a slight bump against the side of the yacht, followed by the sound of voices. With the instinct of a genuine boatman, Bobtail rushed upon deck to assure himself

that no harm befell the Skylark, when the other boat came alongside. He found that Prince, in the white sloop, had just put Captain Chinks on board, and had already shoved off. Bobtail looked at the captain, and thought he had taken a great deal of trouble to pay him this visit, for Prince had come about, and was standing up to the village. He felt as though he should now be called upon to give up the Skylark to her rightful owner.

"I'm glad to see you, Captain Chinks," exclaimed he; but what he said was rather complimentary than strictly true—a society fib.

"Won't you come below, and take some dinner with us?"

The captain had been to dinner, for it was now two o'clock in the afternoon, and he began to ask about the Skylark.

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# CHAPTER VII.

## IN THE CABIN OF THE SKYLARK.

Little Bobtail was not particularly glad to see Captain Chinks when he boarded the Skylark, at her anchorage on the fishing-grounds. It seemed as though the captain had taken a great deal of trouble to come down several miles from the village, probably hiring Prince to put him alongside the yacht. Yet he could not help thinking that the slight

uneasiness which disturbed him was very absurd. He had permitted himself to hope that the owner of the Skylark would not claim her, or, at least, would not claim her till he had the use of her for a season, the longer the better; but he felt that he had no right to hope any such thing. The yacht was a beautiful craft, and it was in the very height of the boating season. All his hopes, however, had been very vague, and were not founded on any reasonable basis. He had been considering the remotest of possibilities, rather than the slightest probabilities.

When Captain Chinks came on board, Bobtail felt that he had come to claim the yacht. According to the general "speech of people," this man of a doubtful reputation was, more likely than any other person in Camden, the owner of the twenty cases of brandy. If he claimed the yacht, he must claim the smuggled goods at the same time. Of course Bobtail would be expected to keep the secret, and thereby become a party to the fraud. He was not prepared for this issue. He did not want the confidence of any smuggler. Whatever his own views of the contraband trade, he would not break any law of the land himself, however leniently he was disposed to regard others who neglected to pay duties to the custom-house. He had always tried to be honest and upright, and he had a perfect horror of being anything else.

"How's this, Bobtail?" said Captain Chinks, casting his eyes about him, as if to examine the parts of the yacht. "This is a fine boat!"

"Tip-top, sir," replied the skipper, with proper enthusiasm.

"Some one up in the village said you picked her up adrift. Is that so?"

"That's so, Captain Chinks. I found her drifting out to sea, over near Blank Island. Does she belong to you, sir?"

"To me?" exclaimed the visitor, with a slight start, which did not escape the observation of Little Bobtail. "What makes you think she belongs to me?"

"I didn't say I thought so. I only asked you if she did. Captain Flipper, of the Islesboro' packet, said you might know something about her."

"What made him think I knew anything about her?"

"I don't know that he did think so; only he said you came over from Islesboro' with him this morning," Bobtail explained.

"What has that to do with it?"

"Nothing, that I know of. Captain Flipper said you knew about all the boats in these parts."

"O, that's the reason he said I might know about her?" added Captain Chinks, apparently relieved by the explanation.

"Yes, sir, I suppose so. Now, do you know anything about her?" asked the young skipper, forcing the question home.

"Possibly I have seen her. I don't know."

"Then she don't belong to you?"

"Why do you keep asking me that question, Bobtail? Do you think I own her?" demanded the captain, rather sharply.

"I don't think anything at all about it. I don't know. I can't tell by the looks of a man whether he owns this

boat or not. I'm looking for her owner, and so I asked you the question."

"Well, I don't own her," said Captain Chinks, with more earnestness than Bobtail thought the occasion required; but he could not help suspecting, from his manner, that Captain Chinks knew something about the Skylark.

"Do you happen to know who does own her?" continued Bobtail.

"No, I don't know anything at all about her."

The Darwinian had left his dinner when Bobtail did, and had come as far as the companion-way, where he stood listening to the conversation which took place while the parties stood on deck. Captain Chinks had discovered Monkey's presence only a moment before, and it was possible that his decided answers were called forth by the fact that a third person was near.

"Won't you take a bite with us?" continued Bobtail, when he happened to remember that he had not finished his dinner.

"No; I had my dinner just before I came from home; but I will go below with you," replied Captain Chinks, following Bobtail into the cabin.

The skipper and Monkey resumed their places at the table, and finished the meal. While he was eating, Bobtail related all the particulars of the finding of the Skylark, so far as the boat was concerned, but prudently repressed all allusion to the twenty cases of brandy. Captain Chinks appeared to be nervous and uneasy, though, as he did not own the boat, and knew nothing at all about her, Bobtail could not see

why he should be so. The dishes were cleared away, washed, and carefully deposited in the lockers. The cook-room was put in order, the cabin floor swept, and every article of furniture put in its place. Bobtail seated himself on the transom, opposite Captain Chinks, and wondered more than ever why he had taken so much trouble to visit the Skylark when she lay so far from the town.

"What do you suppose this boat is worth, Bobtail?" asked Captain Chinks, as he glanced forward and then aft, as if to survey the quality and capacity of the yacht.

"I'm sure I have no idea," replied the young skipper.

"They asked me twelve hundred dollars for one about this size in Newport last year," added the captain.

"That's a big price for a boat."

"But it was three hundred dollars less than she cost her owner two years before. This don't look like an old boat."

"No, she's nearly new. I looked into the run this morning, and the timbers and plank are as fresh as though she had just been built."

"I reckon she is a year or two old," added the captain. "She isn't worth less than a thousand dollars, though you may buy such a boat sometimes for half that money."

"Five hundred dollars is about all any boat of this size is worth down here."

"By the way, Bobtail, did she have any sort of a cargo in her when you picked her up?" asked Captain Chinks, in a careless way, as he raised and lowered

the table-leaf in front of him, just as though he was more intent on ascertaining how the leaf worked than in obtaining an answer to his question.

This was a very important interrogatory on the part of the visitor, notwithstanding the indifference with which it had apparently been propounded; and Bobtail had been expecting it. In spite of all the captain had said, and in spite of the fact that he had declared he knew nothing about the Skylark, our hero could not help connecting his visitor with the contraband cargo; perhaps because the captain was the only man in Camden who had the reputation of being concerned in this sort of business.

"This is a pleasure craft, and wasn't built to carry cargo," replied Bobtail, who had already decided how to meet the question.

"That may be; but such boats do sometimes carry a small cargo. For instance, you could put many thousand dollars' worth of some kinds of goods in this cabin," added the captain, still fumbling over the table-leaf, which seemed to be an inexplicable mystery to him, though it may be added in defence of a man of his intelligence, and a boat-builder, too, that he always built keel-boats, while the Skylark was a centre-board.

"I dare say she could carry a million dollars' worth of gold or diamonds," added Bobtail, cheerfully, for he felt that his wily visitor was not getting much ahead of him.

"Yes; but she might carry heavier goods, such as cigars, liquors, silks, and things of that sort, for it don't take a great lot to be worth a thousand dollars. Did she have anything of this kind in her when you

picked her up, Bobtail?"

"Why should any one think of carrying cigars and liquors in such a craft as this?" asked the skipper, laughing.

"That wan't exactly the question. I say, Monkey, won't you go on deck, and see which way the wind is," added the captain, turning suddenly upon the Darwinian, who was listening to the conversation with his mouth wide open, and trying with, all his might to discover what Chinks was driving at. "I reckon it's hauling more to the southward."

"Sartin; I'll see," replied Monkey, hastening on deck through the cook-room.

"You don't answer the question, Bobtail," said the captain.

"What makes you think there was any cargo in her?" demanded the skipper.

"I didn't say I thought there was any; I only asked you if there was."

In spite of Little Bobtail's indefinite opinions in regard to the moral turpitude of smuggling, he had very decided views on the subject of lying. He believed in telling the truth, though, like most other boys, I am afraid he did not invariably do so; but he always felt mean and guilty when he told anything in the shape of a lie. In the present instance he had made up his mind either to tell the truth or to keep still, not only because it was wicked to tell a lie, but because, in a smuggling case in which the government officers might soon have a hand, it might prove extremely dangerous.

"Well, captain, I didn't say there was any cargo in her," answered Bobtail, cautiously.

"I know you didn't; but I want you to tell me squarely whether there was or not."

"Why do you want me to tell you?"

"No matter why. I want you to tell me: that's all."

"The wind's about nor'-west, Captain Chinks," said Monkey, crawling into the cabin from the cook-room.

"It hasn't changed, then," added the visitor, vexed at the return of the Darwinian, who seated himself near Bobtail, intent upon hearing the rest of the conversation.

"No, sir, not a bit; it's been nor'-west all day, and I don't believe its goin' to change afore night."

"I say, Monkey, I want some fish for breakfast. If you will catch me two or three, and dress them, I'll make it all right with you."

Monkey did not like to lose any of the conversation about the boat; but he reluctantly went on deck in the hope of making a trifle by the job.

"I want you to answer my question squarely, Bobtail," continued Captain Chinks, returning vigorously to the charge, so vigorously that the skipper was almost confirmed in his suspicion connecting his visitor with the contraband cargo.

"I don't say there was or was not any cargo in her," replied Bobtail.

"But I want you to say," persisted the captain, sharply

and sternly.

"Do you own this yacht, Captain Chinks?"

"I don't say whether I own her or not."

"And I don't say whether there was any cargo in her or not."

"What do you mean, Bobtail?"

"That depends upon what you mean, Captain Chinks."

"I don't understand you, Bobtail," said the visitor, struggling to suppress his anger.

"That's just my trouble; I don't understand you," laughed the skipper. "I reckon we don't understand each other at all."

"I asked you a question, Bobtail, and I want an answer," added the captain, bringing his fist down upon the table-leaf, whose mysterious mechanism he had by this time fully mastered.

"I asked you a question, Captain Chinks, and *I* want an answer," replied Bobtail.

"I don't want any of your impudence, and I won't take any of it."

"I didn't mean to be impudent, sir."

"But you talk to me just as though I was a boy like yourself. Now, answer my question."

"I hope you will excuse me, sir, when I say I can't answer it. I mean to be respectful, sir."

"You can answer it, Bobtail."

"I mean that, for certain reasons, I must decline to answer it."

"You must, eh?"

"Yes, sir."

"I didn't think this of you, Bobtail. This morning I got you out of a bad scrape. If I hadn't done so, you would have been taken up for stealing that letter, which contained five hundred dollars. Now, you go back on me the same day," added the captain, more gently.

"I don't go back on you, sir. If you own this boat, I'll tell you all I know about her."

"I don't say that I own her."

"I know you don't say so; and for that reason I can't say anything more about her. You only told the truth about the letter."

"But I might have held my tongue, and I'm sorry now I didn't."

After this speech, Little Bobtail had no doubt that Captain Chinks was a bad man, and he felt the necessity of extreme caution in dealing with him.

"I don't see how you could keep still when Squire Gilfilian asked you the question," added Bobtail, in his simplicity.

"If I had done by you as you are doing by me when I ask you a question, I should have kept still, as you do."

"But I don't want to get any one into a scrape," pleaded the skipper.

"What do you mean by that? I only ask you to tell the truth, as I did for you this morning," said the captain, in a coaxing tone.

"Squire Gilfilian owned that letter, and he had a right to ask about it. If you say you own this boat, I shall feel that I am perfectly safe in answering your questions."

"Perfectly safe! Then of course there was a cargo in her," added the visitor.

"I don't say there was. Have you lost a cargo, Captain Chinks?"

The captain mused. To say that he had lost a cargo would be to acknowledge that he was a smuggler, and he could not trust the secret to a boy like Little Bobtail, who had the reputation of being an honest and truthful boy. If called upon to give evidence, the boy would tell the whole truth. He would rather lose both the cargo and the boat than be convicted of smuggling.

"If there was no cargo in her, you would say so, Bobtail; so I have no doubt there was a cargo in her," continued Captain Clunks, after a silence of a few moments. "I take it for granted there was some sort of goods in her."

"What makes you think so, sir?"

"I have a notion of my own on that subject. If I'm not greatly mistaken, I saw this boat down to Bar Harbor. My idea is, that she went out to sea somewhere, and took a lot of goods from some fishing vessel, and tried to run them up to Camden, or some other port. I don't say it is so, but it might be. Very likely some of those custom-house officers

got wind of the affair, and were on the lookout for the boat. Very likely the men in charge of her abandoned her, and cleared out to save themselves."

"I wonder if they went over to Camden in the Islesboro' packet this morning," suggested Bobtail, innocently.

"What do you mean, you young villain!" cried Captain Chinks, springing forward over the table, and seizing the skipper by the throat. "Do you mean to say I'm one of them?"

"Let me alone!" yelled Bobtail, struggling to shake off the hard gripe of the visitor.



Our hero had a hard fist, if it was a small one, and he used it vigorously upon the head and face of his assailant. He pounded so hard that the captain, holding him at a disadvantage across the table and centre-board, was compelled to release his hold.

"I am not to be trifled with," gasped Captain Chinks, panting from his exertions, and smarting from the heavy blows which Bobtail had inflicted upon his face.

"Nor I, either!" yelled the skipper, seizing a spare tiller which lay on the transom. "If you put your finger on me again, I'll break your head!"

"What's the row?" shouted Monkey, rushing down into the cabin, his round eyes distended to their utmost.

"I don't let anybody take me by the throat," replied Bobtail, shaking his head, and adjusting his shirt collar at the same time.

"It's all right now, Monkey, go and catch your fish," added Captain Chinks, mildly, feeling that his wrath had got the better of him, and induced him to commit an imprudent act.

"It won't be all right if you put your hand on me again," said Bobtail, still holding the spare tiller in his hand.

"You knew that I came over in the Islesboro' packet this morning."

"I wasn't thinking of you when I spoke," muttered Bobtail, who for the first time saw the force of the suggestion he had made.

"I was only supposing a case," said the captain.

"What? when you caught me by the throat? I don't want you to suppose any more cases, then."

"I won't, Bobtail. Perhaps the men had run the boat ashore, and were looking for a place to hide the goods, when the wind blew her off, and sent her adrift."

"Perhaps it was so; I don't know," answered the skipper, coldly.

"If she had a cargo in her, what have you done with it?"

"I didn't say she had any cargo, and I'm not going to say anything more about it till the owner claims the boat. That's the end of it."

Little Bobtail rose from the transom, and walked towards the companion-way. Captain Chinks looked very savage. He was evidently in a dilemma, from which he could not extricate himself.

"One minute more, my lad," called the captain. "I may possibly come across the person who lost this boat."

"If you do, send him to me, and he shall have his boat, and—and—everything that belongs to her," replied Bobtail, who was still full of wrath towards his late assailant.

"But, you see, if she had any smuggled goods on board of her—"

"I didn't say she had."

"You won't understand me! I say *if* she had. Now, perhaps I can make a trade with the owner for you."

"I don't want you to make any trade for me. Send him to me, and he shall have his boat. That's all."

"But he will be afraid to expose himself. Now, suppose he should offer to let you keep the boat, if you would give up the goods, if you found any goods in her. If I should happen to find him, or to hear of him, shall I tell him you will make this sort of a trade with him?"

"No! Tell him he can have his boat and everything that belongs to her. I've learned more about smugglers to-day than I ever knew before, and I wouldn't touch one with a ten-foot pole; and I

wouldn't make a trade with him to cheat the government. I don't want to talk any more about it. I've got a sore throat now."

Having thus delivered himself, Bobtail went on deck, and ordered the crew to help him get up the anchor. In a few minutes the Skylark was headed towards the town. Captain Chinks remained in the cabin, full of wrath and disappointment.

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# CHAPTER VIII.

## A CHANCE FOR BUSINESS.

Possibly, if Captain Chinks had not resorted to violent argument in carrying his point, he might have succeeded better. As Little Bobtail sat at the helm of the Skylark, he thought of the proposition which the captain had made to him. It simply meant that, if he would give up the cases of brandy, he might keep the boat. It was a very tempting offer, and if he had not been smarting under the double injury to his throat and his feelings, inflicted by his visitor, he might have considered it. As it was, his only impulse was to have nothing further to do with such a bad man, a man who could be sorry that he had spoken the simple truth, and thus saved him from arrest for purloining the valuable letter.

Though Captain Chinks had resolutely denied the ownership of the Skylark, and all knowledge of her cargo, Little Bobtail could not help believing that the

captain was the owner of both. He began to think that he had not acted wisely in removing the cargo to the garret of the cottage. His interview with the "gentleman of doubtful reputation" convinced him that it was dangerous for him to have anything to do with such men. He wished that he had handed both boat and cargo over to the deputy collector of the port. Perhaps it was not too late to do so now.

The wind was north-west, and the skipper had to beat up the harbor. As the yacht approached the wharf near the fish market, Captain Chinks came on deck. He seated himself on the trunk of the cabin, and seemed to be very much disturbed. Occasionally he cast a glance at Bobtail, as though he wanted to say something more to him. The bow of the boat was run up to the wharf, and Monkey was directed to "catch a turn" with the warp line on a post, which he did, and the skipper waited for his dangerous passenger to disembark.

"Well, Bobtail, have you thought over what I said to you?" said Captain Chinks, as he rose from his seat.

"I have thought it over, but—"

"This is a fine boat, and if you will only give up the cargo, you will own her, for nobody will ever claim her," interrupted the passenger.

"I haven't said there was any cargo in her," added Bobtail. "You seem to know all about it. If you claim —"

"I don't claim anything," protested the captain, zealously.

"Then it's no use to say anything more about her. I'm not going to get myself into any scrape, and I won't

make any trade of any kind."

"You are making a mistake, Bobtail. In my opinion, there's something about this business that don't appear on the face of it."

"That's just my idea."

"I don't know but you can make folks believe that you picked up this boat, but I don't think you can," added the captain, with his teeth set, and with difficulty keeping down his anger.

"It don't make any difference to me whether they believe it or not," replied Bobtail. "That's the truth."

"You'll find it will make a difference to you," said the captain, as he stepped upon the wharf.

"Didn't you go back to Squire Gilfilian's office, after you left the letter there?"

"No, I didn't."

"I'm not sure of that," replied Captain Chinks, shaking his head in a threatening manner. "You overtook me down by the lime-kiln; so you got behind me somehow or other."

Captain Chinks went off muttering and shaking his head, and Bobtail could not imagine what he meant. So far as the lost letter was concerned, he felt that he had done his whole duty, and he was not disposed to worry about it; he wished his record in regard to the boxes was as clean.

"Cast off, Monkey," said he; and putting the Skylark about, he ran down to the deep water off the Portland Pier, where he anchored her.

Monkey's old dory had been towing astern during the trip, and after putting everything in order on board of the yacht, the two boys went on shore. Bobtail hastened to the cottage, hoping to find his mother there, for he wanted to tell her all about the situation, and obtain her advice. She had not yet returned. Ezekiel was just coming out of his spree, for he had drank all his liquor. He was ugly as sin itself, and began to abuse the boy again for "destroying his property." It was not comfortable to stay in the house under such circumstances, and Little Bobtail walked up to the village. The Bay View House was at this time full of guests—people from other parts of Maine and elsewhere, spending a few days or a few weeks at the sea-shore. Camden has lakes, and mountains, and delightful drives, in addition to the attractions of the sea, and people who went there once were very likely to go there again. Bobtail walked up to the hotel, for the stage from Rockland, by which his mother would return, stopped there.

"What boat's that you have, Bobtail?" asked Mr. Philbrook, the landlord of the hotel.

"The Skylark."

"They say you picked her up."

"Yes; I got blown off yesterday, and I found her adrift near Blank Island."

"I see you are using her. There is a party here from Augusta that want a nice boat for to-morrow," added the landlord. "Can't you take them out?"

"I don't know; the owner of the boat may claim her."

"But you ought to have the use of her for taking care

of her, and you can make six or eight dollars a day with her, just as well as not."

"She isn't my boat, and I don't know's I ought to let her; but I will see, and let you know in the morning," replied Bobtail, as the Rockland stage drove up to the door.

Mrs. Taylor was one of the passengers, and her son assisted her to alight. She wanted to know how her husband was, and Bobtail gave her the information. As they walked towards the cottage he told her all about the Skylark, and her suspicious cargo. Of course his mother was astonished; but fortunately her views in regard to smuggling were more clearly defined than Bobtail's, and she gave him excellent advice. She declared that she could not sleep a wink with all those boxes in the house.

"You must go to Squire Simonton right off, tell him all about it, and let him take them away," said she, warmly. "Why, we are liable to be sent to prison!"

"All right, mother; I will do just as you say," replied Bobtail.

"Besides, Robert, if your father should find the boxes, you know what he would do," added Mrs. Taylor.

"I will attend to the matter right off, mother."

They reached the cottage, and after Bobtail had carried his mother's carpet-bag into the house, he hastened to find Squire Simonton, who was the deputy collector of the port. On his way up the street, he met this gentleman, with another, whom he had often seen at the hotel.

"We want to see that boat you picked up, Little

Bobtail," said Squire Simonton, with the pleasant smile which his face always wore.

"I was just going up to see you about her," replied Bobtail. "I want to ask you what I shall do with her."

"I don't know that you can do anything with her. Perhaps you had better advertise her in the Camden and Rockland papers," replied the squire.

Bobtail did not like to say anything about the boxes before the other gentleman; so he did not allude to them. At the steamboat wharf he borrowed a small boat, and conveyed them on board of the Skylark.

"She is a fine boat—isn't she, Hines?" said the deputy collector, as they stepped into the standing-room.

Mr. Hines agreed that she was a fine boat; and then he commented upon her build, rig, and accommodations, as one who was perfectly familiar with boats and boating. He looked her over with a critical eye, and then expressed a desire to have a little sail in her, which the squire seconded; and Bobtail was always ready for a sail. In a few moments they were under way, with Mr. Hines at the helm. As they sailed down the bay towards Rockland, Bobtail related the whole story of the finding of the Skylark, and both the gentlemen suggested various theories in regard to her being adrift; but the hero of the adventure said nothing about the contraband boxes. He did not know that it was proper to do so before Mr. Hines, though he was a jolly, good-natured gentleman.

"You didn't look into the cook-room—did you, Squire Simonton?" asked Bobtail, who was very anxious to tell the rest of the story.

"I did not," replied the deputy collector. "I will do so now."

Bobtail conducted him through the cabin, which was rather low for a gentleman of his eminent dignity, to the cook-room, where they seated themselves on the lockers.

"I should want a little more room in my yacht," laughed the squire, as he tried to put on his hat, which the height of the apartment would not permit.

"I didn't tell you but half the story on deck, sir," said Bobtail. "I didn't like to speak out before Mr. Hines; but you are the deputy collector."

"And Mr. Hines is a custom-house officer," added Mr. Simonton.

"O, is he? I didn't know it. Well, sir, I think there's something wrong about this boat, and I want to tell you the rest of the story."

"What do you mean by something wrong, Bobtail?"

"In the smuggling line."

