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JOB PRINTING of every kind in Plain and Fancy colors, done with neatness and dispatch. Handbills, Blanks, Cards, Pamphlets, &c., of every variety and style, printed at the shortest notice. The REPORTER OFFICE has just been re-fitted with Power Presses, and every thing in the Printing line can be executed in the most artistic manner and at the lowest rates. TERMS INVARIABLY CASH.

Selected Poetry.

THE SNOWDROP.

Welcome to earth, white snowdrop, once again;
Welcome below the budding hedge;
Welcome in woods that overledge
The rocky streamlet murmuring down the glen:
Welcome to gardens and abodes of men.

Thy maiden leaflets, touched with spots of green,
Like tiptoe-prints of timid Spring,
Upon snow new fallen, bring
Refreshing pleasure to the eyes, I ween,
That weary of the winter's cold white sheen.

Thou wast the first in Nature's mind to lie,
Before she wrought the gorgeous flowers
Of golden Summer's garden bowers,
Ere June disclosed to view earth's canopy
Of light and azure mixed in harmony.

As if she chose thee for the New-Year's brow,
To tempt her maids to imitate,
And learn how comely simple state
Upon the virgin's slender form doth show,
And lead to ripened woman's statelier glow.

Calm-lipped, ambrosia-breathing Charity,
Whom in the unseen homes above,
The clear-eyed angels greet as Love,
Whoe'er may guard thy sisterhood, must be
The sister bidden to keep watch o'er thee:

For we discern those airy forms, that tend
The fragrant lives of bell and bud
On hill or dale, or green-edged flood,
By the peculiar thought which each doth send
Into our hearts, as o'er the leaves we bend.

Selected Tale.

THE GOOD SHIP SHOOTING STAR.

I.

"Captain Ritson, allow me to introduce to you Mr. Pennant, your new purser. Mr. Pennant, pray take a chair, while I have a little talk on brsiness with Captain Ritson."

Mr. Blizzard, of the firm of David and Blizzard, 72 Limehouse Street, Liverpool, continued:

"Captain Ritson, we want to make the first trip of the Shooti g Star an auspicious trip; we want to have our vessel tne first into Quebec this year. We save the dues; for they always return the dues to the first vessel that arrives from England; but it is not so much for the sake of the value of the dues as the *eclat* of the thing. Our trade with Canada is large, and we want to get our name up. We do not, of course, want you to run any danger. No, that is by no means the wish of the firm; but we wish you to skirt the ice, and run in on the very first opening. You will get off Labrador just in time for the frost to have thawed, and, with care, there need be no risk whatever."

Mr. Blizzard said all this leaning againt his railed desk, and nestled in among the piles of invoices and bills of lading. He was a hearty, fresh-colored, portly man, very neat in his dress, and remarkable for a white waistcoat, that seemed as hard and stainless as enamel. He played with his watch-chain as he spoke, and eyed the captain, the purser, and the first mate, who sat in an uncomfortable half-circle. With his well-polished boots planted on the immovable rock of a large capital, Mr. Blizzard seemed to look boldly seaward metaphorically, and consider wrecks and such casualties as mere well-devised fictions.

Captain Ritson was a big North-countryman, with a broad acreage of chest, clear gray eyes and large, red hands,—a sturdy, honest, self-reliant man, without a fear in the world. The mate, Mr. Cardew, by no means so pleasant to look on, being a little spare, thin-legged, cadaverous person, with yellowish eyes, sat in sullen subserviency on the very edge of his chair just behind the captain. The purser, a brisk, cheery, stout young fellow, sat deprecatingly (as if he thought he ought to stand) a trifle farther back still.

"Right it is, Mister Blizzard," said the captain, buttoning his pilot-coat across his chest, as if preparing for an immediate gale, and about to order everything to be battened down. "Right it is, and a better vessel than the Shooting Star I don't hope to see. She's sound, Mr. Blizzard, I do believe, from main truck to keel,—sound, if I may use the expression, as a pious man's conscience. The only thing that wexes me, howsomever, is that, having been sent for to my native place, down Allonby way, on very sad business" (here the captain held up sorrowfully an enormous hat covered with black crape,) "I couldn't see to the lading of this ere wessel as I generally likes to do with wessels I am called upon to command."

"That is of no consequence at all, Captain Ritston," said Mr. Blizzard, pouring out three glasses of sherry all in a row from a decanter on an inky mantel-piece near him. "I have been away at Manchester, and my partner, Mr. David, has been very ill with a touch of pleurisy, but our first mate here, Mr. Cardew, has seen to it all."

The mate nodded assent.

"The cargo is—?"

"Agricultural implements, machinery, and cloth goods."

Mr. Blizzard referred to a ledger for this information, as he spoke, as if he scarcely knew, in his multiplicity of business, whether the Shooting Star might not be laden with frankincense, pearls, gold-dust, and poll-parrots—but he would see.

Having ascertained the fact, Mr Blizzard carefully replaced the ledger, and, turning his back on his company, poked the fire, and consulted a large sheet almanac over the mantel-piece, as a sign the intervie was over.

"We sail to-morrow morning, Sunday," said Captain Ritston, who was a Wesleyan, to the purser, as they left the office of Messrs. David and Blizzard; "I likes to hear the blessed Sabbath bells calling to one another as I go out of the Mersey, and the men like it; and, what's more, it's lucky. It's like the land taking leave of us, as I always say, giving a sort of blessing on the ship; at least, I'm a plain man, and that's how I take it. Its the day I always start, Sunday is."

The purser expressed his hope that he should succeed in doing his duty, and pleasing the captain and all his employers.