"Then I think we had better let Mr. Hines hear the story, for it is part of his duty to look up cases of this kind," replied Squire Simonton, as he rose from his seat, and bumped his head against a deck-beam.

When they were seated on the cork cushions of the standing-room, the deputy collector intimated that Little Bobtail had something to say, and the boy rose to explain.

"When I picked this boat up, her cabin was half full of boxes," said he.

"Cigars?" said Mr. Hines.

"No, sir, I don't know's I had any business to open one of the boxes, but I did. It was full of bottles," added Bobtail.

"Brandy?" said the inspector.

"The bottles were labelled 'JAMES HENNESSY & CO.—COGNAC.'"

"Just so; that's brandy. How many were there?" asked Mr. Hines.

"Twenty boxes, and each box contained two dozen. The bottles were in kind of straw casing."

"I know," nodded the inspector. "What have you done with them?"

"I didn't know what to do with them. I meant to be on the safe side; so I hid them in my father's garret."

"That's a bad place for them," said Squire Simonton, who was an earnest and consistent temperance man, and had labored diligently to reform Ezekiel Taylor.

"My father don't know anything at all about the matter."

"We must get them out of his way at once. I don't know but it would have been just as well if you had emptied all the bottles into the bay," laughed the deputy collector.

"I thought of that, but I didn't think the fishes would like it."

"Of course this brandy is smuggled," added Mr. Hines. "Don't Captain Chinks know anything about it?"

Bobtail related the particulars of his interview with the "gentleman of doubtful reputation."

"But the captain don't claim the boat?" said Squire Simonton.

"He says she don't belong to him, and he knows nothing about the cargo."

The two custom-house officials discussed the case at considerable length. As no one but Bobtail and his mother knew anything about the boxes, it was thought best to keep all knowledge of them from the public. The officers, in tracing out the guilty parties, could work better in the dark than in the light. The following out of this case might expose a dozen others. Captain Chinks was very sly, and what was now suspected might be ultimately proved. The brandy must be seized, and removed to a safe place.

"But what shall be done with the yacht," asked Little Bobtail.

"Nothing at present," replied Mr. Hines. "If we seize her, the game will be up at once. You may keep her and use her, Bobtail. I will appoint you her keeper, but you must not let any one steal her. The rascals may go on board of her at night, and sail her out of the harbor."

"O, I will sleep on board of her every night," replied Bobtail, delighted with the decision of the inspector.

"If any one claims her, let me know at once, and don't give her up without an order from me or Mr. Simonton."

"I will not."

The Skylark returned to her anchorage, and the

gentlemen were landed on the wharf. Bobtail went home. An arrangement had been made for the removal of the boxes, but the presence of Ezekiel Taylor seemed to interfere with its execution. He was at home, sullen and ugly, and nothing could be done while he was in the house. But after supper he went out, shaking in every fibre of his frame, and hankering for a dram to quiet his nerves.

After dark, Bobtail and his mother brought the boxes from their hiding-place, and put them behind a row of currant bushes, in the garden. Having informed the deputy collector where he could find them, he went on board of the yacht to sleep. After midnight the boxes were removed to the storehouse. No one was the wiser, and Bobtail was glad to get them off his hands.

No one attempted to steal the yacht that night, and the next morning Little Bobtail informed the landlord of the Bay View House that the Skylark was at the service of the party who desired to sail. With Monkey "before the mast," he gave entire satisfaction to the ladies and gentlemen who went with them. He placed them where they caught an abundance of fish, and then landed them upon Blank Island, while he made a chowder, and fried fish and potatoes for their dinner. The party took their meal in the cabin, and generously commended the cook. Before dark he landed them at the wharf. He charged seven dollars for boat and crew, by the advice of Mr. Hines, which was cheap enough for a yacht of her size.

"Now, Monkey, you have worked first rate to-day," said Bobtail, when the party had gone. "Of course I mean to pay you."

"I don't ask any pay for helpin' you, Bob," grinned the

Darwinian.

"I want you every day when I have a job, and I shall pay you a dollar a day," added the skipper; and he handed him the money.

"A dollar a day!" exclaimed Monkey, who had never possessed a dollar in cash of his own in his life.

"Isn't it enough?"

"By gracious! I should think it was!" exclaimed Monkey, gazing with wonder at the bill.

"Put it in your pocket then, and call it square for this day's work."

Before the Skylark left the wharf Mr. Philbrook appeared, and engaged the yacht for the next day for another party. Bobtail went up to the store at the head of the wharf, and expended a portion of his receipts for coffee, sugar, and other supplies for the yacht. It seemed to him, just then, that a great business was opening to him, and he was very anxious to give satisfaction to those who employed him. The bow-line was cast off, and the Skylark dropped down to her anchorage. The deck was washed down, and everything put in the nicest order for the next day.

"Don't you think I ought to sleep on board with you, Bob?" asked the Darwinian, as they pulled to the landing-steps at the railroad pier.

"What for?" asked Bobtail.

"To help you if anything should happen. You might break adrift, or some vessel might run into you, and then there would be work to do."

"I should like your company very well; but don't your mother want you in the house at night?"

"The old woman don't care where I am."

"Don't call your mother the old woman, Monkey. If you do I can't respect you."

"Well, I won't, then," replied the crew, opening his mouth from ear to ear in one of his cheerful smiles. "She calls me Monkey, jest as other folks do. When I give her this dollar she'll be satisfied. Won't she open her eyes some!"

"You shall take her another to-morrow."

"I'll come right back when I give it to her. I s'pose you'll have some of that bacon for breakfast in the morning—won't you?"

"Yes, if you like," laughed Bobtail, who now understood that his crew wanted to sleep on board in order to get a better breakfast than he would have at home.

They parted at the cottage, and Bobtail went in to see his mother and take his supper with her. For some reason which the son could not understand, Mrs. Taylor was unusually sad and moody. Ezekiel was sober, for a wonder, and did not appear to be so cross and ugly as he generally was when recovering from his debauches. Neither of them said much, and Bobtail wondered what had happened. After supper he went out and split up the wood for the fire, and did other chores.

"What can be done about it?" he heard Ezekiel say, as he paused at the door, after he had done his work.

"I don't know's anything can be done," replied Mrs.

Taylor, gloomily.

Then there was a silence, and Bobtail went in.

"What's the matter, mother?" asked he, now satisfied that some calamity impended.

"I'm afraid we shall lose the house, Robert," replied Mrs. Taylor.

"Lose the house? How can you lose it?"

"You know there's a mortgage upon it for five hundred dollars. Squire Gilfilian wants the money, and says he must sell the place if it isn't paid. He has been threatening to do it for a good while, and to-day he has foreclosed the mortgage."

"I've been all over town to get somebody else to take the mortgage," added Ezekiel, "but I can't find nobody. The place is wuth a thousand dollars of any man's money; but business is dull, and money's hard, and I don't believe 'twill bring more'n the mortgage under the hammer. I don't know what I'm goin' to do about it. I don't see's I can help myself."

Probably just then Ezekiel Taylor reproached himself for his idle and dissolute life, and realized that, if he had been industrious, and had saved his money, he might have owned the place with no encumbrance at the present time. It was about sunset, and Mrs. Taylor and her son seated themselves on the front doorstep to talk over the impending calamity.

"What vessel is that?" asked Mrs. Taylor, as a cloud of white canvas emerged from behind Negro Island.

"It's a yacht!" exclaimed Bobtail. "There's a *P* in her burgee. It's the Penobscot, of Belfast. She belongs to Colonel Montague. I saw her go down the other day.

She's the finest yacht in these waters. I must go and see her."

Little Bobtail suddenly forgot all about the mortgage and the prospective loss of the cottage as he gazed upon the white sails and the beautiful hull of the Penobscot. She was a magnificent yacht, of about a hundred tons. She had created a decided sensation in the bay, and our young skipper had heard glowing accounts of her, which made him anxious to see her with his own eyes. Her crew were hauling down her gaff-topsails and her jib-topsail, and it was evident that she intended to anchor in the harbor. Her foresail was lowered, and then her jib. As she lost her headway, the anchor went overboard near where the Skylark lay. Bobtail began to move off.

"I should like to see her, too, Robert. Can't you take me out to her?" said Mrs. Taylor.

"Certainly, mother; come along," replied Little Bobtail; "but perhaps they won't let us go on board of her, for I see some ladies on her deck."

At the landing-steps they took a boat, and Bobtail pulled off to the yacht.

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# CHAPTER IX.

## THE PENOBSCOT.

Little Bobtail could not help looking behind him

occasionally, as he pulled the boat, to observe the beautiful proportions, and the comely, tapering spars of the yacht. Beside the Penobscot, even the Skylark was nowhere.

"Well that's the finest yacht I ever saw!" said he, lying upon his oars, when he was near enough to take in the whole idea of the vessel. "She's big enough to go around the world in, too."

"She's as nice as anything need be," replied Mrs. Taylor, with an indifference which was very provoking to the young skipper.

She was looking at the people on the quarter-deck of the Penobscot, rather than at the symmetrical hull and the graceful spars. There were two ladies and two gentlemen. The old gentleman, seated near the wheel, with long silver locks, and of grave and dignified mien, was the Hon. Mr. Montague. His son, Colonel Montague, who had commanded a Maine regiment during a portion of the war of the rebellion, was planking the deck, dressed in the uniform of the New York Yacht Club. He was quite as dignified as his father, though he was not forty yet. His wife was the elegant lady who sat on a camp-stool gazing at the outline of the ragged mountain which rises near the village. The young lady of twelve or thirteen was Miss Grace Montague, the daughter of the colonel. She was quite tall for her age, and looked very much like her mother. Mrs. Taylor was gazing earnestly at these people.

Little Bobtail swung his boat about, and backed her up to the accommodation-steps. The sailing-master, who also wore the Yacht Club uniform, walked quietly to the ladder, shaking his head to intimate that no visitors would be allowed on board. As

Bobtail, who was not good at taking a hint, especially when it did not agree with his inclination, did not suspend his movements, the sailing-master walked down the steps to the little platform.

"We don't allow any one to come on board to-night," said he, shoving off the boat with his foot.

"Is this Colonel Montague's yacht?" asked Mrs. Taylor.

"It is."

"Well, I want to see him."

"O, if you wish to see the owner, you can come on board."

Just at that moment a steward in a white jacket called the party on deck to supper. The old gentleman, Mrs. Montague, and her daughter descended the companion-way first. As the colonel was about to follow them, the sailing-master told him that the woman in the boat wished to see him. He stepped over to the rail as Bobtail helped his mother upon the platform.

"Do you wish to see me, madam?" demanded the colonel, rather haughtily.

"My son wants to see this yacht very much. He's very fond of boats; and I thought I'd make bold to ask you if he might," replied Mrs. Taylor; and Bobtail thought then that his mother had more "cheek" than he had.

"You may come on board," replied the colonel, very much to the astonishment of the young skipper, and apparently to the equal astonishment of the sailing-master.

Bobtail went forward on the instant the permission was granted, leaving his mother to follow at her leisure; but she stood for a moment talking with the colonel. The young boatman examined the Penobscot in every part except the cabin, which he was not permitted to enter while the family were at supper. It would take all the exclamation marks in a fount of type adequately to express his views of the Penobscot and her appurtenances. The sailing-master followed him in his perambulations above and below, and when the family had finished their meal, he conducted him to the cabin, and permitted him to look into the state-rooms. Bobtail had never seen anything half so magnificent, and he expressed his delight and astonishment in the strongest language his vocabulary afforded.

"Well, Robert, have you seen enough?" said his mother, when he returned to the deck.

"I believe I've seen her through. I thought the Skylark was a big thing before, but she's nothing but skim-milk compared with this yacht," replied he. "If I had such a yacht as this, I wouldn't go ashore at all."

"Our people don't go on shore much," said the sailing-master, pleased with the enthusiasm of the boy.

"I suppose she'll sail some—won't she?" added Bobtail.

"She has logged fifteen knots in a fresh breeze."

"How far have you been in her?"

"We have been down to Eastport and Mount Desert. We left Bar Harbor this morning, and shall run up to Belfast to-morrow evening. Next week we go to

Newport, and up Long Island Sound."

"That's the life that suits me!" exclaimed Bobtail, with enthusiasm, as he walked aft to the accommodation-steps.

Colonel Montague was smoking his cigar, and Little Bobtail thought he was gazing very earnestly at him; but when he returned the gaze, the dignified gentleman was looking some other way. He helped his mother into the boat, and pulled her to the landing-steps.

"Do you know Colonel Montague, mother?" asked Bobtail.

"I used to work for him before you was born," replied Mrs. Taylor, looking over the water at the Penobscot.

"He didn't seem to know you," added Bobtail.

"I haven't seen him before for years."

"I didn't think he'd let us go on board."

"I knew he would, if he recognized me."

"If he did recognize you, he was awful stiff about it. He hardly spoke to you, if you did work for him before I was born."

"That's his way, Robert. He is a great man now, and I s'pose he don't make much of folks beneath him. But he's a fine man, and I always liked him."

"He may be a fine man, but he has a very awkward way of showing it. Why didn't he shake hands with you, and look as though he had seen you before?"

"That isn't his way, Robert; and he is rich enough to do just as he pleases."

"I don't believe he is rich enough to be hoggish," added Bobtail, whose impressions of Colonel Montague were not altogether favorable.

"But he is a good man, and has a very kind heart. He will do almost anything for poor people."

"I should like to sail in that yacht first rate; but I would rather go with somebody that isn't so stiff as Colonel Montague. That sailing-master seems to be afraid of him, and daresn't say his soul's his own."

"Did you expect Colonel Montague to take off his hat to you, and treat you like a nabob?" asked Mrs. Taylor, indignantly.

"I didn't expect him to say anything to me; but if you used to work for him, I should think he would have spoken a civil word or two to you."

"And so he did. He spoke to me when you were looking at the vessel; and he spoke very kindly to me, too."

"He went below in two minutes after you reached the deck."

"Well, his supper was waiting for him. I was only his servant, and I don't expect great folks to take much notice of me; and you won't after you have lived to be half as old as I am."

Mrs. Taylor seemed to be entirely satisfied with Colonel Montague, and she walked home, while her son, who was not so well satisfied with the owner of the Penobscot, went off to the Skylark, where he was soon joined by the Darwinian. At an early hour the captain and the crew retired, and doubtless slept very well, for they were up at sunrise in the morning.

Monkey gorged himself with bacon at their early breakfast; and long before the hour appointed for the party to come on board, the Skylark was ready for their reception, with mainsail set, flags flying, and the anchor hove up to a short stay.

Monkey had a great deal to say about the Penobscot, and Bobtail described her cabin, state-rooms, kitchen, and forecastle while they were waiting. She lay only a cable's length from the Skylark, and they could see all that was going on upon her deck.

"That's Colonel Montague getting into that boat," said Bobtail, as the owner of the Penobscot stepped into his barge.

The boat was manned by two sailors, each of whom pulled two oars. The colonel seated himself in the stern-sheets, which were cushioned with crimson velvet, and took the tiller-lines in his hand.

"She's coming this way," added Monkey, as the barge moved towards the Skylark.

In a moment she was alongside, and Colonel Montague, to the surprise of the skipper, stepped on board. He wondered greatly what had procured him the honor of a visit from such a distinguished man.

"Good morning, my lad," said the colonel, with a pleasant smile, which seemed to belie his conduct the evening before.

"Good morning, sir," replied Bobtail.

"Good morning, sir," added Monkey, exhibiting all the teeth in his head.

Colonel Montague glanced at the Darwinian, and possibly debated in his own mind whether the crew

of the Skylark was man or monkey.

"You have a fine little boat here," added the visitor.

"She's a first-rate boat; but she ain't much side of yours," replied Bobtail, whose impressions in regard to the owner of the Penobscot were undergoing a rapid change. "She'll sail some, and she's good when it blows."

"And you take parties out in her?" added the visitor.

"Yes, sir; I have one to-day."

"I'm afraid not, Captain Bobtail," said the colonel, with a smile.

"I'm engaged, at any rate," added Bobtail, who, if the colonel had not smiled, would have thought he was impudent to doubt his word.

"You must thank me for taking your party away from you. I found that some friends of mine at the Bay View House were to go in your boat to-day; but I invited them to go with me."

"Well, sir, I don't thank you for it," said Bobtail, rather pertly.

"Wait a minute, my lad. They told me they had engaged your boat; and I promised to make it all right with you. They were to pay you seven dollars for the day. Here is seven dollars;" and the colonel handed him this sum. "I suppose that will make it all right."

"Yes, sir; that's handsome, and I'm very much obliged to you," answered Bobtail, warmly; and by this time he thought that the owner of the Penobscot was a prince.

"Now, Captain Bobtail, if you would like to take a sail in the Penobscot, you may go with us, as you have lost your job for the day," added Colonel Montague.

"Thank you, sir; I should like to go first rate!" exclaimed Bobtail, delighted with the idea.

"You may go on board with me," continued the colonel.

"I will, sir.—Monkey, you will lower the sail, and take care of the Skylark. Don't let any one have her; and I will pay you just the same as yesterday."

The Darwinian was very well satisfied with this arrangement, and immediately began to consider what he should have for dinner, since the choice was left with him. The barge returned to the Penobscot, and Bobtail followed her owner on deck. Though the young skipper of the Skylark was very democratic in his ideas, he did not presume to take a place upon the quarter-deck with the family, but went forward and fraternized with the sailors, all of whom, except the mates, were young men. Presently the order was given to set the mainsail, and Bobtail took hold of the peak-halyard to lend a hand. He worked well, and by his activity won the favor of his new companions. He did his full share of all the work, because he was not fond of idleness. The party came on board, and the order was given to get under way.

"Clear away the jib and flying-jib," said the sailing-master.

Bobtail ran out on the bowsprit, and, dropping down upon the foot-rope, was at the outer end of the flying-jib boom in an instant, clearing away the sail.

"How smart you are!" said Miss Grace Montague, who was standing with another young lady of the party near the foremast, when he returned to the deck.

Little Bobtail blushed like a girl, for he was not accustomed to talking with such nice young ladies.

"Thank you, miss; but it don't take more than half a day to loose a flying-jib," he replied.

"But aren't you afraid of falling into the water?" she asked.

"O, no. I'm used to vessels. I sail the Skylark, which you see there," replied Bobtail, pointing to the little yacht.

"That's the boat we were going in," added the other young lady. "Then you are Captain Bobtail?"

"Folks call me Little Bobtail; but I'm not captain," answered the young skipper, blushing again.

"Run up the jib!" shouted the sailing-master.

Bobtail sprang to the halyard, ungallantly turning his back to the young ladies. They looked at the short skirts of his coat, and he heard a silvery laugh, as he took in the slack of the rope. Miss Montague and Miss Walker were very much amused when they discovered the origin of his name.

The wind was fresh; the Penobscot went off like "a thing of life," and Bobtail enjoyed the sail exceedingly. She ran down as far as Owl's Head, and then stood over towards the eastern shore of the bay. At one of the best places she lay to, and the party caught cod and haddock till they were tired of the sport, and then the yacht anchored under the lee of

an island. The day was fine, and the excursionists desired to visit some of the islands in the vicinity. Both boats were manned, and went off in different directions, according to the fancy of those on board of them. Bobtail was permitted to occupy the fore-sheets of the one which carried Mrs. Montague and the two young ladies, for somehow he took great pleasure in looking at the latter, and wished they would be a little more sociable. This boat went to Blank Island, which has a high bluff on the east side of it, and all the party landed. The ladies and gentlemen ascended the steep side of the island, and reached the cliff which overhangs the sea.

Bobtail followed them at a respectful distance, while the sailors remained near the boat. From the bluff he looked down into the little bay, where he had anchored the Skylark the night he picked her up. The cliff was about thirty feet high, and rose abruptly from the water, which was very deep at the foot of it, so that a large ship might have floated alongside the rocks. The party seated themselves near the cliff, and were observing the rolling sea beneath them, for a south-easterly wind was driving the huge waves into the little bay. It was a grand sight, and the two young ladies sat on the very edge of the precipice, watching the surges which beat and broke against the wall of rocks.

"Don't go too near, Grace," said Mrs. Montague.

"I'm not afraid, mother," replied the young lady.

"These rocks crumble off sometimes, Miss Montague," added Bobtail, timidly approaching the spot.

"There isn't any danger," answered the wilful miss.

"Do you know what they call this place?" asked Bobtail.

"I'm sure I don't."

"Lover's Leap," laughed the young skipper. "The story is, that an Indian girl came to this island, and jumped off this cliff, because her father wouldn't let her marry the man she wanted."

"Where did she come from?" asked Miss Walker.

"I'm sure I don't know."

"Pooh! I don't believe any Indian girl leaped off these rocks. It wouldn't hurt her any if she did," sneered Miss Montague.

"But she would drown in the water," suggested Bobtail.

"Well, I don't believe the story, because I think there are a thousand just such cliffs, and some Indian girl leaped off every one of them," persisted Grace Montague. "I have seen ever so many 'Lover's Leaps' myself, and the stories about them are nothing but stories."

"Perhaps this story is true," said Miss Walker, who was perchance more sentimental than her companion.

"I don't believe a word of it. If the Indian girl wanted to drown herself, why should she come way out here, when she could find deep water enough near the shore?"

"Perhaps it was to get away from her friends," suggested Miss Walker.

"Perhaps it was, but I don't believe it. If I wanted to drown myself, I could find a better place than this," said Grace, rising, and standing on a loose stone close to the edge of the precipice. "If it were not for getting wet, I should just as lief jump off here as not;" and she swung her arms just as though she intended to take the leap.

"Grace! Grace!" shrieked her mother, in frantic tones, as she saw her daughter demonstrating in this dangerous manner.

The young lady was evidently startled by the shrill tones of her mother. She swung her arms back, as if she had lost her balance, and then went head first over the cliff. The loose stone on which she stood rolled back, and it was plain now that her foothold had been very insecure.

"O, mercy, mercy!" screamed Mrs. Montague, as Grace disappeared over the precipice.



The poor mother rushed towards the cliff, and in her agony would have thrown herself off, if the ladies with her had not held her. Little Bobtail was appalled as he saw Grace go over; but he believed in action rather than words. Kicking off his shoes, and divesting himself of his bobtail coat, he made a graceful and scientific dive into the depths below. He was celebrated as a diver and swimmer, and really felt almost as much at home in the water as on the land. And this was not the first time he had dived over this very cliff. He had done so several times before for sport and bravado, and therefore we are not disposed to magnify his conduct on the present occasion.

Miss Grace Montague had not added to her other accomplishments that of swimming, which would have been a very useful attainment to one of such strong aquatic tastes and tendencies. She could not swim, and she did not attempt to do so. She only floundered and flounced about in the water, struggling madly and purposelessly in the waves. Our hero went deep down into the depths of the little bay, and when he rose he saw Miss Grace borne by the waves towards the wall of rocks. If she was not drowned, she would be mangled to death against the rocks. He struck out for her, and in a moment she was in his arms, or, rather, in one of his arms, for he threw only his left around her, in such a manner as to confine her hands in his grasp. With his head above the water, he swam towards the open bay, fearing the rocks more than the waves.

With his heavy burden he found it impossible to make any headway against the waves, which drove him fiercely towards the rocks. Grace struggled violently, and this added to the difficulty of saving her. He buffeted the waves till his strength seemed to be all gone, and he feared that he should be obliged to abandon the poor girl to her fate. But the screams of Mrs. Montague on the rock above induced him to renew the struggle with new vigor; but his feet touched the wall of rocks behind him. He rose and fell with the waves, but still he held his charge firmly under his arm.

# CHAPTER X.

## GRACE MONTAGUE.

Little Bobtail was not making any headway with his burden. The waves threw him back until his feet touched the wall of rocks. He had struggled and labored, and Miss Grace had struggled and labored, as if intent upon defeating his beneficent efforts, until his strength was nearly exhausted. But he treated himself as he did a boat in heavy weather; he kept his head to the sea, well knowing that if he got into the trough, the waves would roll him over, and render him helpless. When his feet touched the rock, he "shoved off" vigorously. Fortunately for him, the young lady in his grasp was even more exhausted than he was, and by this time she was content to keep reasonably quiet. Bobtail only endeavored to keep her head out of the water, which he was not always able to do when the great waves surged in upon him. He no longer attempted to make any headway, but by occasionally pushing his feet against the rocks he saved himself from being disabled against them.

One of the gentlemen on the island had shouted to the boatmen to pull around to the little bay. The sailors, thrilled by the screams of Mrs. Montague, were straining every muscle, and their oars bent like reeds before their vigorous strokes. The other boat, with Colonel Montague in the stern-sheets, was also hastening to the spot, the half frantic father urging the men forward with wild gestures. On the rock above, the party watched the struggling swimmer as he bravely supported his helpless burden.

Two of the ladies held the agonized mother, to prevent her from leaping over the cliff. The gentlemen were shouting to the men in the boat to hasten their speed, for there was nothing else they could do. Bobtail saw the boat, and heard the rapid thumps of the oars in the rowlocks. The sight and the sound inspired him with new courage. He had ceased to struggle any more than was necessary to keep his distance from the rock.

"Hold on a few seconds more," shouted one of the gentlemen on the rock above.



Bobtail tried to speak, but he could not, though he felt that for a short time longer he was master of the

situation.

"Way enough!" said one of the men in the boat. "Toss him an oar, Bill."

The stroke oarsman threw one of his oars to Bobtail, who grasped it, and supported himself with it.

"Back her," said the man in the bow, as he reached forward, and seized one of Miss Grace's arms, while the other man kept the boat in position with his oars.

The stout sailor lifted the young lady into the boat, and Bobtail laid hold of the bow with his released hand. A shout of joy rose from the rock when Grace was safely drawn into the boat.

"Back her!" gasped Little Bobtail, still clinging to the bow with one hand, while he held the oar with the other.

Grace was exhausted and panting violently, but she was not insensible. She was even able to sit up; and when the boat had backed clear of the rocks, she was placed on the velvet cushions at the stern. In another moment the second boat dashed alongside, and Colonel Montague leaped into the stern-sheets, and folded his daughter in his arms. He wiped the salt water from her face, and did all he could to improve her situation.

"Pull for the yacht!" said he, nervously.

All this time Bobtail had been clinging to the bow of the barge, recovering his breath. The sailor assisted him into the boat, and he dropped down into the fore-sheets, breathing heavily from exhaustion. The stroke-oarsman picked up his oar, and the two men pulled with all their might for the yacht, while the

other boat went around to the landing-place on Blank Island to bring off the party there.

"How do you feel, Grace?" asked Colonel Montague, as he laid his daughter's head upon his breast.

"Better, father," she replied, faintly. "I'm cold."

"Give way, lively, my lads," added the colonel, to whom minutes seemed like hours.

When the barge came alongside the accommodation-steps, Colonel Montague bore Grace in his arms to the deck of the Penobscot.

"Let me sit down here in the sun, father," said she.

"But you must remove your wet clothes."

"Not yet. Let me rest a few moments. I shall be all well in a little while."

"What's the matter, Edward?" asked the Hon. Mr. Montague, who had remained on board of the Penobscot, being too old to scramble about the rocks.

"I have been overboard, grandfather," replied Grace, with a faint smile; and it was evident that her condition was rapidly improving.

"Overboard, child!" exclaimed the old gentleman. "How did it happen?"

"I don't know. I was not with her," replied the colonel. "But where is that boy?"

"That boy" has just come on deck, and had seated himself in the waist. He had recovered his wind, and was now nearly as good as new. He felt that he had done a big thing, and he wondered that no one said anything to him. The boat that brought him to the

yacht had gone for the party which had been left on the island; and no one but the colonel knew anything about the part he had borne in the affair. But he was not long neglected, for the instant Colonel Montague thought of him he hastened to the waist, and with tears in his eyes, grasped him by the hand. Doubtless he betrayed more emotion than the occasion seemed to warrant—emotion which was not all gratitude.

"My lad, you have done me a service which I can never forget," said he, wiping the tears from his eyes.

"It's all right, sir. I feel better than if I hadn't done it," replied Bobtail.

"But come aft, and see Grace," added the colonel.

"No, sir, I think I won't bother her now. She must feel pretty bad after the ducking she got."

Just at this moment the barge from Blank Island dashed up to the steps. Mrs. Montague was a demonstrative woman, and she had not even yet ceased to scream.

"O, where is she? where is she, Edward?" cried the poor mother, as she rose in the stern of the boat.

"Here I am, mother," exclaimed Grace, hastening to the rail on the quarter-deck. "I am not drowned or hurt."

Mrs. Montague was assisted up the steps, and in another moment she was sobbing over her child in her arms. While this scene was transpiring on the quarter-deck, the rest of the party went to Little Bobtail, and took him by the hand, as they expressed their admiration of his heroic conduct.

"That wan't anything," replied Bobtail. "I have dived

off that rock twenty times before."

"But Grace would have drowned if you hadn't done it."

"Well, I don't know. I suppose, if I hadn't gone for her, some of the rest of you would."

"I don't know about that," said one of them, shaking his head. "I might have gone into the water, but I couldn't have done much."

Mrs. Montague hurried Grace into the cabin as soon as the violence of her emotions had in a measure subsided.

"But I haven't seen Captain Bobtail yet," said the daughter.

"You shall see him; but you must take off your wet clothes first," replied her mother.

"Not yet, mother. I must see him this instant. Tell him to come down here."

"I'll go for him," said Emily Walker, as she rushed up the companion-way.

Perhaps Miss Walker was more sentimental than Miss Montague; at any rate, she flew to the spot where Bobtail was seated, threw her arms around his neck, and actually kissed him before he had a chance to repel the assault, if he desired to do so.

"What a dear, good fellow you are!" exclaimed she. "But you must come right down into the cabin this instant. Grace wants to see you."

"I'm all wet, and I guess I won't go down now," replied Bobtail, blushing like a red cabbage in the

dews of the morning.

"But you must come. Grace is dying to see you;" and Miss Walker took him by the arm, and tugged at it till she dragged him to his feet.

"I don't like to go down into the cabin. I haven't got my coat and shoes yet."

"Never mind your coat, Mr. Bobtail. Grace won't change her wet clothes till she sees you."

Of course Miss Walker carried the day, and Little Bobtail was dragged into the cabin. Grace seized him by both hands, and warmly expressed her gratitude. Emily wondered that she did not kiss him. If he had saved her, she would have kissed him twenty times. Mrs. Montague pressed his hand, and thanked him over and over again. Then Colonel Montague took his hand again, and expressed himself even more fully than before. The Hon. Mr. Montague followed him, and every lady and gentleman of the party took him by the hand, and said something exceedingly handsome; and Bobtail began to think they were overdoing it.

"But come, my lad; you are in your wet clothes, while we are talking to you," interposed the colonel. "You must have a dry suit."

"Never mind me, sir. I'm used to it," laughed Bobtail.

"You will catch cold."

"Catch a weasel asleep! I don't catch cold."

Colonel Montague insisted, and the sailing-master lent him a shirt and a pair of trousers twice too big for him, and Bobtail put himself inside of them. His bobtail coat and shoes, which had been brought from

the island, were dry, and he was in presentable condition. Grace soon appeared, her hair nicely dried and dressed anew, wearing a white dress and a blue sacque. She looked very pretty; but Bobtail thought that Emily Walker was the prettier of the two. By this time dinner was ready, and the skipper of the Skylark was invited to dine in the cabin. He did not exactly like the idea, for he felt that he was not sufficiently posted in the ways of genteel society to sit at the table with such grand people.

"I'll take my grub with the hands forward, sir," said he, laughing. "I shall feel more at home with them."

"But we shall not feel at home without you, my lad," replied Colonel Montague. "Besides, when everybody gets cooled off, we want to talk over the affair on the island, for I haven't even heard how Grace happened to be in the water."

The owner of the Penobscot would not "let him up," as Bobtail expressed it when he told his mother the story, and he was placed at the table between Grace and Emily Walker. Chowder was served first. Bobtail kept his "weather eye" open to see how the rest of the party did, and adjusted his conduct by theirs. He wondered what "those towels were stuck into the tumblers for;" but when little Miss Walker unrolled her napkin, and placed it in her lap, and the gentlemen of the party did the same, he followed their example.

"Now, Grace, tell me how you got overboard," said Colonel Montague, when the soup plates were removed.

Mrs. Montague shuddered, for the scene was too terrible to be recalled with anything but anguish.

"Captain Bobtail had just told Emily and me a story about an Indian girl who jumped off that same cliff; but I didn't believe a word of it," Grace began. "I stood up on a stone near the edge, and swung my arms, for I was thinking just how the Indian girl looked, if she really did jump off that cliff. Just then mother screamed, and frightened me. I started back; but the stone I was standing on rolled over, and threw me forward, so that I went down into the water head first."

"I thought the child was going to jump overboard," added Mrs. Montague, with a strong tremor passing through her frame.

The details of the affair were repeated, and then all eyes were directed at Little Bobtail, who was more concerned about the propriety of his conduct at the table than about his deeds at Blank Island; but probably, if he had fed himself with his knife, his admiring friends would cheerfully have forgiven him. He found it more difficult to transfer mashed potato from his plate to his mouth with the silver fork than it was to dive off that cliff into the sea. When the pastry came on, it was absolutely appalling to think of eating custard pie with a fork, and he would rather have undertaken the feat of swimming around Blank Island.

"You know I always shovel in custard pie with my knife," said he, afterwards, in telling his mother about it; "but everybody else used a fork, and so I had to."

But Bobtail magnified the trials and tribulations of that grand dinner in the cabin of the Penobscot, for, by keeping his "weather eye" open, he hardly sinned against any of the proprieties of polite society, and

some of the ladies even remarked how well he behaved for a poor boy. The dinner was finished at last, and "it was a tip-top dinner, too," for besides chowder and fried fish, there were roast beef and roast chicken, boiled salmon, puddings, pies, and ice-cream. Perhaps Bobtail ate too much for strict gentility, but he excused himself by declaring that not only the stewards, but all the party, "kept making him eat more of the fixins."

"When I got through that dinner, mother," said he, "I was just like a foot-ball blown up for a game; and if the captain's trousers that I wore hadn't been a mile too big for me, I couldn't have put myself outside of half that feed."

After the dinner, which Bobtail will remember as long as he lives, the party went on deck. Grace was as bright and fresh as ever. She and Emily walked up and down the deck. The young skipper went forward to talk with the crew, for he did not wish them to think that he was putting on airs because he "took his grub in the cabin." The men congratulated him on his good fortune, and assured him he had made a rich and powerful friend, and that he would get a pile of money by the operation. Bobtail thought that a hundred dollars was "a pile of money," and, if any one claimed the Skylark, this sum would enable him to purchase a better boat than Prince's old tub. But he did not think much about this matter; in fact, he was gazing at Miss Grace and Miss Emily, as they walked so gracefully on the deck. He was not sentimental, romantic, or very visionary; but these two young ladies were so pretty, and so elegant, and so finely dressed, that he could not help looking at them; besides, they were as sociable now as he could wish. Bobtail joined them in their promenade on the

deck, and was admitted to the privilege with distinguished consideration.

"I should like to have you take a sail with me in the Skylark," said he.

"O, I should like to go ever so much," replied Miss Walker.

"And if you get overboard, I will pull you out."

"I don't mean to get overboard, if I can help it," laughed the little miss, though, from her conversation with Grace, one would have thought she considered it rather a nice thing, if she could only be rescued by a young gentleman.

"You must sail up to Belfast, Captain Bobtail, and come to our house," added Grace. "I have lots of things to show you. We have ever so many boats; and you may ride my pony."

"Thank you, Miss Montague. You are very kind; but you know I'm not one of the grand folks, and I shouldn't know how to behave myself in your fine parlors."

"Pooh! You behave just as well as any of the young men that come to our house," said Grace, pouting her lips. "You are just as good as any of them, and a great deal better than most of them. I hope you will come, Captain Bobtail; I shall be so glad to see you!"

The order was given to get up the anchor, and Bobtail sprang to take a hand in the operation. In a few moments the Penobscot was standing over towards Camden; and the hero of the day began to regret that he must so soon lose his pleasant companions. About five o'clock she landed her

passengers at the Portland Wharf, and Monkey came off from the Skylark for Bobtail.

"Little Bobtail, you have rendered me a service to-day which you can neither understand nor appreciate, and I shall never forget it," said Colonel Montague, as he took the boy's hand. "I shall see you again before long. I am going away in the yacht next week for a long cruise; but we shall meet again, and I hope in the end that you will not be sorry for your noble conduct to-day."

"I'm not sorry for it, sir. I've had a tip-top time to-day, and I'm much obliged to you for taking me with you," replied Bobtail, unable to comprehend the whole of the grateful father's speech.

"It is fortunate you were with us. We might have been weeping over our lost child, instead of rejoicing, as we do now."

"O, some other fellow would have gone in for her if I hadn't."

"Perhaps not; for not many have the nerve to dive off a high cliff into the sea, as you did. Be that as it may, my gratitude to you is none the less. If you want a friend, if you have any trouble about that boat, or anything else, send for me, for I would cross the continent to serve you."

"Thank you, sir. I don't know that I am likely to have any trouble about the Skylark, for if the owner comes, he can have her."

"And then you will have no boat?"

"No, sir. I shall be out of a boat, sure; and I should like to live in one all the time."

"If you lose her before I return, write a letter to me at Belfast, and it will be forwarded if I have gone. Now, good by, my lad."

The rest of the family shook hands with him again, and spoke many kind words to him. Bobtail leaped lightly into Monkey's boat, and they returned to the Skylark. The skipper spoke in glowing terms of the experience of the day; but somehow the Darwinian did not seem to relish the narrative. He was nervous, and did not laugh as usual; but it was some time before Bobtail's enthusiasm permitted him to notice the change which had come over his companion's spirits. They went on board the Skylark.

"Has any one been after the boat, Monkey?" asked the skipper.

"No one after the boat," replied the Darwinian, gloomily; "but somebody has been after you."

"After me? Who?"

Monkey was silent, and studied the seams in the deck.

"Who has been after me?"

"Mr. Brooks."

This gentleman was a deputy sheriff; but his name had no terror to Robert Taylor.

"Say, Bob, don't you think we had better get under way, and run for it?" added Monkey, his face brightening for a moment.

"What for?"

"Mr. Brooks said he had a warrant to take you up,

and I s'pose he's on the lookout for you now."

"Take me up!" exclaimed Bobtail. "What for?"

"Something about a letter—I don't know what."

"I know," replied Bobtail, musing, for he could not think how, after he had been fully exonerated from the charge of taking that letter, he should again be accused.

The jib of the Penobscot was hoisted while he was musing, and she stood away towards the Spindles off North-east Point.

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# CHAPTER XI.

## THE FIVE HUNDRED DOLLAR BILL.

Little Bobtail watched the beautiful yacht as she piled on her "kites" and gradually increased her speed in the light breeze. He felt that he had a powerful friend on board of her, and he was tempted to call in his aid in meeting the difficulties that seemed to be gathering before him.

"Don't you think we'd better run for it, Bob?" asked Monkey. "We can keep out of the way of any boat in Camden. We can run over among them islands, and spend the summer there without being caught."

"I don't run away from anything of this sort," replied Bobtail, proudly. "I'm going to face the music,

whatever comes of it."

"But they'll put you in jail," suggested Monkey, opening his eyes as wide as they would go.

"I don't care if they do. I haven't done anything wrong, and I'm not going to run away. If Mr. Brooks wants me, here I am."

"There he comes; and Captain Chinks is with him. We can hoist the mainsail, and be out of the way before they get here, if you say the word," added the crew of the Skylark, nervously.

"I don't say the word. I'm all right, and I'm ready to look any of them square in the face."

"But what's it all about, Bob?"

"Squire Gilfilian says I stole a letter with money in it, which was sent to him."

"You!" exclaimed the Darwinian. "Well, I know better'n that myself."

"So do I," laughed Bobtail, pleased with the enthusiasm of his friend.

"Here they come. Captain Chinks looks as ugly as sin itself. He is at the bottom of this business. You stay by, and take care of the boat, Monkey, whatever happens to me. If any one attempts to get her away from you, send for Squire Simonton."

"I'll stick to her as long as there's a chip left of her, Bob; but I don't like to have them take you out of her in this kind of style, and send you off to jail."

"You needn't be concerned about me. I have some strong friends, and I'm rather sorry I didn't stop the

Penobscot, and tell Colonel Montague what's up. I would, if I had known exactly what was going to happen."

A boat with Captain Chinks at the oars, and Mr. Brooks in the stern-sheets, came alongside the Skylark.

"You are here—are you?" said Captain Chinks, with an ugly look.

"Of course I'm here," replied Bobtail, quietly. "I ain't nowhere else."

"I want you to go on shore with me," added the deputy sheriff.

"Monkey says you want to take me up."

"I don't want to do so, but I must discharge my duty. I have a warrant for your arrest," replied Mr. Brooks.

"What for?"

"For stealing a letter with money in it."

"Captain Chinks here knows that I didn't do it."

"No, I don't."

"You saw the letter in Squire Gilfilian's office after I left."

"That's so; but I can't say that you didn't go back after I went off. I didn't believe you took the letter till the squire proved it; and then I couldn't help believing it. I don't see how you can help believing it yourself."

"I didn't take the letter."

"We will talk this matter over at the squire's office,"

interposed the deputy sheriff. "You had better not say much about it here."

"I'm going to speak the truth right straight through, and I don't care who hears me."

"You are not obliged to say anything to commit yourself, Bobtail. I want you to understand that," said Mr. Brooks, kindly.

"I shall not say anything to commit myself, you had better believe, for I didn't take the letter."

"The less you say about it, the better," added the officer.

"Does my mother know anything about this business?" asked Bobtail.

"I reckon she knows more about it than anybody else except yourself," answered Captain Chinks.

"I have talked with your mother about it," said Mr. Brooks. "She feels very bad, of course; and she says she can't explain the matter at all."

"She don't know anything about it," replied Bobtail.

"I will send for her when we get on shore," added the deputy sheriff.

Captain Chinks pulled to one of the wharves up the harbor, where the party landed, and then proceeded to the office of Squire Gilfilian. The lawyer was there, and so was the ill-visaged man who took care of the case of the bank robbers. Mr. Brooks had sent a boy for Mrs. Taylor as soon as they landed, and she and her husband arrived at the office almost as soon as Bobtail.

"O, Robert," exclaimed the poor woman, her eyes filling with tears, as she hugged her boy.

"Don't be scared, mother. I didn't do this thing, and I shall come out all right," replied Bobtail. "Don't fret about it."

"I can't help it, Robert. I wish—"

Mrs. Taylor suddenly checked herself. "What do you wish, mother?" asked Bobtail, who thought there was something very strange in her conduct.

"I wish they hadn't arrested you," added she; but this was evidently not what she had intended to say.

"So do I; but you needn't be frightened. I didn't take the letter, nor the money."

"I know you didn't, Robert, but the case looks very bad against us."

"I think so, Mrs. Taylor," said Squire Gilfilian, who had been occupied in looking over some papers when the party entered, and was now ready to give his attention to the case. "I should like to hear what you have to say."

"This is not an examination," said the deputy sheriff to Mrs. Taylor and her son. "If you don't wish to answer any questions here, you needn't do so. The case will come on to-morrow, before Squire Norwood."

"I am ready to answer any questions that can be asked," said Bobtail, stoutly, "whether it is an examination or not."

"Do as you please about it. If you want any help—any lawyer—I will send for one," added Mr. Brooks.

"I don't want any lawyers. I can tell the truth without any help," answered Bobtail.

"Did you come back to the office after you put that letter on my desk?" asked the squire.

"No, sir; I did not," replied Bobtail, squarely.

The lawyer took from his pocket-book a five hundred dollar bill, and spread it out on the desk at his side.

"Did you ever see that bill before, Robert Taylor?" demanded he, sternly.

"No, sir."

"Think before you answer."

"Think! I don't want to think. I never saw a five hundred dollar bill before in my life," answered Bobtail, with no little indignation in his tones.

"I am sorry to see you persist so stoutly in a lie," said the squire, shaking his head, as he glanced at Mrs. Taylor.

"It isn't a lie; it's the truth, and I'll stick to it as long as I have breath in my body," replied Bobtail, warmly.

"You are not under oath now, Robert Taylor."

"I'll say just the same under oath, and before all the lawyers and judges in the State of Maine."

"Mr. Slipwing, do you know this bill?" added the squire, addressing the ill-visaged man.

"I do. I will swear in any court that this is the bill I sent you in the letter from Portland," replied the man.

"You are very sure?"

"Positively so. I remember the bank, and there are three things on the bill which enable me to identify it. The cashier's pen snapped when he wrote his name on the left, and blotted the bill. The corner was torn off, and it was mended in another place with a piece of paper from the edge of a sheet of six-cent postage stamps."

The ill-visaged man spoke confidently, and whatever his character, his testimony was very clear.

"What has all this to do with me?" asked Bobtail, who did not yet understand the situation.

The lawyer smiled, and perhaps he thought that the boy was playing his part extremely well for a novice.

"My testimony will come in next," added Squire Gilfilian. "This afternoon, Mrs. Taylor, who is the mother of this boy, paid me five hundred dollars, for I had foreclosed the mortgage on her husband's house. Now, Mrs. Taylor, where did you get the bill?"

"Robert didn't give it to me," she replied; and she seemed to be very much troubled and very much embarrassed; so much so, that her looks and actions were the worst possible evidence against her.

"So you say, Mrs. Taylor; but you don't answer my question."

"I can't tell you now where I got it," stammered the poor woman.

Ezekiel Taylor and Little Bobtail were more astonished at this answer than any other person in the room. Both of them wondered where she had obtained so much money, while the others in the

office believed that her answer was merely a subterfuge to conceal the guilt of her son. Ezekiel could not help thinking, just then, that his wife always had money; that, while she had no visible means of obtaining it, she always had enough to feed and clothe the family. He had considered this subject, and wondered over it before; and the only solution of the mystery he could suggest was, that her first husband had left her more money than she ever acknowledged he did, and she had concealed it to prevent him from spending it. As to her son, he had never thought of the matter at all. All that confused and confounded him was, his mother's refusal to answer what seemed to him a very simple question.

"Mrs. Taylor, you will be a witness, and the most important one in the case, when it comes up before Squire Norwood to-morrow," added the lawyer.

"I suppose I shall," replied Mrs. Taylor, with a gasp.

"You will be put under oath, and compelled to testify."

"But you are not under oath now, and you need not say anything, if you don't wish to," said Mr. Brooks.

"As the matter looks now, you are a party to the theft, and I can cause your arrest," added the squire, vexed at the officiousness of the deputy sheriff.

"O, dear me!" groaned Mrs. Taylor.

"Don't be frightened, mother," interposed Bobtail. "You know, and I know, that you did not obtain the money from me."

"And the Lord knows I did not, and that I came

honestly by it, too," sobbed the poor woman, who had a mortal terror of courts and the law.

"If you came honestly by the money, why don't you tell where you obtained it?" added Squire Gilfilian.

"I have my reasons."

"If your son did not give you this bill—"

"He did not! I'm sure he never saw it before," protested Mrs. Taylor.

"Whoever gave you this bill must have stolen it," said the squire, sternly.

"That don't follow," replied Mr. Brooks. "It may have passed through the hands of half a dozen persons after it was taken from the letter."

"Are you the counsel for these parties, Mr. Brooks?" demanded the squire, smartly.

"I am not; but the prisoner is in my keeping, and shall have fair play. I'll take him away if you are not satisfied, for I brought him here to oblige you," answered the deputy sheriff, who was certainly very considerate towards his charge.

"All I want is, to get at the truth," added the squire, in a milder tone. "If Mrs. Taylor did not receive this bill from her son, and will tell us where she got it, we can trace out the thief."

"That's the point," said Captain Chinks. "We want to find the guilty party."

Captain Chinks winked rapidly for an instant, as though his brain was fearfully exercised to discover the thief. He had one black eye, which winked faster

than the other—it was the result of his interview with Little Bobtail the day before, for the boy struck hard when he was assailed.

"I can't tell you where I got the bill," said Mrs. Taylor; "but I came honestly by it."

"It's no use of saying anything more, then," added the lawyer. "Under these circumstances, I am compelled to regard you as a party to your son's guilt, Mrs. Taylor; and I must cause your arrest."

"Don't do that, Squire Gilfilian," pleaded Bobtail.

"I must do it. It becomes my duty to do it."

"Let him do it," whispered Mr. Brooks.

"I can't help it if you do," sobbed the poor woman. "If I have to go to jail, I can't tell."

"Nothing more can be done, and I shall procure a warrant for the arrest of Mrs. Taylor," said the lawyer, gathering up the papers on his desk, and restoring the five hundred dollar bill to his pocket-book.

Mr. Brooks and Bobtail left the office, followed by Mrs. Taylor and her husband.

"I am responsible for you, Bobtail," said the officer.

"I won't run away, sir. You have been very kind to me, Mr. Brooks, and I won't go back on you," replied Bobtail.

"But I must not lose sight of you; and I don't want to send you to jail. I'll take you to my house."

"Just as you say, sir; but I should like to go home and have a talk with mother. I want to see Squire

Simonton, too."

"Very well; I will go home with you. I saw Squire Simonton walking towards his house just now. There he is, in front of the hotel, talking with Mr. Hines."

They walked towards the Bay View House. It was nearly tea time, and the guests of the house were seated on the platform, under the shade of the trees which surround the hotel. There was an excited group there, for the particulars of the cruise of the Penobscot that day had just been related by the Walkers and others.

"I want to see you, Squire Simonton," said Bobtail.

"There he is. Three cheers for Little Bobtail!" shouted Mr. Walker, as he pointed to the hero of the day.

There were gentlemen enough who had heard the story to give the cheers, and the ladies clapped their hands.

"That's for you, Bobtail," said Mr. Hines. "We have heard of your brave deeds, and all the people in the hotel are talking about you."

Little Bobtail blushed like a beet, and while Mr. Hines was telling the deputy sheriff how the boy had saved Grace Montague from the waves and the rocks, the hero related his own troubles to Mr. Simonton. Mr. Walker and Emily came out, and insisted that Bobtail should go into the hotel, and see the ladies. Ever so many of them shook his brown hand, and he blushed and stammered, and thought the scene was ten times as trying as that off Blank Island. Then he must take tea with the Walkers. He could not be excused.

"I can't, sir," protested Bobtail. "I have been taken up for stealing since I came a shore. But I didn't do it."

"For stealing!" exclaimed Emily Walker, with horror.

"I didn't do it."

"I know you didn't, Captain Bobtail," replied Emily.

"This is Mr. Brooks, the deputy sheriff, and he is responsible for me," added Bobtail. "So you see I can't leave him."

"Then Mr. Brooks must come too," said Mr. Walker.

The officer was very obliging, and went too. Bobtail was a first-class lion, though under arrest for stealing. The gentlemen patted him on the head, and the ladies petted him. A party wanted the Skylark for the next day, another for Monday, and a third for Tuesday. The hero could not go the next day, for he had to be examined before Squire Norwood for stealing the letter. It was dark when he escaped from the hotel, and went home attended by Mr. Brooks. Squire Simonton was there waiting to see him.

After the scene at the office, Ezekiel and his wife had walked to the cottage together. Neither of them was in a pleasant frame of mind. The tippler was sober, because he had neither rum nor money. He wanted both, for he was thirsting and hankering for a dram.

"So it seems you've got money somewhere," said Ezekiel to his troubled wife.

"No, I haven't," replied Mrs. Taylor, who was only thinking how she could extricate herself from the difficulties of her situation, and not at all troubled about the thoughts or suspicions of her worthless husband.

"Yes, you have! When I don't have a dollar, you always have somethin'," persisted Ezekiel. "You've kept money hid away from me ever since we was married. Your first husband left more'n you told on."

"All that my first husband left me was gone years ago," added Mrs. Taylor, indifferently.

"You've got money somewhere."

"If I have, I shall keep it."

"You hain't no right to do so."

"Yes, I have. If I had any money, I would not let you have it to spend for rum. Every dollar you get goes for that, and you would have starved to death if I hadn't taken care of you."

"If you've got any money, I wan't some on't; and I'm go'n to have it, too."

"I haven't any money; at least not much of any; and what I have I mean to keep."

Ezekiel was mad. He was fully convinced that his wife had money concealed somewhere, or in the hands of some friend, who gave it to her as she wanted it. She always paid the bills of the house very promptly, and had enough to buy a dress for herself, or a suit of clothes for Robert, and even for him. He felt that he had a right to his wife's property, even if he spent it for rum. But Mrs. Taylor was too much for him; for whatever secret she had, she kept it. This was not the first time that Ezekiel had been vexed by these suspicions, and he had searched the house several times, when she was absent, for the hidden treasure, but without finding it. The debate on this question was continued long after they returned to

the cottage, but the husband was no wiser at the end of it than at the beginning.

All the points of the case were stated to Squire Simonton, who volunteered to act as counsel for Bobtail.

"But where did this bill come from, Mrs. Taylor?" asked the legal gentleman.

"I can't tell," replied the troubled woman.

"You can't tell!"

"No, sir; I cannot."

"But your refusal will certainly insure the conviction of your son."

"Robert did not give me that bill," protested she.

"I don't believe he did, nuther," said Ezekiel. "She's got money hid away somewhere."

"If it had been hid away long, it could not have been the bill which was sent in the letter."

"It wasn't hid away," added Mrs. Taylor. "I might injure somebody by telling where I got the bill; and for that reason I can't say a single word, even if I go to prison for it."

"But your son will be sent to prison, certainly, if you don't tell," said the lawyer.

"O, dear! What shall I do?"

She positively refused to tell even Squire Simonton, who explained that, as counsel, he could not be obliged to reveal the secrets of his clients. It was finally arranged that a postponement of the

examination should be obtained, if possible; and Mr. Walker and half a dozen others had promised to give bail for Bobtail.

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# CHAPTER XII.

## CAPTAIN CHINKS IS INDIFFERENT.

"I don't know that we can do any better under the circumstances," said Squire Simonton, after the arrangement of the legal business had been agreed upon. "But we are making a strange case of it."

The squire bestowed one of his pleasant smiles upon the case, for he was one of those sweet-tempered men who never frown, even when they are vexed. He was perplexed, and very properly claimed the right, as counsel, to know all the facts. But it was evident that Mrs. Taylor had, or supposed she had, a good reason for concealing the source from which came the five hundred dollar bill.

"Squire Gilfilian purposes to make Mrs. Taylor a party to the theft," said Mr. Brooks. "Probably he will get out a warrant for her arrest in the morning."

"I never thought it would come to this, that I should be taken up for stealing," added the poor woman, bursting into tears.

"You can hardly wonder at being arrested," suggested the squire. "The stolen property was in your

possession, and you refuse even to explain where you got it."

"I could tell a lie about it, but I won't do that," sobbed Mrs. Taylor. "If you can only get the case put off for a few days, or a week, I hope—I may be able —that is, I may be able to explain how I came by that bill."

"We must give some reason for desiring a postponement," replied the lawyer. "Can you really say, Mrs. Taylor, that you expect to obtain more testimony?"

"I hope to obtain it."

"Very well. Then I think we can have the case put off till, say, next Tuesday."

"I will try to have matters explained by that time; but I am to be taken up and sent to jail."

"O, no," laughed the squire. "You may be arrested; but that will amount to nothing. Your husband can give bail for you, for it appears that this house belongs to him now, since the mortgage is cancelled."

"I won't go bail for her," said Ezekiel, sourly; and this was the first time he appeared to be of the slightest consequence.

"Won't you?"

"No, I won't. She has kept money hid away from me."

"Never mind, mother. We shall get bail enough to keep a coaster afloat," interposed Bobtail. "If we can't do any better, I'll send for Colonel Montague. He told me, if I ever wanted a friend, to send for him."

"Certainly he will help you, after what you have done to-day," smiled the lawyer.

"But I don't want to have you to go away up to Belfast for him," said Mrs. Taylor, who appeared now to be more troubled than ever.

"I don't think we need to do so, mother. Mr. Walker and two or three other gentlemen said they would bail me out; and so I don't believe we shall sink," laughed Little Bobtail.

"Now, Mr. Brooks, I don't think you need take the boy away from his friends. I am sure he won't run away," added the squire.

"I am satisfied. Though this is the oddest case I have had anything to do with for a long time. I am inclined to think Bobtail will come out right, though for the life of me I can't see how," added the deputy sheriff.

"I'll trust Bobtail anywhere. He goes to our Sunday school, and I know he is an honest boy, however bad his case may look just now," continued Mr. Simonton.

Mr. Brooks was entirely willing to trust the lion of the day out of his custody; and he left the cottage with the lawyer.

"I s'pose I ain't o' no account here," said Ezekiel, as the door closed behind the departing gentlemen.

"What do you mean by that?" asked Mrs. Taylor.

"I wan't to know sunthin' about this business. I s'pose I ain't the head of this family."

"I don't think you are," replied the wife. "You haven't

done much for it the last seven years."

"You bring that boy of yourn up to steal. If he'll take my property, he'll take other folks' property."

"It's no use to talk any more about that matter," said Mrs. Taylor, impatiently.

"I believe the boy stole the letter and took the money out on't," muttered Ezekiel.

"A little while ago you believed I had money hid away, and took the five hundred dollars from that."

"It was one way or t'other, and one ain't no wus 'n t'other. I hain't been consulted in this business at all."

"You refused to be bail for me, and that's enough for one day," answered Mrs. Taylor.

"I ain't a goin' to resk my property for a woman that keeps money hid away from me, and won't tell no thin' about this business."

"Your property would have been all taken away from you long ago if I hadn't paid the interest, and paid the mortgage, too."

"But where did you get the money to pay the mortgage with?"

"That will all be explained in due time."

Ezekiel went over the same ground again and again. He was angry, and finally left the house. He felt that he was an abused man, because he was ignored. He objected to giving bail for his wife simply to increase his own importance, and a little importunity would have won his consent. He was vexed because he had not even been asked a second time to yield the point.

"Now, mother, we are alone," said Bobtail. "Can't you tell me where you got that bill?"

"I can't tell anybody, Robert," replied his mother. "I am sure that all will be explained in time."

"The case looks bad against me, mother."

"I know it does;" and the tears began to flow from her eyes again.

"I don't like to be accused of stealing, and have it proved, as it seems to be in this case. I don't blame anybody for thinking I'm guilty, when the very bill that was in the letter was handed to the squire by you, and you won't tell where you got it. I shall be sent to the state prison for two or three years."

"O, Robert, I shall be crazy! Do you think I stole the bill?"

"No, mother; nothing of that kind. I know you wouldn't steal. You know I didn't give you that bill, and you are the only one that does know it positively. I wonder that Squire Simonton don't give me the cold shoulder, though he is my Sunday school teacher. I can't see what difference it would make if you should tell where you got the bill."

"I can't say a word about it. I will try to have the whole matter explained before Tuesday," said the poor woman, troubled as she had never been troubled before.

"I think I shall call on Colonel Montague, if I get a chance. He told me I should hear from him again," said Bobtail, as he put on his cap, for he intended to sleep on board of the Skylark.

"I wouldn't bother him with the matter, Robert."

"Why not? He told me to send for him if I ever wanted a friend; and I want one now, if ever I did."

"It will look as though you wanted to make too much of what you did for him to-day."

"I don't think so, mother. He is a great man, and has influence. If I can get a chance to run up to Belfast in the Skylark, I will do so."

"Don't tell him that I sent you, Robert," said Mrs. Taylor, actually trembling with emotion.

"Of course I won't; but I don't see why you are so particular about not calling on him. I know he would be glad to help me."

Mrs. Taylor made no reply, and her son, bidding her good night, left the house. He went on board of the Skylark, and after he had told the Darwinian the whole story of his misfortune, he turned in. He did not sleep as well as usual. He could not help thinking half the night of his troubles. They worried him, and he wondered if people were ever really punished for crimes they did not commit.

Ezekiel Taylor left the cottage hardly less disturbed than his wife was. He had a strong suspicion that he was not the head of the family; that Mrs. Taylor had actually usurped his powers and prerogatives; that she dared to think and act for herself and her son without much, if any, regard to him. He felt belittled and degraded; not because he was a drunkard, and neglected to provide for his family, but because he was not in fact, as he was in name, the head of the house. He was thirsty and hankering for rum, and this condition made him ugly. He had not a cent in his pocket, and his credit at the saloon was not good

even for a single dram. But he went to the saloon, for it was possible that some one might treat him. The first person he saw when he entered was Captain Chinks.

Almost everybody seemed to be troubled that night, and Captain Chinks was among the number. Things did not work to suit him; and every time he viewed himself in the glass he saw that black eye which Bobtail had given him, and every time he touched that eye there was a soreness there to remind him of that affair in the cabin of the Skylark. He did not love Little Bobtail, and the event of the day that had set everybody to talking about and praising the boy made him feel ten times worse. It would be hard to convict him of stealing the letter while almost everybody was making a lion of him.

"Ah, Zeke!" exclaimed Captain Chinks, as the tippler entered the saloon.

"How d'y do, cap'n?" replied the nominal head of the family.

"I'm glad to see you, Zeke. I've been wanting to see you. Won't you take something?"

"Thank ye; I don't care if I do take a little o' sunthin'. I don't feel jest right to-night," answered Ezekiel, placing his hand upon his diaphragm, to intimate that this was the seat of his ailing.

"We will go into this little room, if you like," added Captain Chinks, as he led the way into a small apartment, where a party could dine or sup in privacy. "Give us a bottle of *that* brandy," he continued, addressing the keeper of the saloon.

Ezekiel smiled, for a private room indicated a free-

and-easy time. A bottle of brandy promised a succession of drams, enough to warm up that disagreeable coldness at the diaphragm, and to lift his brain up to the pitch of a tippler's highest enjoyment. Then "*that* brandy" suggested a liquor of choice quality, something which his companion had tested, and knew to be good. Ezekiel was happy, and for the moment he forgot that he was not the actual head of the family; that his wife had kept money "hid away from him;" and that her son had destroyed his property. But he wondered what Captain Chinks could want of him, for that worthy did not generally treat him with much consideration, whereas now he was polite, generous, and ready to invest to the extent of a whole bottle of *that* brandy, which must be very choice, and therefore expensive.

The bottle came, and the door of the little room was closed. Captain Chinks seated himself on one side of the table, on which the bottle and glasses were placed, and invited Ezekiel to occupy a chair on the other side. The captain pushed the brandy and a glass towards his guest, who needed no persuasion to induce him to partake of the choice liquor. He poured out about half a tumbler of the stuff, but he kept his hand over the glass,—he was a wily toper,—so that his host should not see how much he took. He added a very little water to the fiery fluid, and then held the glass in his trembling hand till the captain was ready to join him. The man with a doubtful reputation did not cover his glass with his hand; if he had thought it necessary, he would have done it in order to conceal how small, rather than how large, a dram he took. He only covered the bottom of the tumbler, and then deluged the liquor with water. Captain Chinks was a cunning man, and he knew that brandy unfits a man for business, impairs his

judgment, and blunts his perception. He took a small dram.

"Here's to you," said Ezekiel.

"Thank you; my respects," added Captain Chinks.

The toper drained his glass. The liquor was strong, and the tears drowned his eyes as he swallowed the fiery fluid.

"That's good brandy!" exclaimed he, as soon as he could speak.

"First chop," replied Captain Chinks. "You couldn't buy that brandy in Portland for three dollars a bottle. In my opinion that article never paid tribute to Uncle Sam."

"'Tain't no wus for that," said Ezekiel, with a cheerful grin.

"That's so."

"'Tain't right to charge no duties on liquors. That's the reason we git so much pizen stuff. You can hardly git a drop of good brandy for sickness now, without you pay four or five dollars a bottle for it; and I can't afford to pay no such prices," added Ezekiel, deeply moved at this terrible grievance.

"Well, I reckon there's more of it comes in from the provinces without paying any duties than most people think, though I don't *know* anything about it myself."

Even Ezekiel Taylor had his doubts on this point, though he was not disposed, under the present agreeable circumstances, to indulge in any controversy on the point.



"The more they bring in, the better," said he, encouragingly.

"By the way, Zeke, that boy of yours is in luck to-day," continued Captain Chinks, toying with his glass.

"He ain't no boy o' mine," said the toper, with no little indignation in his tones. "He's my wife's boy."

"Well, it's all the same. He's a smart boy."

"He's smart enough; but he ain't the right sort of a boy. He's rather too smart."

"That was a bad scrape he got into about that letter;

but I can't believe he opened it, and took the money out," added Captain Chinks, still toying with the glass, and apparently without the least interest in the conversation in which he was engaged.

"He ain't none too good to do sech a thing," muttered Ezekiel, as he recalled the wickedness of the boy in destroying "his property."

"I thought he was a nice boy, went to Sunday school, and belonged to the Band of Hope," continued the captain, who, however, judging from his manner, did not care whether the boy was a saint or a demon.

"I don't care what he b'longs to, nor how many Sunday schools he goes to: he stole sunthin' from me, and I cal'late he'd steal from other folks, if he would from me."

"That's good logic, Zeke; but you mustn't be hard on the boy."

"I ain't hard on him."

"I reckon that folks generally think more of him than you seem to. By the way, did he say anything to you about that boat he picked up over on the other shore?"

"No; he never said nothin' to me about it."

"Didn't he?"

"No; he never says nothin' to me about anything."

"That's a fine boat," added Captain Chinks, who had taken a lead pencil from his pocket, and was tapping the glass with it, as if to ascertain the quality of the material of which it was composed.

"So I've hearn tell; but I hain't seen her only from the shore."

"It's strange no one comes after her," suggested the captain. "Zeke, there's a mystery about that boat."

"Sho!"

"Of course I don't know anything about it; but I reckon the owner would have been after her, if there hadn't been some reason for keeping in the dark."

"You don't say so!"

"Well, you see I only guess at it. I don't know no more about it than you do; perhaps not so much."

"I don't know nothin' at all about it," protested Ezekiel.

Captain Chinks tapped the glass, and did not seem to care about anything in particular, least of all about that boat, which was the subject of the conversation.

"What do you mean by a mystery, cap'n? I hain't hearn nothin' of no mystery afore."

"I had some talk with your boy about the boat and her cargo."

"What cargo? I hain't hearn nothin' o' no cargo."

"Won't you take another nip of this brandy, Zeke?" added Captain Chinks, pushing the bottle towards him.

"Don't care if I do. That's good brandy."

"But it isn't any better than a lot which was aboard that boat when your boy picked her up."

"Sho! You don't say she had brandy in her?"

"No, I don't say so. I say again that I don't know anything at all about the matter. I only had my suspicions, you know."

"I understand," replied Ezekiel, as he drank off his dram.

"I don't know, but in my judgment that boat was loaded with brandy, or something that don't pay tribute to Uncle Sam."

"You don't say so!"

"No, I don't say so," replied Captain Chinks, sharply, for he was very particular not to be regarded as affirming what he only suspected. "I only guess so."

"Well, you don't say that you guess so! That's what I meant to say," explained the toper.

"The talk I had with your boy satisfied me I wasn't far from right. Now, the brandy's worth more than the boat. I'm always up to a trade, you know; and I didn't know but I might make something. I asked your boy if he would give up the cargo and keep the boat, in case I could find the owner."

"Sho! Did you know the owner, cap'n?"

"Of course I didn't. I haven't the least idea who he is. Your boy wouldn't give up the cargo and keep the boat."

"That boy's a fool, and allus was."

"I thought, if I could get hold of the cargo, I could make something out of it. Perhaps you and I can now;" and the captain looked sharply into the toper's

face.

"I'm ready," replied Ezekiel, who was now considerably "boozed."

"Bobtail must have landed that cargo somewhere, and concealed it; perhaps on some island; may be in your house. I say, Zeke, can you keep a quiet tongue in your head?"

"I cal'late I can."

Captain Chinks enlarged on this point, and the toper promised to be as silent as the grave.

"Now, I reckon you can find this brandy. I suppose it was brandy, but I don't know. If it was, it comes in cases."

"Yes, I know," added Ezekiel, eagerly; and he wished he might get hold of that brandy; if he did, Captain Chinks would not get the whole of it.

"If you keep an eye on the boy, you can easily find it. The boat was seen at anchor early in the morning after he picked her up, and I'm pretty sure he has hid the goods somewhere about your house. If you find them, just let me know, and I'll give you a case of the brandy, and a hundred dollars besides. Will you do it, Zeke?"

"If it don't b'long to you, I don't see why I should give it up to you."

This was a brilliant idea on the part of the toper, and Captain Chinks could not help acknowledging the force of it.

"You can't do anything with it. The government will take it away from you. You see, I mean to make a

trade with the owner of the goods. It is no more than fair that he should have his own property, if he will pay you and me for our trouble. Take something, Zeke."

The toper drank again, and then Captain Chinks made him a present of what was left in the bottle. Ezekiel agreed to do all that was required of him, and his companion cautioned him not to say a word to Bobtail about it, but only to watch him. They separated, and the inebriate staggered to his home.

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# CHAPTER XIII.

## THE EXAMINATION.

Mrs. Taylor did not sleep any better than her son. Her troubles kept her awake, and not her worthless husband, who was so tipsy when he returned from the saloon, that he dropped asleep as soon as he lay down. The poor woman had done nothing to improve the situation, for she could not leave the town until after the examination. At nine o'clock Mr. Brooks came to the cottage with a warrant for her arrest, but he considerately begged her not to disturb herself about the matter. All he required of her was to appear at the office of Squire Norwood at ten o'clock, and no one need ever know she was in custody before that hour.

Little Bobtail came on shore before the officer left the house, and reported himself ready, in his own

words, to "face the music." At the appointed hour there was a considerable collection of people in the office of Squire Norwood. Mr. Walker, who was quite a distinguished man, the mayor of Bangor, Judge Hamblin, and several other notable gentlemen of the state were present, all of them interested in the fate of the brave youth who had behaved so well off Blank Island. They were members of the Penobscot's party, and each of them was willing to do all that Colonel Montague would do if present.

Mrs. Taylor and her son appeared, and they were warmly greeted by the interested spectators. The business proceeded in due form, and Mr. Simonton astonished Squire Gilfilian by asking for a postponement until the next Tuesday. The reasons for this request were considered, and they were deemed sufficient; but Squire Gilfilian stoutly objected, because a certain witness would be obliged to remain in Camden three days. Judge Hamblin consulted with Squire Simonton, and it was agreed to proceed with the examination. Mrs. Taylor trembled and wept when this decision was reached, and a smile of triumph played upon the lips of Squire Gilfilian. Captain Chinks tried to be indifferent, but he was evidently pleased with the result. The case was commenced, and Squire Gilfilian, Captain Chinks, and the ill-visaged man gave their evidence as they had stated it in the office of the lawyer. It appeared that Robert Taylor had left the letter on the squire's desk. The five hundred dollar bill was produced and identified by Mr. Slipwing, and it was shown that this bill had been paid to the squire by Mrs. Taylor. No evidence was introduced to show that the boy had returned to the office after Captain Chinks left, but it seemed impossible to escape the conclusion that he had done so. Mrs. Taylor now

appeared as a defendant, and could not be compelled to testify. At this point in the proceedings, Squire Simonton renewed his request that the further examination of the defendants be postponed till the next Tuesday, when he hoped to bring forward an important witness in the case. Captain Chinks, in spite of his assumed indifference, was uneasy at this statement. The request was granted; Mr. Walker and the mayor of Bangor offered themselves as bail for the defendants, and they were released from custody.

The case certainly looked very black for Mrs. Taylor and her son. The kind friends who appeared to assist them were staggered at the evidence, and feared it would be impossible to save him from conviction. They could only hope for the best, and hope against what appeared to be an absolute certainty. Judge Hamblin was confounded, but he was so averse to believing the brave boy was guilty, that he suspected there was a conspiracy. After the postponement of the examination, he asked Squire Gilfilian to let him see the five hundred dollar bill.

"Mrs. Taylor, have you looked at this bill?" he asked, as he showed it to the troubled woman.

"No, sir; I have not," she replied.

"Won't you look at it? Do you remember the bill you paid Mr. Gilfilian?"

"I didn't look at it much."

"How long did you have the bill in your possession?"

"Not long, sir."

"Did you examine it?"

"Not much; I looked it over a little."

Mrs. Taylor turned over the note in her hands, and examined it very carefully.

"Does that one look like it?" asked the judge, anxiously.



"You don't suppose we have changed the bill—do you?" demanded Squire Gilfilian, rather indignantly.

"Certainly not, Mr. Gilfilian," replied the judge. "At least I don't suppose you have any knowledge of such a trick. But there may be some mistake. The witness who identifies this bill is taking charge of the defence of the Buckingham Bank robbers. Perhaps he is one of them himself, and it is even possible that he

sent you no money in the letter."

"I have no desire to convict the boy, if he is not guilty," added Mr. Gilfilian.

"Certainly not; I do not suppose the contrary, but I would like to hear what the boy's mother says about this bill. Now, Mrs. Taylor," continued the judge, turning to the troubled woman, "does that bill look like the one you paid Mr. Gilfilian?"

"Yes, sir; very much like it," answered she, sadly.

"Do you think it is the one?"

"I think it is, sir."

"Look at it very carefully, if you please."

"I have looked at it; and I'm sure this is the one," said Mrs. Taylor.

Squire Gilfilian looked triumphantly at the judge, who was more amazed than ever. He knew the workings of crime well enough to see the bearing of poor Mrs. Taylor's present conduct. If guilty she would not have acknowledged the identity of the bill. She would have encouraged the lawyers to save herself and her son, by following out the suggestion that the letter had contained no bill.

"Then where did you get this bill, Mrs. Taylor?" asked the judge.

"I can't tell at present, sir," replied the poor mother, as she glanced at her son.

Mr. Simonton explained that, for some reason inexplicable to him, the woman positively refused to explain where the bill came from. The judge was still

more confounded; though, after the straightforward and damaging answers she had given in regard to the identity of the bill, he could not believe she was guilty, even while it was impossible to see how she could be innocent. The parties left the office, and everybody talked about the examination for the rest of the day.

Ezekiel Taylor did not attend the examination, for he was engaged in an examination on his own account. He improved the opportunity while Bobtail and his mother were absent in searching for the contraband merchandise. He had already consumed the bottle of brandy given him by Captain Chinks, and was anxious to find the goods, in order to obtain another. He ransacked the house from cellar to garret, without finding anything which looked like a case of brandy. He was bitterly disappointed, but he continued his search in the vicinity of the house, and along the shore. He spent the whole day in this fruitless occupation.

Judge Hamblin walked to the Bay View House, after the close of the proceedings, and Little Bobtail went with him. The bewildered legal gentleman questioned the boy closely, but his replies were always square and prompt. He knew nothing whatever about the letter after he left it on the desk in the office.

"Are you going to see Colonel Montague?" whispered Mrs. Taylor, who had followed her son to the hotel.

"I should like to tell him about the case, but I don't see that he can do anything for us. These folks have done everything," replied Bobtail, gloomily.

"You said you were going, but I don't ask you to go."

"Two gentlemen here want the boat. They said they wished for a sail, and didn't care about fishing. If they had just as lief go to Belfast as anywhere else, I'll run up there. It's a tip-top breeze to go and come."

"Do as you think best, but don't tell him I sent you," added Mrs. Taylor, as she walked towards home.

Bobtail thought she was over sensitive about calling upon her old employer, but was willing to humor her, and promised to tell Colonel Montague, if he saw him, that his mother had not sent him.

"Now, where's Captain Bobtail?" shouted a gentleman, coming out of the hotel.

"Here I am, sir."

"You were to take us out to sail if you got out of that scrape, my boy."

"I'm not out of it, sir; but I can take you out to sail," replied the skipper of the Skylark.

"We are all ready, and Mr. Philbrook has put up a basket of stores for us; for we were going to take another boat if you couldn't go."

"The boat is all ready, sir. Where do you wish to go?"

"Don't care a fig where we go. All we want is a good sail."

"How long do you want to be out, sir?"

"O, till night."

"What do you say to a run up to Belfast?"

"Capital! But can you go as far as that in one day, or what is left of the day?"

"I can run up there with this wind, and the tide in our favor, in about three hours. It is blowing pretty fresh."

"I see it is."

"And the wind is west. The tide will turn about the time we get there, and the wind is fair both ways, or nearly all the way. If the wind holds, I can get you back before nine o'clock, and give you an hour or two in Belfast."

"All right, my lad. We don't care whether we get back by nine o'clock or not,—just as lief make a night of it as not," added the gentleman, who spoke for both.

"You can sleep tip-top in the cabin; but I will get you back by nine, if the wind don't die out. I can't warrant you against that."

"Belfast it is, my lad. Now, how much do you ask a day for your boat?"

"Seven dollars, sir, for the boat and crew; eight if we cook for you," replied Bobtail, who had decided to advance the price, as he stated, in order to pay for the few groceries and other stores.

"Cook?" queried the gentleman.

"If you take a fish dinner and supper on board, I charge a dollar more. I can give you tea and coffee, fried fish, and fried potatoes. If you want meats, I must charge for them, too."

"Good, Captain Bobtail. We will have fish for dinner and supper, and pay you eight dollars," laughed the gentleman, amused at the business-like talk of the boy.

"But can we stop to catch fish?" asked his companion.

"We have time enough," answered the skipper.

"Then catch the fish by all means, for they are twice as good just out of the water."

Little Bobtail procured a small can of milk, and a bucket of fresh clams for bait. The yacht was amply supplied with water and stores, and the party hastened to the steps at the Portland steamer wharf. A boy in a boat pulled them off to the Skylark.

"Loose the mainsail, Monkey," shouted Bobtail, as the boat approached the yacht.

"Ay, ay," replied the Darwinian, with enthusiasm; for he was glad to vary the monotony of his situation as boat-keeper.

"Your crew is well named, Captain Bobtail," laughed one of the gentlemen.

"Yes, sir. Monkey is a queer-looking fellow, but he is just as good as they make them," replied Bobtail, as he leaped upon the deck of the Skylark.

The gentlemen were delighted with the yacht, and explored her above and below, while the skipper and his crew were hoisting the mainsail and weighing the anchor. In a few moments Bobtail took his place at the helm; the fresh breeze struck the mainsail as the skipper hauled in the sheet, and the Skylark heeled over, gathered headway, and went off like an arrow shot from a bow.

"See here, Captain Bobtail; you won't upset us—will you?" said one of his passengers as the yacht heeled down, when she caught the breeze.

"O, no, sir. I mean to keep her right side up," replied the skipper.

"I have no doubt you mean to do so; but can you do it?"

"To be sure I can."

"She tipped pretty badly then."

"That was nothing. She will go over ever so much farther than that without putting her scuppers under. She had not got her bearings then. Now hoist the jib, Monkey," shouted Bobtail.

"Hold on, Captain Bobtail!" said one of the gentlemen. "Don't you think you have sail enough on? It blows fresher than I thought it did."

"It's just a whole sail breeze. She will carry her jib without winking, and go along as steady as a lady on the sidewalk," laughed Bobtail, who concluded that his passengers were not accustomed to boats, especially when the wind blew.

"We are going ten miles an hour now," suggested the second gentleman.

"Not seven, sir. We will try the jib; and if you don't like it, we can take it in again."

Monkey had hoisted the jib, and it was flapping and pounding furiously,—making a noise which was rather trying to the nerves of the gentlemen. The skipper seized the lee sheet, and luffing up the boat, flattened down the sail to its proper place, for he was obliged to run a short distance to the northward in order to clear some vessels at anchor. Having passed these, the sheets were started, and the Skylark went off before the wind. The sea was not heavy so far in

shore, but it was exciting sailing, and the passengers kept silence, watching the swift motion of the yacht. In a short time they were accustomed to the situation, and began to talk, though in rather subdued tones at first. They seemed to regard the skipper with a feeling of awe, and realized that their lives were in his keeping. They knew little or nothing about a boat, and did not feel quite at home with such lively sailing. The confident manner of the young skipper, his perfect command of the situation, his pleasant speech and laugh, reassured them. When the yacht had passed North-east Point the course was changed to the north-east, and the sheets hauled in, so that the Skylark had the wind a little abaft the beam. This was her best point in sailing, and she soon exhibited her best speed. She heeled over so that her scuppers often went under. Bobtail kept her just far enough from the land to get the full force of the wind, but not far enough to be shaken up by the waves, which beat heavily on La Salle Island, east of them.

"This is lively—isn't it, Howe?" said one of the gentlemen.

"It is the smartest sailing I ever saw," replied Mr. Howe. "You seem to know what you are about, Captain Bobtail."

"I think I do, sir," answered the skipper. "I have been in a boat ever since I was born, and I can't remember the time when I couldn't sail one."

"I would give a hundred dollar bill if I could sail a boat as well as you can," said Mr. Jones.

"So would I," added Mr. Howe.

"I will tell you all I know about it for nothing," laughed the skipper. "I don't pretend to know much, but somehow I always get along. Won't you take the helm, sir, and try your hand at it?"

"No, not now; I should rather begin when it is not quite so lively," replied Mr. Jones.

"It is easy enough. She will almost steer herself. All you have to do is to run for that point of land, about eight miles ahead."

"Eight miles—is it?" asked Mr. Howe, consulting his watch.

"About eight from here. It is just ten from the point astern of us."

"It is exactly twelve o'clock now. Let us see how long it takes us to go eight miles."

"I can tell you now, sir," laughed Bobtail. "It will take us just forty-eight minutes."

"Good, my lad! I will time you. If it takes forty-nine, you are no prophet."

"I don't expect to tell within a minute; but I guess I'll steer myself, if you are going to whittle me down as close as that."

Bobtail began to be very exact in his steering and sailing. He started the sheets a couple of inches, and watched the point ahead very closely. Ten miles an hour was fast sailing for a boat of the size of the Skylark; but he knew she would do it if she was well handled. The two gentlemen kept looking at their watches, and as the distance diminished they declared she would make the point in half an hour; but distances are very delusive on the water, and

when half an hour had elapsed, they thought that five minutes more would bring the boat up with the headland. Bobtail watched his sails, and "steered small." In forty minutes he found that he should make the point a little too soon, and he let out the jib-sheet a little, so that the sail did not draw full.

"Forty-five minutes!" exclaimed Mr. Jones, "and we are off the point."

"But we are not up with it, sir," replied Bobtail, hauling in the jib-sheet again.

"You are cutting it fine, Captain Bobtail," added Mr. Howe.

"Of course I meant abreast of the point, and when it lies just abeam, we shall be up with it. Here we are, sir!"

"Forty-eight minutes to a second!" ejaculated Mr. Jones, as he showed his watch to the skipper.

"Lower the jib, Monkey!" shouted Bobtail.

"I did not think you could hit it so closely as that," said Mr. Howe.

"Well, sir, I couldn't if you hadn't told me the time every few minutes," laughed Bobtail. "I bamboozled you."

"How?"

"I should have made the point in three quarters of an hour if I hadn't let out the jib-sheet. I lost the three minutes on purpose."

"But why do you lower the jib here?" asked Mr. Jones.

"We will try the fish here. Ready with the anchor, Monkey!"

"All ready," replied the Darwinian.

Bobtail threw the yacht up into the wind, and as soon as she had lost her headway, he gave the order to let go the anchor. Monkey had got out the fishing gear and opened the clams on the passage up, so that the passengers threw over their lines immediately. They did not have a bite for some time, and Monkey threw over a line. It had hardly run out before he had a fish, and pulled in a good-sized cod.

"How's that?" said Mr. Howe. "I haven't had a nibble yet."

"Perhaps you don't fish right, sir," suggested Monkey, with one of his apish grins, as he took the gentleman's line, and found that the sinker was not within twenty feet of the bottom. "That's what's the matter, sir. Drop the line down till the sinker touches bottom; then pull up about a fathom."

The two passengers, following these instructions, began to pull in cod and haddock very rapidly, and Monkey had all he could do to bait their hooks, and take off their fish.

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# CHAPTER XIV.

## THE DISCHARGE.

"Look here, Howe!" exclaimed Mr. Jones, tugging with all his might at his line; "I'm pulling up the bottom of Penobscot Bay, as true as you live!"

"Don't do that, sir," shouted Bobtail, merrily. "We shall get aground if you do."

"What is it?" asked Mr. Howe.

"I don't know," replied Mr. Jones, still hauling away at his line, to which some immense dead weight seemed to be attached. "It must be a whale."

"No, sir; pull away," said Monkey, laughing; "you have got hold of your grandmother."

"My grandmother!"

"Yes, sir; pull away, and you will see her in a minute."

After much tugging, for the fish was not at all "gamey," he hauled up the strangest looking fish he had ever seen, though Bobtail and Monkey were entirely familiar with the specimen. The hook, drawing upon his mouth, so distended it, that its appearance was not unlike the face of an old woman with a cap on. The fish was a large scate, not less than three feet across the back. The gentlemen had never seen one before, and he was hauled upon the deck to enable them to examine him.

Half an hour's fishing satisfied the passengers, as there was a tub full of cod and haddock to show for their success. After the gentlemen had fully satisfied their curiosity, the scate was thrown overboard. The anchor was weighed, the jib hoisted, and the Skylark continued on her voyage to Belfast. Monkey dressed a couple of the nicest cod, and then washed down

the deck. The Darwinian was then required to take the helm, and Bobtail, sacrificing his dignity as the skipper of the craft, went below and assumed the duties of cook and steward. He pared and sliced a large quantity of potatoes, for Mr. Jones had declared that he was already as hungry as a bear. These he fried, and put them in the oven to keep them hot. The fish was cooked, and coffee made. The table had been set at odd moments, and in less than an hour dinner was ready. Bobtail was invited to dine with the passengers, and he was warmly commended for his culinary skill.

"That's the best dinner I've eaten in the State of Maine," said Mr. Jones, with enthusiasm.

"We can get up a pretty good dinner on board of the Skylark," added the proud skipper. "The cook isn't much on puddings and pies, but on the heavy grub he can do as well as the next man."

"I've drank worse coffee than yours at a first-class hotel in New York," said Mr. Howe.

"I can give you a chowder for supper, if you like," added the cook.

"I like the fried fish best."

"Perhaps we can give you something different."

The skipper and the passengers went on deck. Bobtail relieved the crew at the helm, and sent him below to eat his dinner, and clear away the dishes. The gentlemen lighted their cigars, and declared that they felt perfectly happy. The Skylark was now going up Belfast Bay, close-hauled, but still laying her course.

"Now, how long have we been?" asked Mr. Jones, taking out his watch. "Just three hours."

"But we spent half an hour of it in fishing," suggested the skipper.

"Exactly so, and we have made the run in two hours and a half."

Monkey was called on deck, the jib taken in, and the Skylark ran alongside a wharf, where she was secured. It was agreed to sail for Camden on the return at six o'clock, and the passengers left the yacht to explore the town. The skipper washed and "slicked up" as well as he could. Putting on his bobtail coat, he went ashore, to call upon Colonel Montague. After some inquiry he found the house; and it was easily identified, for it was the finest one in the city. The visitor found the owner of the Penobscot smoking his cigar under the shade of a tree, where rustic chairs had been placed. He was alone, and gave the young skipper a hearty greeting.

"I'm glad to see you, Captain Bobtail," said he, warmly, shaking the hand of the boy. "I did not expect a visit from you quite so soon, but I'm none the less glad to see you."

"I brought a couple of gentlemen up in the Skylark, and thought I would call upon you while they were looking over the place."

"I'm glad you did. Grace and Mrs. Montague will be very glad to see you. I will call them."

"Not yet, if you please, sir. I want to tell you what a scrape I got into first; and then I don't know that you will want them to see me," replied Bobtail, blushing.

"A scrape?"

"Yes, sir."

"I hope you haven't been doing anything wrong."

"They say I have, but I have not. I am as innocent as you are, sir. I thought I would come up and tell you about it, as I was here. Mother did not send me."

"She did not?"

"No, sir; she was rather opposed to my saying anything to you about the scrape."

"Sit down, Captain Bobtail, and tell me all about it," said the colonel, in kindly tones, though there was an anxious expression on his face.

Little Bobtail told the whole story about the letter and the five hundred dollar bill.

"And your mother paid this same bill to Mr. Gilfilian?" asked Colonel Montague, very much troubled.

"Yes, sir. The squire wanted to know where she got the bill, and she won't tell," added Bobtail.

"She won't tell!" echoed the colonel; and there was an expression of relief in his face.

"She won't give even the slightest hint; and because she wouldn't explain it, Squire Gilfilian caused her to be arrested. They said that both of us will be sent to the state prison for stealing this money."

"That's bad."

"I know it is, sir; but I didn't take the letter; and I know mother came honestly by the money."

"I know she did, too," added the colonel. "When does this examination take place?"

"It was postponed till next Tuesday, at ten o'clock."

"Very well, Captain Bobtail. I know where your mother obtained the money."

"You, sir!" exclaimed Bobtail.

"I do; and I will be in Camden next Tuesday to tell all I know about it."

"Thank you, sir; you are very kind."

"Of course I shall not let your mother be convicted of stealing. I know nothing about the letter; and therefore I can do nothing for you, Captain Bobtail."

"If you clear my mother you will clear me. If we can only tell where the money came from, we shall be all right."

"Don't give yourself any uneasiness at all about it. I will certainly be present at the examination."

"But are you sure you know where my mother got the bill, sir?" asked Bobtail.

"Certainly, I do; and she came honestly by it. But as this is her affair, I don't feel at liberty to say anything about it yet."

Little Bobtail was confounded by this sudden solution of the mystery. If Colonel Montague knew where his mother had obtained the bill, it was plain enough to him that he had given it to her himself. He could not, for the life of him, see why this gentleman, wealthy and liberal though he was, should give her such an immense sum of money. It

was a very perplexing problem, and he could not solve it. His kind friend conducted him to the house. Grace was so glad to see him, that she actually kissed him this time; and Bobtail felt as though he had tumbled into a cream-pot. Mrs. Montague was very demonstrative, and the Hon. Mr. Montague was more dignified, but hardly less cordial.

"Now you must stay with us all night, and all to-morrow, and all next week," said Grace.

"I can't," laughed Bobtail. "I brought two gentlemen up in the Skylark, and I must sail them back to-night."

"Plague take the two gentlemen!" said Grace, pettishly. "Let them go back in the stage or the steamer."

"I promised to take them back to-night; and I must keep my promise, you know, if the sky falls," pleaded the young skipper.

"Of course he must, Grace," added her father. "But he will come up some other time, and stay a month."

Little Bobtail spent an hour in the elegant mansion, whose luxuriously furnished apartments filled him with wonder and astonishment, for he had never seen anything half so fine. He promised faithfully to come some other time, and stay longer. Grace walked with him down to the wharf. The Skylark's passengers were on board, and ready to start, and in a few moments the yacht was under way. Grace waved her handkerchief to the gallant skipper, as the Skylark pulled away.

"Who is that young lady?" asked Mr. Jones, as Bobtail returned the salute.

"That's the one that fell off the rocks at Blank Island," replied the skipper.

"And the one you saved! Why didn't you say so before, so that we could have a good look at her?"

"I didn't think of it."

"She is a rich man's daughter."

"Yes, sir; her father is as rich as mud."

"And one of these days, Captain Bobtail, you will marry her, just as it is laid down in the novels," laughed Mr. Howe.

"I guess not;" and Bobtail blushed at the presumptuous idea. "She will not marry any poor fellow like me, you'd better believe. She will fish for bigger game than I am."

"She seems to like you very well."

"O, well, that's nothing; she's only a girl, and I'm only a boy," added the skipper.

Much to his relief, the topic was changed. The return trip was quite as pleasant as the other had been, and at nine o'clock the Skylark landed her passengers at the steamboat wharf, in good order and condition, and very much delighted with the excursion. The skipper received the eight dollars for the trip, and paid off his crew. It was Saturday night, and Monkey wanted to buy some provisions and groceries for his mother with the money he had earned; but he proposed to return before ten, and sleep on board, as usual. Bobtail told him he had better spend Sunday at home, for he could not pay him when the yacht did not go out. The Darwinian was willing to sleep on board without pay.

"Did you see Colonel Montague, Robert?" asked Mrs. Taylor, as he went into the house.

"Yes, I saw him; and he promised to be at the examination next Tuesday."

"What did he say?"

"He said he knew where you got the money, and that it would be all right; but I told him you didn't send me to him."

"What else did he say?" inquired Mrs. Taylor, anxiously.

"That's about all. He took me into the house, and treated me like a lord. That's the handsomest house I ever went into;" and Bobtail described the glories and the beauties of the mansion.

"Of course, after what you have done, they feel very grateful to you."

"I suppose so; but, mother, I can't keep that confounded bill out of my head," continued Bobtail. "I conclude, if Colonel Montague knows where you got it, he gave it to you himself."

"He must explain that himself."

"Of course he gave it to you. You saw him on board of the Penobscot, the day before I was taken up."

"You had better not say anything more about it, Robert."

"But why should he give you such a pile of money?" persisted the boy.

"I didn't say he gave it to me."

"I know he did."

"Well, the less you say about it, the better."

"If that is the bill which that Slipwing sent in the letter, I should like to know where Colonel Montague got it."

"I don't know anything at all about that," replied Mrs. Taylor.

The conversation was interrupted by the entrance of Ezekiel. He was sober, because he could obtain no liquor. He had spent the day in searching for the contraband cargo. He had been upon Negro Island, and explored North-east Point, and all the surrounding country, but he could find no vestige of the cases. He wanted to talk with Bobtail, and he was very gentle and conciliating in his tones and manner. After beating about the bush for a long time, he so far disregarded the instructions of Captain Chinks, as to ask him what he had done with the cargo of the Skylark.

"I see you have been talking with Captain Chinks," said Bobtail. "When any one claims the boat, I am willing to talk with him, but I can't say a word before that time;" and the young skipper abruptly left the house, and went on board of the yacht.

He had scarcely seated himself in the standing-room before a gentleman from the hotel came alongside in a boat, and wanted to engage the yacht for the next day.

"To-morrow will be Sunday," replied the skipper.

"I know it; but I must leave on Monday," said the applicant.

"I don't engage her for Sundays, sir."

"It is the only time we have."

"I can't help it, sir."

"But we want to go down to Rockland to church."

"I can't let her go out on Sunday. I want to go to meeting myself, and to Sunday school."

The gentleman begged hard, but Bobtail was as resolute as the case required; he would as soon have thought of setting the Bay View House on fire, or robbing the bank, as of going out in a boat for pleasure on Sunday. The applicant offered him ten dollars, then twelve, and at last fifteen, if he would take the party out; but he refused to go for any sum that could be named, and the gentleman departed, with some hard words about fanatics, and declared that he would not hire the boat on a week day if he could not have her on Sunday.

At an early hour Bobtail turned in, with the feeling that he had done his duty, though fifteen dollars was a large sum to sacrifice. He might lose some of his engagements on other days by his observance of the Sabbath, but he would as soon have thought of robbing the bank, or setting the Bay View House on fire, for fifteen dollars, as of running the Skylark on Sunday for that sum. He was satisfied with himself, after he had faithfully considered the subject, and confident that there were good people enough to make the yacht pay without wounding his own conscience.

He went to church and to Sunday school the next day; and the services never seemed to do him so much good as after the sacrifice he had made.

A party was ready for him on Monday, and though the weather was rainy and foggy,—as it sometimes is at Camden,—he made his eight dollars, and his passengers were entirely satisfied. A party wanted the boat on Tuesday; but of course he could not go out until after the examination. At nine o'clock in the morning the Penobscot dropped her anchor in Camden harbor, and Colonel Montague immediately went on shore in the barge. An hour later the defendants and the witnesses had assembled at the office of Squire Norwood.

"We have our witness here," said Mr. Simonton, with one of his pleasantest and blandest smiles—"Colonel Montague."

The justice bowed to the distinguished witness, and requested Squire Gilfilian to produce the five hundred dollar bill, which was promptly done. Squire Norwood then rehearsed the evidence which had been given at the former hearing. The letter had been left on Mr. Gilfilian's desk; it had disappeared, and the bank bill it had contained was paid to Mr. Gilfilian by Mrs. Taylor, to cancel a mortgage on her husband's house. One of the defendants had denied all knowledge of the letter after he put it on the desk, and the other, refusing to explain where she had obtained the bill, had been arrested as a party to the crime, or as accessory to it.

"This is the bill," continued Squire Norwood, handing it to Colonel Montague, who examined it for a moment. "Have you any knowledge of that bill?"

"I have."

"Do you identify it?"

"Fully. I gave this bill to Mrs. Taylor last Thursday afternoon, about sunset, on board of my yacht."

This evidence produced a decided sensation among the spectators. Squire Gilfilian sprang to his feet, and Captain Chinks, who was toying with his pocket-knife, turned as red as a red cabbage.

"On what account did you pay Mrs. Taylor five hundred dollars, Colonel Montague?" demanded Mr. Gilfilian.

"She was in my employ many years ago. She came on board of my yacht last Thursday, and told me her husband would lose his house if a mortgage upon it of five hundred dollars was not paid; that the mortgage was already foreclosed, and the house was to be advertised for sale. Under these circumstances, I loaned her the money to save her from being turned out of house and home," replied Colonel Montague, deliberately, but with more agitation than the case seemed to warrant.

"You are confident that this is the same bill?" added Squire Norwood.

"Perfectly confident; I declare upon oath that it is the same bill."

"Now, Colonel Montague, where did you obtain this bill?"

"At Bar Harbor, Mount Desert."

"Of whom?"

"I have really forgotten the name of the gentleman, but he came to Mount Desert in a small yacht, and had a very rough passage. He was quite sick, and told me he was disgusted with yachting in a small

craft. He had just sold his boat for half her cost, and had received this five hundred dollar bill in payment for her, which he wished me to change for him, and I gave him smaller bills for it."

"Do you know the boat he sold?" asked Mr. Simonton.

"I never saw her, that I am aware of."

Squire Norwood ordered Mrs. Taylor to be discharged; Squire Gilfilian suggested that Bobtail was the purchaser of the yacht, but it was proved that he had not been absent from Camden even an hour before the time when Colonel Montague obtained the bill, and he was also discharged. When the examination was finished, Captain Chinks quietly stole out of the office, evidently dissatisfied with the result. Little Bobtail was warmly congratulated by all his friends, old and new, on the issue, and he was hastening away, in order to take out his party in the Skylark, when Mr. Hines stopped him.

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# CHAPTER XV.

## A TRIP TO BAR HARBOR.

"Are you engaged to-day, Bobtail?" asked Mr. Hines, who was accompanied by Mr. Brooks, the deputy sheriff.

"Not exactly, sir. Two gentlemen at the Bay View

wished me to take them out in the Skylark, but I told them I didn't think I could."

"If you are not engaged, I want you and your boat for two days," added the custom-house official.

"Another party wanted me to-morrow; but of course I couldn't say anything when I expected to be sent to the state prison by this time."

"I must have the boat for a couple of days, Bobtail. I won't say where we are bound, and you need not mention that I am going with you," continued Mr. Hines, as he discovered Squire Gilfilian and Captain Chinks talking together on the sidewalk. "You shall be paid for the use of the boat at your usual rate, and I shall be ready in about an hour. Mr. Brooks will go with us."

Little Bobtail wondered what was going to be done now, as Mr. Hines sheered off and hastened to the hotel; but he had no time to consider before Squire Gilfilian called him. He was not quite willing to believe that the distinguished lawyer wished to convict him of a crime, but he thought he was very zealous in his work.

"Bobtail, I am not quite satisfied about this business," said the squire.

"I am, sir," replied the young skipper.

"I suppose so," added the lawyer, with a smile. "You ought to be. There seems to be some connection between the boat you say you picked up and the bill which was stolen from my letter."

"I don't know anything about that," said Bobtail.

"Do you mean to say that you picked that boat up?"

asked Captain Chinks, sharply.

"I do mean to say so."

"I'll bet a hundred dollars she is the boat that was bought with that money."

"I think it's very likely; but I didn't buy her with it," replied Bobtail.

"But you got some man to do it for you. The boat didn't turn up in Camden harbor till a week after the money was lost."

"I don't know anything about that; but if you want to take me up again, I'm ready," answered Bobtail, smartly.

"We don't want to take you up. We only want to know who stole that letter. Your bringing that boat here, and no one claiming her, look a little suspicious —that's all," added Squire Gilfilian.

"But I never was in Bar Harbor, where the boat was bought, in my life," pleaded Bobtail.

"You might have got some man to buy her for you."

"I might, but I didn't."

"You seem to be using the boat just as if she were your own."

"I told Captain Chinks I was ready to give her up whenever the owner came for her; and she is advertised in the Camden Herald and the Rockland Gazette."

"That's a blind," said Captain Chinks. "But I'm going to look the thing up. I was in the squire's office when that letter came, and by and by somebody will say I

took it."

"Well, I don't know but you did," added Bobtail, though the suspicion had never before entered his mind.

"What!" exclaimed the man with a doubtful reputation, his face flushing.

"I don't say you did; and I don't know anything at all about it."

"Don't be saucy, Bobtail," interposed Squire Gilfilian.

"I have just as much right to say he took the letter, as he has to say I took it. He had just as much to do with it as I had; and he was in the office when I left it."

"But you went back again, you rascal!" said Captain Chinks, angrily.

"No, I didn't go back again."

"You left the office before I did, but you overtook me on the road to the Portland steamer wharf. You went back again; I know you did!" stormed the captain.

"I didn't go back."

"Well, where were you all that time?"

"I went into a shop and bought some gingerbread and cheese, and I can prove it, too."

"Didn't you hear me tell the post-master that I expected a letter with some money in it, the day that letter came?" asked the squire.

"No, sir; I did not."

"I told the post-master what I expected when I asked him to send me the letter. You were in the office then, Bobtail."

"No, sir; I didn't see you at all that day. I wasn't in the post-office half a minute before the letter was given to me," answered Bobtail, decidedly.

Squire Gilfilian wished to make it out that the boy knew there was money in the letter, to account for his stealing it; but he made no progress in his effort.

"I'm going to look this business up, anyhow," said Captain Chinks, savagely. "I want your boat for two days, Bobtail."

"You can't have her," replied the young skipper, decidedly.

"I suppose not," sneered the captain. "You don't want this business looked up."

"Whether I do or not, you can't have the boat."

"What's the reason I can't?"

"She is engaged; but if she was not engaged, I wouldn't let you have her."

"Steady, Bobtail," interposed the squire. "You are a little too crank for a boy."

"I can't help it. The last time Captain Chinks was in the boat, he pitched into me; and that's where he got that black eye. I don't want anything more to do with him."

"I'll pay for the boat," said the captain, who seemed desirous at this point to change the subject of the conversation.

"You can't have her. She is engaged."

"Who is to have her?"

"Two or three parties want her. I'm going off for two days."

"Where are you going?"

"I don't know. The folks didn't tell me where."

"Who are the folks?" demanded Captain Chinks.

"It don't make any difference who they are. But I haven't time to stand here talking all day. If you want anything of me, I'm ready to face the music."

"Captain Chinks wants your boat to investigate the matter of the letter," said Squire Gilfilian. "He is going to Bar Harbor, and wants the boat so as to find the person who bought her, for of course she will be known there. You had better let him have her."

"I can't let him have her. She is engaged."

"But this is a case that will warrant you in breaking your engagement."

"I don't think so."

"Your character is involved in this matter; and it is for your interest to have the case cleared up."

"I don't believe Captain Chinks will clear it up. I know more about him than some other fellows do, and I don't want him to whitewash my character. I can't stop any longer, sir," said Bobtail, as he saw Mr. Hines and the deputy-sheriff watching his movements.

Captain Chinks was very angry at the boy's last

remarks, and began to storm at him. Squire Gilfilian tried to calm him, and Bobtail walked off while he was doing so.

"What's the matter, Bobtail?" asked Mr. Hines, when the boy joined him in the office of the hotel.

"They are trying to make it out now that I bought the Skylark with the money taken from the letter," answered the skipper, as he proceeded to give the substance of the conversation with the squire and Captain Chinks.

"Then the captain is going to Bar Harbor—is he?" laughed Mr. Hines. "I hope he will go. I may want to use him there."

"Are you going to Bar Harbor, sir?" asked Bobtail.

"That's where we are bound."

"But I am not a pilot beyond Sedgwick. I have been there, but never to Mount Desert," said the skipper.

"No matter, my lad; I'm a pilot to Bar Harbor, and it's quite time you learned the way there," replied Mr. Hines. "Now get ready as fast as you can, Bobtail, and don't say where you are going or who is going with you; for I don't believe Captain Chinks would go to Bar Harbor if he expected to meet me there."

The skipper purchased some provisions and stores for the yacht, which Monkey had sailed up to the wharf at the head of the harbor, as he had been instructed to do. Bobtail sent word to his mother that he should be gone two or three days, and went on board. But his passengers did not appear, and he waited impatiently for them. Captain Chinks was loafing about the wharf, and Bobtail concluded that this was

the reason they did not come. The captain was evidently curious to know who were to go in the Skylark. After waiting half an hour, a boy brought a note to the skipper. It was from Mr. Hines, desiring him to sail at once, and to stand up towards North-East Point. He obeyed his written order, and beyond the point, a boat with his passengers came off from the shore. Mr. Hines and the deputy sheriff went below, so as not to be recognized by any persons in the boats which were sailing about in the vicinity. The skipper laid his course for the northern point of Deer Island, and the Skylark went off flying on her cruise.

"I began to think you were not coming," said Bobtail to Mr. Hines, who sat near the cabin door.

"We couldn't get on board at that wharf without being seen by everybody; and Captain Chinks was watching us," replied the custom-house official. "Mr. Philbrook drove us round to the point, where we got a boy to bring us off. Are there any boats near you, Bobtail?"

"Not a single one, sir. There is a lot of mackerel catchers half a mile to the southward of us, and the Portland steamer is coming round the point."

"All right," said Mr. Hines, taking a seat in the standing-room opposite the skipper. "Has Captain Chinks any boat fit to go to Mount Desert in?"

"He had one a while ago, but I haven't seen her lately. I don't know where she is now."

"Do you know the boat?"

"Yes; I should know her a mile off."

"I think we shall find her at Bar Harbor," laughed Mr. Hines.

"I shouldn't be surprised, for I begin to see the daylight sinning through this business," added Bobtail, his eyes flashing.

"What do you see?"

"I think I know who stole that letter, and how the five hundred dollar bill happened to go down to Bar Harbor."

"We shall know before we get back."

"What do you suppose Captain Chinks wanted to go to Bar Harbor in the Skylark for?" asked Bobtail.

"I don't know, but I am afraid if you had gone with him you would never have come back again; for you have spoiled all his plans. He will take the steamer to-morrow morning at Rockland for Bar Harbor. But we shall have time to look the matter up before he arrives, if the breeze holds."

Fortunately the wind did hold, and at eight o'clock in the evening the Skylark reached her destination. The breeze was steady, but light, and the passage was a delightful one through the narrow channels among the islands. The skipper got up a nice dinner of beefsteak, green corn, and tomatoes, which Mr. Hines declared was equal to the table at the Bay View; and this was no equivocal compliment.

"That is Captain Chinks's boat," said Bobtail, as he pointed to a craft at anchor near the steamboat wharf.

"I thought we should find her here," replied Mr. Hines. "He doesn't sail that boat alone—does he?"

"No, sir; he has a nephew that lives with him; but he has gone to Boston."

"Are you sure of that?"

"Captain Chinks says he has; that's all I know about it."

"How old is the nephew?"

"Almost twenty-one."

"In my opinion that nephew is here," added the custom-house official.

"That's so!" exclaimed Bobtail, as the Skylark passed the captain's boat. "There he is now.—Hallo, Ben!"

"Is that you, Bobtail? Where did you pick up that boat?"

"Don't let on," interposed Mr. Hines; and the skipper did not answer the question.

"Say! Where d'ye get her?" shouted Ben.

"She isn't mine."

"He knows all about her. Keep out of sight, Mr. Brooks. He knows you, but not me," continued Mr. Hines.

The Skylark passed out of hearing of Ben's voice, but he immediately jumped into his dory and pulled for the wharf. Bobtail ran the yacht up to the landing-steps, and Mr. Brooks hastened on shore, so that Ben Chinks should not recognize him.

"Say, Bob, where'd ye get this boat?" asked Ben, stepping upon the deck of the Skylark.

"She don't belong to me," replied Bobtail.

"Don't you know the boat?" inquired Mr. Hines.

"Don't I know her?" repeated Ben.

"That's the question I asked."

"I cal'late I've seen her before; because she came into Bar Harbor about ten days ago," replied Ben, cautiously.

"Exactly so," added the custom-house detective; "she was sold, and your uncle or father bought her."

"Who told you all that?" asked Ben; and he did not seem to know whether or not to admit the truth of the statement.

The detective whistled and looked about him as though he did not care whether Captain Chinks bought her or not.

"Your uncle bought her dog cheap, too. I think Captain Chinks is a smart man," added Mr. Hines.

"He's some," grinned Ben.

"But you and he drank a little too much of that liquor."



"What liquor? I don't drink liquor."

"You might as well own up. Captain Chinks and you were a little boozy that day."

"What day?"

"Why, that day you sailed this boat up the bay."

"I didn't drink a drop," protested Ben, warmly.

"Then your uncle drank enough for both of you."

"No, he didn't, nuther. I didn't see him drink anything."

"Ah, it's no use to deny it," laughed Mr. Hines, as though he was only indulging in a pleasantry.

"I wouldn't deny it if it was true; but it ain't."

"How did the boat get adrift, then?" queried Mr. Hines. "Both of you must have been a little set up."

"Not a bit."

"The boat wouldn't have got adrift if you had either of you been all right."

"Both of us were as straight as a gun."

"How did it happen, then?"

"It was blowing like Sam Hill, that day, you see—didn't Captain Chinks tell you about it?"

"He didn't say you were both sober."

"Well, I was; and if he drank anything that day, I didn't see him do it,' persisted Ben.

"But what in the world did you want to land your stuff in that place for?"

"What place? What stuff?" demanded Ben.

"Those cases of brandy, of course. It's all right, my man. Captain Chinks will be down here to-morrow. Little Bobtail here picked up the yacht, and took her into Camden. The stuff was all landed in the night, so that only two or three persons know anything about it—Little Bobtail, myself, and a friend of mine."

"Who is he?"

"He's a friend of mine. We were on the lookout for this lot of brandy, and we took it off Captain Chinks's

hands, so that he won't have any trouble in getting rid of it."

"Is that so? Who's the other man?"

"We don't call names in this business, you know," answered the detective, mysteriously. "But I can't see what you wanted to land the stuff in that place for. You would have been trapped if you had; for there is a sharp detective over at Camden, looking out for cases of this sort."

"Sho! Who is he?"

"His name's Hines."

"Hines? I never heard on him before."

"He's sharp."

Bobtail had to look overboard to keep from laughing.

"Ketch a weasel asleep!" grinned Ben. "Me'n my uncle's sharp enough to whittle skewers with him. When he ketches Cap'n Chinks, he'll ketch a weasel asleep, you bet! It was the cap'n's notion to land the stuff on that island, and take it over, a little at a time, when we went out fishing. We run the boat aground on a beach. You see, I found a hole in the rocks—a kind of cave—that would hold the hull lot on't. We could kiver up the mouth of the hole with rocks, so't no one'd ever think anything was in it. The boat was on so hard we couldn't stir her, and we went up to take a look at the hole. While we were gone, the tide riz, and the wind blowed the boat off. The cap'n did some tall swearin' about that time, you'd better believe; but it didn't do no good. The boat was gone, and we couldn't git her. It was just dark, and I cal'lated the wind would drive her on the

rocks, and smash her all to pieces. It was lucky Bob picked her up, for she might 'a been found by some feller who'd made mischief out of that stuff in the cabin."

Bobtail had to tell the story of the picking up of the Skylark.

"She must have drifted up the bay, and then down, for the tide turned not long after we lost her," said Ben. "We walked up to Islesboro', but we didn't dare to say a word. The cap'n went over to Camden in the packet, and I came down here. I took our boat here, and with a man to help me, cruised all round Deer Island and Vinal Haven, to see if I could find the Skylark; but I couldn't hear nothin' on her."

"What did the captain give for this boat?" asked Mr. Hines.

"Five hundred dollars."

"Didn't pay for her—did he?"

"Yes, he did; cash down. The man he bought her of 's up at one of the hotels now."

"Is he?"

"Yes, he is;" and Ben described the house.

"If he has any more such boats to sell, I should like to buy one like this at the same price. But when are you going out again?"

"Out where?"

"O, I understand all about this business; you needn't roll your eyes at me," laughed the detective. "I know all about it; and when Captain Chinks runs in

another lot of brandy, I intend to take it off his hands, if he isn't too sharp; and I want to know when to be on the lookout for it."

"O, you do?" grinned Ben.

"When do you go?"

"I donno; you must ask the cap'n. When he gets a letter he will be off."

The conversation was continued till it was quite dark, and then Ben went back to his boat. Little Bobtail laughed till his sides ached at the tactics of Mr. Hines, as they walked up to the hotel, or boarding-house, where the late owner of the Skylark lodged.

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# CHAPTER XVI.

## THE CHASE.

Mr. Hines and Little Bobtail walked up to the hotel. The former had possessed himself of sufficient evidence to convict Captain Chinks of smuggling, and also of intense stupidity in employing a simpleton like Ben Chinks in such a dangerous business, though rogues and villains almost always leave a screw loose somewhere.

"We shall make a good case of it, Bobtail," said Mr. Hines.

"I could hardly keep from laughing while you were pumping Ben Chinks," replied the skipper. "The idea of your taking the stuff off Captain Chinks's hands!"

"I did take it off his hands, and he will have no trouble now in getting rid of it."

"I wouldn't have said anything if I had been Ben."

"Very likely you would, Bobtail; for with all the information I have obtained from you, and from other sources, I spoke by the book, and he had every reason to suppose I was in the captain's confidence."

"But do you really think Captain Chinks will come down here?" asked Bobtail.

"I am almost sure of it."

"I should stay away, if I were him."

"He must come to unsnarl the tangle he has made here," replied the detective. "He must have been more astonished and disconcerted when Squire Gilfilian showed him the bill he had paid for the boat, than any one else was. Very likely he will have another explanation to make to show how he came by it, and he may trace it back to you in some way. But we will keep an eye on him."

At the hotel they met Mr. Brooks, but the gentleman who had sold the Skylark, being in feeble health, had retired early. Nothing could be done, and Bobtail returned to the yacht, while his passengers took rooms at the hotel, and slept like a rock till morning, for he had worked hard all day. At sunrise the next morning he was on his feet again. The Darwinian had more talent for sleeping than the skipper of the Skylark, and did not turn out till half an hour later.

Bobtail had scarcely shown himself on deck before Ben Chinks pulled to the yacht.

"Say, Bob, who is that man with you?" asked he.

"You must ask him who he is?"

"Don't you know?"

"I never saw him till a few days ago. In his kind of business, he don't always tell who he is. No doubt he will tell you before night who he is. What have you been doing down here so long?" asked the skipper, wishing to divert the conversation into some other channel.

"I have made a pile of money taking out parties to sail, while I'm waiting."

"What are you waiting for?"

"Waiting for the old man. Didn't he tell you?"

"No; he didn't say much to me."

"What did he give you for picking up the boat?"

"He hasn't given me anything yet," replied Bobtail. "How much do you charge a day for your boat and two hands?"

"Five dollars."

"I've taken some parties out in the boat, and I have been charging seven and eight dollars a day."

"That's a better boat than the Eagle. If I had her I should charge eight dollars a day. But how did you get that stuff out of the Skylark?"

"I ran over in the night, and landed it between one

and two o'clock in the morning, when no one was stirring in our part of the town. I hid it away in the attic, and this man took it away in the night," replied Bobtail, confining himself strictly to the facts, though of course he was no less guilty of deception than if he had told a number of square lies, except that the deception was in the interest of justice.

"It was lucky for the old man that you picked that boat up; but he's mean if he don't give you something handsome," added Ben.

"I have had the use of the boat ever since I picked her up."

"Well, that's somethin'. There comes Monkey. Does he know anything about this business?" whispered Ben.

"Not a thing."

This was a sufficient reason for saying nothing more about it, and Ben soon returned to the Eagle. After breakfast, Bobtail went up to the hotel, where his passengers lodged. In the course of the forenoon, the deputy sheriff "interviewed" Mr. Gordon, the gentleman who had sold the Skylark. He was sure he could identify the man who had paid him the five hundred dollar bill. When the steamer from Portland, which touches at Rockland, arrived, almost everybody went down to the wharf, Mr. Gordon among the number.

"If you see the man who paid you the bill, point him out, if you please, but don't say anything about it," said Mr. Brooks, as the gang plank of the steamer was run out.

"There he is!" exclaimed Mr. Gordon, as Captain

Chinks walked from the boat to the wharf.

The deputy sheriff and Mr. Hines kept out of sight. Bobtail had been sent away in the Skylark, that she might not attract the attention of the smuggler, and was standing off and on a mile or more from the shore.

As soon as Captain Chinks landed, he was greeted by Ben, his nephew, who was doubtless glad to see him.

"I s'pose you are tired of waiting—ain't you, Ben?" asked the captain, who wore a troubled expression.

"Not a bit on't. I've been makin' five dollars a day, right along, takin' parties out to sail," replied Ben, with a cheerful grin; "but I had to pay a boy half a dollar a day to help me."

"That's pretty well."

"Why didn't you come down afore?"

"Because I didn't hear anything from St. John; and things are a little mixed up to Camden."

"Mixed! Why, I thought everything had come out fust rate. You got the Skylark and the stuff back as slick as a whistle."

"Who told you so?" demanded the captain, with a startled look.

"Why, Little Bobtail. He's here in the Skylark, and said you sent him."

Bobtail certainly had not said any such thing. Ben had inferred it from what Mr. Hines had stated. It was not prudent to talk of these matters in the midst of so many people, and the captain and his nephew

hastened on board of the Eagle.

"I didn't send him," said Captain Chinks, very much perplexed.

"You didn't?"

"No; the young villain picked up the boat, but I couldn't do anything with him."

"Sho!" exclaimed Ben, who began to be worried himself. "Bobtail's here, and that other man with him."

"What other man!" demanded the captain, savagely.

"That man that took the stuff off your hands."

"What stuff!"

"Why, the liquor that was in the Skylark."

"What do you mean, Ben?"

"Didn't Bob pick up the Skylark and land the stuff in the night; and didn't you sell it to that other man? and didn't he move it out of Bob's house in the night?"

"No!" roared Captain Chinks.

"That's what they said, anyhow," added Ben, stoutly.

"Who said so?"

"Why, the man that took the stuff off your hands."

"Who is he?"

"Well, don't you know?"

"No, I don't," gasped Captain Chinks.

"I'm sure I don't, then. He wouldn't tell me his name. He came down in the Skylark with Bobtail yesterday."

The gentleman with a doubtful reputation uttered an exceedingly hard and naughty expletive, and he did so with much emphasis. His face was very red, and his lips quivered with wrath.

"Have you been talking with any one about this business, Ben Chinks?" demanded the smuggler, shaking his clinched fist in the face of his nephew.

"I didn't tell him nothin'; he told me, and he said he took that stuff off your hands, and was goin' to have the next lot; he said you oughtn't to land the stuff on that island, and wanted to know how we happened to let the boat go adrift."

"And you told him?" gasped the captain.

"What was the use of my tellin' on him, when he knowed all about it? O, he said you and I had both been takin' too much. He was kind o' jokin', but I stuck to it that we was as sober as he was. I did tell him how the boat got adrift; but he told me all the rest."

"Ben, you are a fool!"

"I tell you he knowed all about it," whined the nephew.

"You've made a pretty mess of it."

"I didn't do it. He knowed all about it afore, and I s'posed you told him."

"I told him nothing. I never said a word to him. Don't you know the man's name?"

"No, I don't. He wouldn't tell me, nor Bob nuther."

"Well, I know who he is," groaned Captain Chinks, pounding the trunk of the cabin with his fist, and grating his teeth with rage.

"Who is he?"

"He's a custom-house officer."

"Sho! you don't say so!" cried Ben, with horror, for he regarded a custom-house officer in about the same light that he did a hangman.

"You've told him all about it," added the Captain.

"I didn't tell him nothin'; he knowed it all before.'

"All we can do now is to get out of the way. Where is this man?"

"I don'no; I hain't seen him to-day. There's the Skylark," replied Ben, pointing to the yacht.

"Is he on board of her?"

"No."

"Are you sure of it?"

"Sartain, I am. I see Bobtail start off in her alone."

"We must get out of the way, but I don't know where to go to," groaned the captain. "I cal'late you've ruined me, Ben."

"I didn't do it," protested the nephew. "I keep a tellin' on you, he knowed all about it in the fust on't."

"Get up your fore'n mainsail. We must get out of this as quick as we can."

"You can't kerry the foresail. It blows like Sam Hill, and squally, too."

"Hist the mainsail then."

This sail was set, but the moment they began to hoist it, Mr. Hines made the signal agreed upon, by waving his handkerchief on the wharf, for the return of the Skylark. The steamer had gone, and most of the people had left the wharf by this time. Bobtail, who was on the lookout for the signal, saw it immediately, and headed the yacht for the pier. As Ben Chinks had remarked, it blew hard, and the wind came in heavy flaws. The Skylark had a single reef in her mainsail, and the jib was furled, but even with this short canvas she flew like a bird.

"There goes the Eagle," shouted Monkey from the forecastle.

"Who's on board of her?" asked Bobtail.

"I reckon it's Captain Chinks; it looks like him."

The skipper looked at the boat through the spy-glass, and identified the captain.

"He's trying to get away," said he.

"What for?" asked Monkey, who was in blissful ignorance of the smuggling operation of the captain.

"You will soon know," replied Bobtail.

The Eagle, under jib and mainsail, was standing out of the harbor, and the Skylark had to pass her on her way to the wharf. Captain Chinks was at the helm himself, and at that moment, as he gazed at Little Bobtail, he was the maddest man on the waters of Maine. Both boats were going free, and when they

were nearly abreast of each other, and not a hundred feet apart, the captain suddenly put up his helm, and the Eagle darted towards the Skylark, as if she shared the spite of her skipper, and as an eagle would pounce upon a skylark.

"Down with your helm!" shouted Bobtail, full of excitement, for the danger of a collision was imminent.

If the Skylark had held on her course, she would have been struck amidships by the bow of the Eagle; but Bobtail jammed his helm hard down, the result of which was to throw the yacht up into the wind, and bring her alongside the other craft. As it was, the Eagle's bow grated along the quarter of the Skylark. Bobtail supposed that Captain Chinks intended to board the yacht, and he instantly seized the spare tiller, which he always carried in the standing-room when it blew hard, and stood ready to "repel boarders." But the captain did not intend to capture the Skylark. Probably he intended to sink her; but his purposes were only known to himself. The sails of the Eagle were still full, and she continued on her course.

"Keep out of the way next time!" shouted Captain Chinks.

Bobtail made no reply, but filled away again, and in a few minutes was at the wharf. Mr. Hines and Mr. Brooks leaped on board.

"After him, Bobtail," cried the detective, earnestly, as he shoved off the bow of the boat.

"He has heard all about it from Ben, and is going to run away. Hurry up."

The Skylark was clear of the wharf, and coming about, was headed towards the Eagle.

"Is Captain Chinks's boat fast?" asked Mr. Hines.

"Yes, sir; but it blows too hard for her to-day. She don't carry sail worth a cent," replied Bobtail.

"How is it with the Skylark?"

"She is the ablest boat I know."

"Good! Then we have the advantage."

"Hoist the jib, Monkey," shouted the skipper.

"Are you sure she will carry it? It blows heavy outside, and the wind comes in flaws," added Mr. Hines.

"I know her like a book. She will carry her jib and mainsail to-day, but we have one reef in. The Eagle has two miles or more the start of us; but we will give her a sweat," said Bobtail.

"She is hoisting her foresail now."

"She will have to take it in again when she gets clear of the land."



With her jib set, the Skylark occasionally put her scuppers under, but she was as stiff as Mount Desert itself, and only heeled over just so far, under any flaw that came.

"I didn't think the captain would run for it so soon," said Mr. Hines. "He didn't even go to the hotel, where a letter is waiting for him. It has the St. John postmark upon it, and I know what that means without opening it."

"He tried to run me down," added Bobtail.

"I saw him do it. His game is nearly up. I intended to arrest him when he came down from the hotel, but

he took the alarm from what Ben told him."

As the Eagle ran out from the land, it was evident that she could not long carry her foresail. It was taken in very soon, but she sailed faster without it than with it. The Skylark gained rapidly upon her. The water—Frenchman's Bay—was studded with islands, but Mr. Hines, who had taken the helm, was perfectly familiar with the navigation. As the race began to be a desperate one for Captain Chinks, he dodged in among the islands, tempting his pursuer to make short cuts over sunken ledges; but in all these expedients he failed. The Eagle was a keel boat, and drew more water than the Skylark, so that wherever the former went the latter need not fear to follow. At last Captain Chinks appeared to have given up the race, and Mr. Hines surmised that he was running for a landing-place on one of the islands. But the Skylark was still gaining, and was now almost abreast of the Eagle.

"All ready, Mr. Brooks," said the detective, as the bowsprit of the sloop came up with the quarter of the schooner.

"I'm ready," replied the deputy sheriff, as he went forward to the bow of the yacht.

"Stand by the sheets, Bobtail, for I don't know what he will do next."

"Ay, ay, sir!" responded the skipper. "Have a fender ready, Monkey."

"All right."

In a moment more, the forecastle of the Skylark was abreast, on the weather side, of the Eagle, taking the wind out of her mainsail in part.

"Hard down," shouted Mr. Brooks, as he saw Captain Clunks jam down the helm of the schooner.

Both boats came up into the wind alongside each other, and Monkey was busy with his fender. The deputy sheriff leaped upon the deck of the Eagle, and Mr. Hines, giving the helm to Bobtail, followed him. The skipper permitted the yacht to come about, and she went clear of the other boat.

"You are my prisoner, Captain Chinks," said Mr. Brooks.

"What for?" gasped the captain.

"For stealing that letter."

"I didn't steal it."

"That remains to be proved."

"We ain't in Knox County now."

"Never mind; I will take you for violating the revenue laws," added Mr. Hines, as he took the helm of the schooner.

"I hain't done nothing," protested Captain Chinks.

"We will go over to Camden, and settle that point some other time."

The captain was obliged to give it up, and he groaned in bitterness of spirit. To be charged with stealing the letter, and with violating the revenue laws at the same time, was more than he had anticipated. On the first, if convicted, he would be sentenced to imprisonment, and on the other, to pay a heavy fine. His crimes brought loss of liberty and loss of property.

Bobtail eased off his mainsheet, and waited for the Eagle to come up. Mr. Hines had already decided to return to Camden in Captain Chinks's boat, and when he had announced his purpose, the Skylark filled away again. It was now about noon, and as the wind was contrary for at least half the way back to Camden, the skipper hardly expected to reach his destination that night. The yacht very soon ran away from the schooner, and at six o'clock had made half the distance. She had come up with the point which forms the south-eastern point of the town of Brooklyn, where she started her sheets, and ran through the channel between Deer Island and Sedgwick.

The wind was still unsteady, coming in heavy flaws; but now it was beginning to haul more to the southward. This change was favorable, for it enabled the Skylark to lay her course for Camden. But an awful sea was rolling in from the ocean, and the yacht jumped like a galloping horse. The wind freshened into a gale with the change, and the gusts were more fitful and violent. The jib was taken in, and Monkey was thoroughly ducked in the operation, for the Skylark occasionally slapped the waves with her bowsprit. Great black clouds were rolling up off to seaward, but Bobtail was confident that the yacht was equal to anything. Under the lee of an island, the mainsail was close-reefed; but she flew over the waves, and the skipper hoped to reach his destination by nine in the evening. At eight o'clock, while it was still light, he discovered a schooner working down the bay under jib and reefed mainsail which he recognized as the Penobscot.

# CHAPTER XVII.

## THE WRECK OF THE PENOBSCOT.

"That's the Penobscot!" exclaimed Bobtail, as soon as he identified her.

"She is taking a nasty night to go to sea," added Monkey.

"She will put into Rockland or Camden. I suppose the colonel is in a hurry to get to Newport for some race. He told me yesterday he should sail to-day."

"She ain't going into Camden. If she was, she wouldn't be out there. She's right off the ledges, and if she don't tack soon, she'll be on 'em," said the Darwinian.

"I think she's going into Rockland. She can make it in one more stretch."

"She can get in behind Owl's Head, and lay as easy as if she was in a mill pond."

"That's an awful sea out there, Monkey," said Bobtail. "See the breakers on that lower ledge. If I was the captain of the Penobscot, I should go in stays. There she goes!"

At this moment the sails of the large yacht shook, as her head came up to the wind. But the next instant she fell off, heeled over, and drove ahead again. Bobtail distinctly heard a shout from her, though she was a mile distant. He watched her with his heart in his mouth, and his worst fears were realized when he

saw her lift her bow high up in the water. She had run upon the ledge.

"By gracious! she is on the rocks!" cried Bobtail, wild with excitement and anxiety.

"So she is!" gasped Monkey.

Then came a shriek in the tones of a woman's voice, whose piercing note was heard above the roaring of the billows.

"That's Mrs. Montague," said Bobtail. "Get your warp-line out, Monkey. We have got something to do to-night."

The Skylark flew on her mission of rescue, and her skipper watched the Penobscot with intense interest. Her bow rose and fell at every sea, and it was evident that she was crashing her timbers at every motion. In five minutes from the time she struck, the smaller yacht came up with her. She had gone upon the last ledge of the series that extends to the southward from Islesboro'. Bobtail ran to the west of the ledges, and, going entirely round to avoid gybing, he came up into the wind close under the stern of the Penobscot. He heard her planks and timbers grinding on the rocks. Monkey heaved the warp-line, which was caught by the sailors on board of the wreck. The mainsail of the Skylark was lowered.

By this time, though the waves still beat over the bow of the Penobscot, she ceased to grind upon the rocks. The tide was going out, and less of the weight of the vessel was supported by the water, and as the volume of the waves diminished, their power lessened. In two or three hours the yacht would be

high and dry. She had gone upon the ledge in a direction diagonal with the wind, so that under one of her quarters the water was comparatively smooth. Bobtail and Monkey heaved on the warp-line till they brought the Skylark alongside this lee quarter.

"No time to lose, sir!" shouted Bobtail to Colonel Montague, who was supporting his wife and daughter on deck, for the cabin was flooded with water. "I shall be aground in half an hour."

"Can your boat weather this blow?" asked the colonel, anxiously.

"Yes, sir; she can stand anything that any boat can."

Mrs. Montague and Grace were assisted on board of the Skylark, which, even in this sheltered place, rolled, pitched, and tugged furiously at the warp-line. The colonel and another gentleman, whom Bobtail had not seen before, helped old Mr. Montague down to the rail of the Penobscot.

"You go first, Tom, and help him down," said Colonel Montague.

The sailing master of the Penobscot also took the old gentleman's arm. The Hon. Mr. Montague seemed to be very feeble, and he was certainly very much terrified.

"Put your arm around that shroud, Mr. Barkesdale," said the captain to the person whom the colonel called Tom.

Tom Barkesdale stood upon the rail then, with his left arm around one of the shrouds of the Skylark. The stern of the Penobscot was down so low in the water, that it was not a long step down from the rail

to that of the smaller yacht. Tom took the hand of the old gentleman as he stepped down; but at that instant the warp-line, which held the bow of the Skylark, snapped in twain, and her head swung off. His son and the skipper had just let go of the old gentleman, and Tom's hold was wrenched away by a jerk of the boat. Mr. Montague went down between the two craft.

"Merciful Heaven!" cried the colonel. "Father is overboard!"

"Throw me a rope," yelled the sailing-master, as he dropped into the water and caught the old gentleman as he rose after sinking once.

Several lines were thrown to him, and with so many ready hands available, they were both drawn on board of the yacht in a moment. Though the venerable gentleman had received a terrible shock, he was not rendered insensible. The bow of the Skylark was again hauled up to the quarter of the Penobscot, and Mr. Montague was safety transferred to the cabin of the small yacht "What will you do, captain?" asked the colonel of the sailing-master.

"I will stick by her with the crew. At low tide we will take the ballast out of her, and float her off the next tide."

"Are your men willing to stay?"

"They must stay; they are as safe here as on shore; at least till the next tide, and I shall be ready to float her off by that time."

Colonel Montague went on board of the Skylark. A couple of men from the Penobscot were sent to assist in working her, though Bobtail protested that he had

not the least need of them. The close-reefed mainsail was hoisted, and the Skylark went off on her course. By this time it was quite dark, but the light-house on Negro Island was a sufficient guide to the skipper. The yacht rolled fearfully, and to keep out of the trough of the sea Bobtail headed her to a point south of his destination. In an hour he was as near the main land as it was prudent to venture in the night, and then he put the Skylark before the wind. Before eleven o'clock he was at the wharf. He had not seen his passengers since they came on board.

"My father has suffered severely from his mishap," said Colonel Montague, after the boat was made fast.

"I'm sorry for it, sir. I didn't think of such a thing as that warp-line breaking," replied Bobtail.

"Of course it was not your fault. You have done well for us, and I have no fault to find with you. I want some one to go to the hotel, and tell the landlord to send a coach, for my father cannot walk up."

"Monkey will go;" and the Darwinian was on his way in a moment.

The Hon. Mr. Montague was apparently very ill. The cold bath and the shock had severely shaken his frame. He was trembling with cold when Bobtail went below, and Mrs. Montague was holding his head. He was wrapped up in shawls, coats, and all the clothing available. The lady and her daughter spoke very kindly to the young skipper; but they were too much disturbed by the condition of the old gentleman to say much.

"I think you ought to have a doctor, Ned," said Tom Barkesdale.

"Send for one at once, then," said the colonel.

"What are you going to do, Edward?" asked the old gentleman, in feeble tones.

"I have sent for a coach, to take you to the hotel."

"I want to go home. Can't I go in this boat?"

"It blows too hard to-night, father."

"A boat is easier than a carriage. Let me go home in this boat, when the wind goes down."

"Then we had better not take him on shore," said Tom. "We can make up a good bed in this cabin for him."

"Do, Edward," groaned the old gentleman.

"I will go to the hotel, and get everything we need," added Tom, "and Bobtail shall go for the doctor."

In half an hour the skipper returned with Dr. Estabrook, and the coach came with an abundant supply of beds and bedding. Mrs. Montague and her daughter went up to the Bay View, while the gentleman took off the wet clothes of the sufferer, and put him to bed. A fire was made in the cook-room, which heated the cabin when the door was open. The doctor prescribed for his patient, and he was soon made more comfortable. About midnight the rain began to fall in torrents, and the wind howled fearfully. But the storm lasted only a couple of hours, and at three o'clock in the morning the wind came fresh from the westward, and the sky was clear. The change knocked down the sea, and made a fair wind for Belfast. Tom Barkesdale went to the hotel for Mrs. Montague and Grace, and at four o'clock the Skylark sailed. She made a comfortable

passage of it, and reached the town in three hours.

Mr. Montague's clothes had been dried, and he was dressed. His carriage was sent for, and he was conveyed to his elegant mansion. His family physician superintended his removal. He had hardly entered the house, when he was taken with the most alarming symptoms. In less than half an hour he breathed his last, and there were weeping and wailing in the elegant mansion. Death comes alike to the rich and the poor, and invades the palace as well as the hovel.

Colonel Montague wept like a child; the strong man was shaken by the throes of grief. He felt that he would have given all he had for the consciousness that he had never deceived that kind and indulgent father who lay silent in death before him. An hour after the sad event, Tom Barkesdale tried to comfort his friend.

"I would give the world if I had never deceived him," moaned the grief-stricken son.

"It was all for the best. Your father has passed away full of years and honors. It is well as it is."

"No, no, Tom! It was all wrong."

"You have only saved him from misery, which might have killed him years ago, for the doctor says he had a disease of the heart. Don't reproach yourself, Ned."

"Where is the boy—Robert?" he asked suddenly. "I have wronged him still more. Where is he?"

"I don't know. I haven't seen him since we left the boat."

"Go for him, Tom. Bring him back. He shall not suffer

this wrong another hour. He is a noble little fellow, and I am proud of him. Bring him back."

Tom went to the wharf in the carriage, but the Skylark was three miles down the bay, on her way to Camden. It was of no use to chase that boat, and the messenger returned to his weeping friend.

"Go to him, Tom; tell him all, and bring him back," said Colonel Montague; and his friend took the next steamer for Camden.

Little Bobtail had sailed as soon as the invalid was landed, for he was anxious to be at home when the Eagle arrived. He had been up all night, while Monkey had slept in the cook-room; and as soon as the Skylark was clear of the harbor, the skipper gave the helm to the Darwinian, and turned in. He was sleeping heavily in the cabin of the yacht, while the telegraph wires were flashing all over the state the intelligence of the death of the Hon. Mr. Montague. The wind was light, so that the Skylark made a long passage: and Monkey did not wake the skipper till the yacht was off North-east Point. He had slept five hours, and felt like a new man. He went on shore as soon as the boat came up to the wharf, and ascertained that the Eagle had not yet arrived. Walking up to the cottage, he found his mother sitting on the front doorstep, in the shade, sewing.

"Why, Robert, where did you come from?"

"From Belfast last."

"Did he die before you got there?"

"Die? Who?"

"Why, old Mr. Montague."

"He isn't dead."

"Yes, he is. The telegram came this forenoon."

"But I helped him on shore myself at seven o'clock this morning."

"He died at half past seven, the despatch says. And you didn't know it?"

"No, I didn't. That's strange. But I started for home as soon as I saw him in the carriage, and slept all the way down."

Mrs. Taylor had not seen her son since the examination at the office of Squire Norwood, but she had heard that he returned from Mount Desert late at night, and had gone to Belfast early in the morning. Bobtail had begun to relate his adventures at Mount Desert, when Squire Gilfilian presented himself at the door. It was known now that the Skylark had been to Bar Harbor, with Mr. Hines and the deputy sheriff as passengers. The young skipper had told this the night before, but nothing more—not even that his passengers had not returned with him. The squire had heard this report, and he was anxious to know the result of the visit.

"Good afternoon, Mrs. Taylor," said the lawyer. "I am glad to find your son here, for I want to talk with him. But I wish to say to you, in the first place, that I don't consider that mortgage fairly cancelled."

"Why not? Didn't I pay you the money?" asked Mrs. Taylor, very much alarmed.

"You did, but that bill was already mine. Mr. Slipwing sent me five hundred dollars, and I have received it—the very bill he sent. From you and from

him I ought to have a thousand dollars, but I have only half that amount."

"Am I to lose that money?" demanded the poor woman.

"Well, am I?" echoed the squire, with a bland smile. "If my horse is stolen, I take him wherever I find him, and whoever has bought or sold him."

The lawyer was talking to a woman knowing but little of law and business, and he was doubtful himself whether he could claim that bill after it had passed, in good faith, through the hands of several persons.

"I don't think it's right," protested Mrs. Taylor.

"Nor I, either," added Bobtail. "My mother didn't steal it, and I didn't steal it."

"No one knows who did steal it," said the squire. "Captain Chinks still contends that you took the letter, my boy; and he has gone down to Bar Harbor to ascertain how the bill got there. He thinks you heard of that boat, and sent some one down to buy her. He means to look up the case."

"He'll look it up with a vengeance," replied Bobtail. "It is already looked up."

"What do you mean? I hear that you have been to Bar Harbor."

"I have."

"Did you see Captain Chinks?"

"I haven't anything to say about it," answered Bobtail.

"Can't you tell me whether you saw him or not?" asked the squire, in his cross-examination style.

"I can, but I would rather not. Mr. Brooks told me to keep still about it, and I'm going to do so."

The squire coaxed and threatened, but without effect.

"You will know all about it to-day or to-morrow. There comes the Eagle,—Captain Chinks's boat, Squire Gilfilian. He's in her, and he will tell you all you want to know, and more too, perhaps."

The lawyer was not in good humor, though he was, in the main, a very good sort of man. He did not like to have a boy like Little Bobtail say no to him.

"I must say, Mrs. Taylor, it looks rather black for your son. Colonel Montague testifies that the bill which was stolen with the letter was paid for a boat to a gentleman at Bar Harbor. Your son comes home one night with a boat, and no one knows where he got it," said Squire Gilfilian, sharply.

"He told where he got it, and he was discharged at the examination yesterday," replied Mrs. Taylor, smartly.

"We shall see when Captain Chinks gets back."

"I think you will see," added Bobtail.

"In the mean time, Mrs. Taylor, I shall expect you to pay the mortgage note," said the squire, as he walked towards the railroad wharf, where the Eagle appeared to be headed.

Bobtail soon followed him, and was at the wharf when the Eagle came up at the steps.

"So you have arrived, Bobtail," said Mr. Hines.

"I got in at eleven o'clock last night, and should have been here sooner if I hadn't stopped to pick up the Penobscot's people," replied the skipper of the Skylark, as he proceeded to describe his cruise, and tell the news of the wreck, and of the death of the Hon. Mr. Montague.

"And so you have been to Belfast since?"

"Yes; and been back some time. Where's Captain Chinks? Squire Gilfilian wants to see him," added Bobtail, as the lawyer came down the steps.

"The captain is below. He is all used up, and willing to confess everything. But we must take him down to Rockland at once, and we will go in the Skylark. For we want her there."

"She's all ready, sir."

"Where's Captain Chinks?" demanded the squire.

The captain came on deck when he heard the lawyer's voice. He was pale and dejected. The Eagle had anchored under the lee of an island during the storm, and Mr. Hines had explained to him both the law and the nature of the testimony. The detective told him he would probably get off easier if he pleaded guilty, and made all the restitution in his power. The captain had about concluded to do so, but he desired to consult his counsel.

"It's a light wind, and we must be off at once," said Mr. Hines, impatiently. "You can go with us, if you like, Squire Gilfilian, but I can't wait for you to discuss the case."

The squire was willing to go to Rockland, and in half

an hour the Skylark was standing down the bay.

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# CHAPTER XVIII.

## ROBERT BARKESDALE MONTAGUE.

"Well, Captain Chinks, did you find the man who paid that five hundred dollar bill to Colonel Montague?" asked Squire Gilfilian, as he seated himself in the standing-room, opposite his client.

"I didn't look for him," replied the captain, studying the seams in the deck.

"I thought that was what you went down there for. You told me that, in your opinion, Bobtail here had sent some one down to Bar Harbor to buy this boat with the money taken from the letter," added the squire, whose "fine judicial mind" had not yet grasped the truth. "I don't see any other way that this bill could have got to Bar Harbor."

"Mr. Hines and I saw the man that received the bill for the boat," added the deputy sheriff.

Captain Chinks looked up at the speaker, as if to entreat him to deal gently.

"Well, who gave him the bill?" demanded the squire, impatiently.

"The captain can tell you."

"How can he tell me? He didn't see the man. Why didn't you see him, captain?"

"I had something else to think of," replied the culprit, with the most woe-begone expression that ever darkened the face of man. "It's no use for me to try to beat to windward any more. I gave him the bill myself, Squire Gilfilian. That's the truth."

"You!" gasped the lawyer.

"I gave it to him."

"That can be proved, for Mr. Gordon identified him as he came off the steamer at Bar Harbor," added Mr. Brooks.

"I don't deny it," said the captain, meekly.

"But where did you get the bill?" asked the squire.

Captain Chinks did not answer immediately. It was too humiliating to tell the whole truth, and the lawyer seemed to be very slow to comprehend it.

"I had no more notion of opening that letter than I had of flying," he said, at last, after the squire had repeated his question.

"Did you open it?"

"I'll tell you just how it was; but, upon my word, I didn't mean to open it. Bobtail came into your office that day with the two letters in his hand, one for you and one for me. He gave me one of them, and I tore it open without looking at the address."

"Did I give you the wrong one?" asked the skipper.

"You did; and that was what made all the mischief," answered the captain, wishing to lessen his guilt if

possible.

"I didn't know I gave you the wrong one. I had no reason for doing so. I put the other on the desk, as you told me to do," explained Bobtail.

"Yes; you tossed it on the desk, and it fell with the address down. You went out then, and I found the letter I had opened was for Squire Gilfilian, and had a five hundred dollar bill in it."

"There was no harm done even then," said the lawyer. "If you had given it to me and explained the mistake, it would have been all right."

"That's where I made my mistake, squire. I was afraid you would think I meant to steal your money, or pry into your business, and I put the letter into my pocket. It came from the bank robbers, and I didn't suppose you would believe any such letter had been sent to you."

"I didn't till the man identified the bill," replied the squire. "Mrs. Taylor gave me the bill in the morning, and while I was writing her release, Mr. Slipwing came into the office. When the woman paid me the money, I couldn't help wondering where she got so large a bill. Happening to think of her son's connection with the letter, it occurred to me that he had opened that letter. Slipwing described the bill before he saw it, so as fully to identify it. Of course I was entirely satisfied then that Bobtail had stolen the letter."

"I don't blame you for thinking so," said the skipper.

"It looked like a plain case; but it is singular how that bill came back to me. You went off to Mount Desert that day, Captain Chinks."

"Yes; I expected a lot of stuff from the provinces. I went to Bar Harbor, and bought the boat."

"And you paid the bill from the letter for the boat? Now, that brings up another question. The bill belonged to me, and I claim it. What Mrs. Taylor paid me amounts to nothing."

"I don't believe you can make that go, Squire Gilfilian," said Mr. Hines. "If I mistake not, there's a decision the other way."

"I shall try it, at any rate," added the squire.

"No, you needn't," interposed Captain Chinks. "I will make it good myself."

"That will settle the case," replied the squire, who knew that his client had the means to do so.

"If Mrs. Taylor must make good the loss to you, then Colonel Montague must make it good to her, and Mr. Gordon to the colonel. If the payment in stolen money was not legal, there was no sale of the boat, and she still belongs to Mr. Gordon," continued Mr. Hines. "In the mean time the government has seized her for violation of the revenue laws, and the case is decidedly mixed."

"I will pay the squire the five hundred dollars," added the smuggler.

"And lose your boat besides?" queried the squire.

"What's the use? You can't fight against the government. The custom-house officers have the boat and the stuff."

"What stuff?" asked the squire.

"A lot of brandy that I could have sold for over a thousand dollars, which didn't cost me four hundred. It would bring fifteen hundred at retail."

"O ho!" said the squire, opening his eyes.

"I'm caught, and I may as well make the best of it. I used to think this sort of business paid, but I don't think so now. I shall lose my boat, the money I paid for the stuff, and have to pay a fine of a thousand dollars besides. That makes me about two thousand out—half of all I'm worth, besides my farm; and all because Little Bobtail wouldn't make a trade with me. I as good as offered to give him the boat, if he would return the stuff; and I reckon he'll wish he had when you take the boat away from him, for he has been making money with her."

"No, he won't," said Mr. Hines, decidedly. "He gave the information that led to the seizure of the goods, and his share of the fine and forfeiture will be at least five hundred dollars, and he can buy the boat."

"Is that so?" exclaimed the skipper, opening his eyes. "I had no idea I was to make anything out of this business. But I am in love with this boat; and if I get her, I shall be the happiest fellow on Penobscot Bay."

"You will have her; and we'll manage it so that you shall have the use of her till she is sold," added Mr. Hines.

Captain Chinks was no longer a man of doubtful reputation. His contraband operations were capable of proof without his confession, and his reputation as a dishonest man was now fully established. The Skylark arrived at Rockland in a couple of hours. The United States deputy marshal arrested Captain

Chinks; but he was liberated on bail furnished by Squire Gilfilian. The Skylark was seized, and Mr. Hines appointed keeper; and, on his own responsibility, he permitted Bobtail to have the use of her.

The detective had fully sifted the captain's method of operating. He was in company with a "Blue Nose" fisherman, who used to run the goods down to the coast of Maine, where his partner took them into his boat, usually in the night, or under the lee of some uninhabited island. Another lot was on its way, but the captain concluded to have them properly entered, and paid the duties.

When Bobtail returned from the custom-house in Rockland to the Skylark, he found Mr. Tom Barkesdale on board of her, waiting for him. This gentleman had come down to Camden in the steamer, and finding that the boy had gone to Rockland, he obtained a team, and drove to that place, where he found the Skylark at the wharf. Monkey did not know where the skipper had gone; but he soon appeared with all his passengers, for the business had not detained them more than an hour. But Mr. Barkesdale was not inclined to "tell him all" in the presence of so many persons. He finally, after much persuasion, induced Bobtail to return with him in his buggy, while Mr. Hines sailed the Skylark back to Camden. Nothing but the assurance that the business was of the utmost importance could prevail upon the skipper to leave the yacht; and much he wondered what that business could be. They walked up to the hotel together, but, as yet, Mr. Barkesdale said nothing.

"I think you have worn that bobtail coat about long

enough," said the gentleman, when they came to Main Street.

"I have a better suit at home."

"What color is it?"

"Blue, sir."

"That will hardly answer. You must go up to Belfast with me, and attend the funeral of Mr. Montague."

"I?"

"Yes; the family are all very much interested in you. You need a black suit, and we will get one here," added Mr. Barkesdale, as they entered the best clothing store on the street.

The finest suit that could be obtained was purchased; and it was supplemented, at other stores, with a cap, nice shoes, black kid gloves, and other furnishing goods. Bobtail protested against the gloves; he did not want any gloves in summer; never wore them, except in winter. But Mr. Barkesdale said he must wear them at the funeral, if he never did again.

"I don't see why I should be rigged up in all these togs, to go to the funeral of a man I never saw but twice in my life," said Bobtail, as they seated themselves in the buggy.

"You don't know much," laughed Mr. Barkesdale.

"I know I don't."

"You don't even know your own name."

"Everybody calls me Little Bobtail, and it wouldn't be strange if I forgot my own name," replied the boy.

"I'm told your father's habits are not very good."

"Zeke Taylor's? He isn't my father; he is my mother's second husband; and my father died when I was small."

"Your mother must have a hard time of it with a drunken husband."

"That's so; I wish she would leave him; and I think she will, for he don't do much, and spends all he gets for rum. He's ugly, too, and tries to get her money away from her."

"Then your mother has money of her own?"

"I don't know; there's something strange about it," replied Bobtail, looking into the face of his companion, and wondering what he was "driving at." "Zeke says she has money hid away from him."

"Then you have thought of the matter?"

"Well, I can't see, for the life of me, how she supports the family."

"Well you don't know much—not even your own name," laughed Mr. Barkesdale again.

"I know that my father's name was Wayland, and by rights mine ought to be Wayland."

"Are you quite sure of that?"

"Of course I am. I know what my mother told me. I was born in the Island of Cuba."

"That's true, but not the rest of it."

"What do you mean?"

"Your name is not Wayland."

"What is it, then?" asked Bobtail, amazed beyond expression.

"Your name is Robert Barkesdale Montague—the middle name after me."

"You don't mean so!"

"I do; and when you see your mother, as you call her, she will tell you the same thing."

"Isn't she my mother?" asked Bobtail,—or rather Robert, as we shall insist upon calling him now,—with a gasp of astonishment.

"She is not; she is a very worthy woman, but she is not your mother."

"Well, who is my mother?"

"The first Mrs. Montague, of course; she died in Cuba when you were only a few months old. Mrs. Wayland —as she was then—was your nurse. She has brought you up, and brought you up very well too, for it appears that you are an honest, good boy, noble, brave, and intelligent."

"But what's the reason I never knew anything about this before?" asked the puzzled youth.

"I'll tell you;" and Mr. Barkesdale told the story which is related in the first two chapters.

"I supposed I had a mother, but no father. It turns out just the other way," said Robert, rubbing his throbbing head.

"And your father is one of the best men in the world."

"Mrs. Taylor is one of the best women in the world; and I shall be sorry to leave her. I don't like to believe she is not my mother, after all she has done for me. I don't believe she ever spoke a cross word to me in her life;" and the tears started in the boy's eyes.

"I don't think you will have to leave her. Your father will take her up to Belfast."



"And all the money came from my father?"

"Yes; I have carried a great deal to her myself."

Robert Montague continued to ask questions till the buggy stopped before the door of the cottage in

Camden. Mrs. Taylor wept, and the boy wept, as they met. He wished that the truth had not been revealed to him. Mr. Barkesdale went to the hotel, and Robert spent the evening with Mrs. Taylor. Ezekiel was at home, and sober. He was permitted to know where the money which had perplexed him so much came from; and, as the son of Colonel Montague, he regarded Robert with respect and deference.

Mrs. Taylor and Robert took the steamer for Belfast the next morning, with Mr. Barkesdale. The boy was dressed in his black suit, and looked like another person. Colonel Montague's carriage was waiting for them when the steamer arrived. As Robert entered the elegant mansion, now "the house of mourning," he could hardly control his violent emotion. Mr. Barkesdale conducted him and Mrs. Taylor to the library, where the colonel was alone. As they entered, he walked towards his son, grasped him by the hand, and turning away his face, wept bitterly. Robert could not help weeping in sympathy.

"You know now that you are my son," said he, when he was able to speak.

"Mr. Barkesdale told me all about it."

"You are my son, and I am proud of you; but I have been a coward, Robert," added the colonel, with anguish. "I have wronged my father, who lies dead in the house; and I have wronged you, my son."

"No, sir; you haven't wronged me," protested Robert.

"I have kept you out of your birthright for sixteen years."

"I couldn't have been any better off than I was with Mrs. Taylor," replied the boy, turning to the woman.

The colonel took her hand, and expressed his gratitude to her for all she had done.

"He is a good boy, and I wish he was my son," said Mrs. Taylor. "I can't bear to think of losing him."

"You shall not be separated, and he and I both will see that you never want for anything while you live."

Mrs. Montague and Grace were sent for, and presently appeared.

"I am glad to see you, my boy," said the lady, as she took both his hands. "You are my son now."

"And did you know I was Colonel Montague's son before?" asked Robert.

"I knew it before I was married to him," she replied. "My husband always reproached himself—and now more than ever—because he concealed his first marriage from his father; but my brother and I always thought it right for him to do so."

"I know it was wrong," added the colonel, bitterly.

"Undoubtedly it was wrong in the abstract, but it was the least of two evils," said Mr. Barkesdale.

"Now you are my brother, I shall kiss you again," was the greeting of Grace, as she suited the action to the word.

The rest of the day was spent in talking over the events of the past, and Robert Montague was duly installed as a member of the household. The funeral took place the next day, and hundreds of people stared at the boy who rode with the other members of the family in the first carriage, and wondered why he was there. In a few days the strange story was

fully circulated both in Belfast and in Camden.

On the day after the funeral Robert returned to his former home with Mrs. Taylor. He was greeted by his friends with a deference which made him feel very awkward; and when he went on board of the Skylark, Monkey hardly dared to speak to him. But he soon convinced all that his altered fortunes had not changed his heart. He was more amazed himself than other people were to find himself the son of one of the richest and most distinguished men in the state. He returned to his new home in the Skylark on the same day, and arrived soon enough to give Grace a sail in the yacht before dark.

In due time Robert attended the trial of Captain Chinks, who pleaded guilty, and was sentenced to a year's imprisonment for opening the letter and stealing the money. The yacht and the liquor were condemned and sold. The captain was fined a thousand dollars; and it was said that he got off easy because he pleaded guilty. Colonel Montague bought the Skylark when she was sold, with his son's share of "the moiety of the penalty and forfeiture." With his father as a passenger, Robert sailed the yacht home.

The Penobscot was got off by the sailing-master and crew at the next tide after she went on the ledge. Buoyed up with casks she was towed to Belfast, where she was put on the ways, and made as good as new.

"I thought your sailing-master was rather reckless that night," said Robert, one day, as they passed the Penobscot on the ways, and were discussing the mishap.

"It was not his fault. The wheel broke down," replied

the colonel.

"I didn't know the wheel broke."

"Yes; that was the trouble; but if it had been the sailing-master's fault, I wouldn't have said a word, after he saved my father. He's a brave fellow; he is like you, my son. If you had been less brave, Robert, Grace would certainly have been drowned, or killed on the rocks."

Colonel Montague shuddered as he thought of such a calamity, and then gazed with admiration upon his son.

"I would have done that any time for the fun of it," laughed Robert.

"It was hard for me, when we met on the deck of the Penobscot, to keep from telling you the truth—that you were my son."

"It's all right now."

The conversation turned to Mrs. Taylor. Colonel Montague wanted to take her into his family, but her drunken husband was in the way of such a step. On one of her trips down the bay the Skylark put into Camden, and Robert and his father called upon her.

"I'm all alone now," said Mrs. Taylor, after she had exchanged greetings with her visitors.

"Why, where is Ezekiel?" asked Robert.

"He went off a-fishing yesterday in Prince's boat, and caught a great fare of mackerel. He sold them for nine dollars, and of course he has been intoxicated ever since. This afternoon he got into a quarrel with Moses Pitkins, and struck him with a club. Both of

them were drunk, and they say Moses is so badly hurt that he may die. Ezekiel was taken up, and sent over to Rockland."

"Then you had better go with us to Belfast, Mrs. Taylor," added Colonel Montague.

Robert begged her to do so, and she consented. Squire Simonton was engaged to defend Ezekiel when his trial came off. Mrs. Taylor went to Belfast in the Skylark, and was kindly welcomed at the elegant mansion.

Moses Pitkins did not die, but Ezekiel was sentenced to two months' imprisonment. Squire Simonton labored diligently with him to abandon his cups; but the two months' abstinence did him more good than the arguments, able and kind as they were. When he was discharged he returned to Camden to find his home deserted. Squire Simonton renewed his efforts to secure the reform of the toper. He assured Ezekiel that his wife would not live with him if he continued to be intemperate. He promised faithfully never to drink a drop, and the squire kept an eye on him. He let the house to Prince, and boarded with him. He went to work at his trade, and people said Ezekiel Taylor was a new man since he came out of prison. Mrs. Taylor heard of his good behavior, and came down to see him. He promised her faithfully that he would never drink another drop. Colonel Montague had given her a beautiful little cottage near his own house, handsomely furnished, when the reports indicated that Ezekiel had actually reformed. Having satisfied herself of the truth of the report, she invited him to his new home. Thus far he has kept his promise, and both are happy in their new residence, which Robert visits every day, and sometimes

oftener.

Mr. Walker and his family spent a week with the Montagues, in September, after Mr. Barkesdale had gone. Though picnics and pleasure parties were not in order so soon after the death of the Hon. Mr. Montague, Robert took Grace and Emily out to sail every day in the Skylark; and up to this date, he thinks Miss Walker is the prettiest girl in the State of Maine. He may change his mind within ten years; but if he does not, she will probably have an opportunity to accept or refuse his hand.

Monkey was retained for service in the Skylark during the rest of the season. He still thinks his friend, the skipper, is the greatest man in the world. He sends a portion of his wages to his mother, and in the fall moved her up to Belfast. Robert goes to Camden occasionally, and always calls upon Mr. Simonton, who invariably gives him a cheerful welcome. His views in regard to smuggling are very definite now, and, as Robert Barkesdale Montague, he believes that fidelity to principle is the only safe rule of life, whether it brings worldly prosperity or adversity, as did LITTLE BOBTAIL.

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