"O, you'll do, young man, I can see; don't you be afraid. Won't he, Mr. Cardew? Clear, straight-forward eyes, and all aboveboard."

Mr. Cardew thought he would do, but he did not look on the purser at all. His mind was running on very different things.

II.

"Joe," said the purser's wife, when Pennant returned to his little cottage at Birkenhead, and announced his new appointment, "I don't know how it is, but I have got a strong presentment, and I wish you would'nt go in this ship. I never did like ships with those sort of names. The best run you ever had was in the Jane Parker, and the worse one in the Morning Star. Stick to the plain names. Besides, it's too early in the season. Now, do oblige me, Joe, and give it up. Stay for a fortnight later; get an Australian ship. It's too early for Canada. It is, indeed. Mrs. Thompson says so."

"Jenny, my love, you're a silly little woman. A pretty sailor's wife you make. Come, pack up my kit, for I'm going, that is the long and short of it. Nonsense about sentiments. And who is Mrs. Thompson, I should like to know? Who wants her poking her nose here? Why did she drive her husband away with her nagging, and temper, and botheration? Tell her to mind her own business. Pretty thing, indeed! Come, dear, no nonsense; pack up my kit."

"But, Joe dear, there was your photograph fell off the nail on Tuesday, that night I saw a shooting star fall, close to the docks, and it wasn't sent for nothing. Don't go, Joe; don't go."

"Go I must, Jenny dear, and go I shall, so don't make it painful, there's a good little woman. Come, I'll go up with you now, and kiss George and Lizzy. I won't wake them; then we'll go and look out the shirts and things for the chest. Keep a good heart; you know I shall soon be back. I've got a nice captain, and a smart first mate."

III.

"Why, Captain Thompson, who ever thought to have found you here, and only quartermaster?" said the purser, as he stood at the gangway of the Shooting Star, watching the fresh provisions brought in. "Well, I am sorry to see you so reduced, sir, I am, indeed. How was it?"

The quartermaster drew him on one side with a rueful look. He was a purple, jolly, sottish-looking man, with swollen features.

"It was the grog, Joe, as did it,—all the infernal grog," he said. "I lost my last ship, the Red Star, and then everything went wrong; but I've strack off drinking now, Joe; I wasn't fit to have a ship, that's about it,—lost myself, too, Joe; and here I am with my hands in the tar-bucket again, trying to do my dooty in that station of life, as the Catechism used to say."

"And how do you like our captain and crew, sir?" Pennant said, under his breath.

"Captain's as good a man as ever trod in shoe-leather—upright man, though he will have the work done, but the crew ain't much, b tween ourselves. Four of them first-class, the rest loafers and skulkers, wanting to emigrate, picked up on the quays, half thieve, half deserters, not worth their salt. They'll all run when they get to Quebec. Then ther'es the first mate, he's a nice nigger-driver, he is, bound for a bad port, I think. I wouldn't trust him with a ship, that's all I can say, unless it was a pirate ship, that he might get on with; but he is smooth enough before the captain,—he takes care of that,—curse him."

Just at that moment there came a shrill voice screaming curses from the shore.

"Look alive, you skulkers, there," it cried—it was the mate's voice—"or I'll let you know. We shan't be ready by Tuesday, if you don't hurry. Not a drop of grog before the work's done, mind that. I'll have no infernal grumbling while I'm mate; and what are you doing there quartermaster, idling? Mr. Purser, see at once if the stores are all in, and hand in the bills to me to give to Captain Ritson."

The men, ragged, sullen fellows, worked harder, but cursed in an underbreath.

The moment the captain came on board, the mate's manner entirely altered. He crouched and whispered, and asked for orders, and spoke to the men with punctilious quietude.

Cardew had some strange hold over the captain, as the purser soon discovered—some money matters—some threat, which he held over Ritson's head, about his father's farm in Cumberland, some power that the captain dreaded, though he tried to appear cheerful, trusting, and indifferent. At first tyrannical to the men, Cardew had now begun to conciliate them in every possible way, especially when Captain Ritson was not on deck.

The purser was in his cabin, the twentieth day after the Shooting Star had started. He was head down at his accounts, and the luminous green shade over the lamp threw a golden light upon rows of figures and the red lines that divided them. He was working silently, honest, zealous fellow that he was, when a low tap came at the cabin-door. He leaped off his seat and opened the door; it was old Thompson, the quartermaster, who shut it after him with a suspicious care.

"Well, Thompson," said the purser, looking up with an overworked and troubled expression, "what is it?"

The quartermaster sat down with a hand on either knee "I tell you what it is, Mr. Pennant, between you and me, there's mischief brewing."

"Thompson, you've been at the rum again," said the amazed purser, in a reproachful voice.

"No, Mr. Pennant, I haven't; no, I am sober as the day I was born. Never you mind how I learned what I am going to tell you. There was a time when no one dared accuse Jack Thompson of eavesdropping, without getting an answer straight between the eyes, and quick too; but now I'm a poor rascal no one; only fit to mend old rope and patch sails, and I can stoop now to do things I should have been ashamed of once, even if I had done them, as I did this, for good."

There came at this moment a pert rap at the door, and Harrison, the ship's boy, thrust in his head.

"Well, what do you want?" said the purser, in his sharp, honest way.

"If you please, sir, there's an ice-fog coming on, and Mr. Cardew says the men are to have an extra glass of grog round, as there will be extra watches."

"Did Captain Ritson himself give the order?"

"No, sir; Mr. Cardew. Captain's been up all night, and is gone to lie down."

"Tell Mr. Cardew, with my compliments, that the captain told me yesterday never to serve out rum without his special orders."

"Yes, sir." The boy left.

"Now, Mr. Quartermaster, let us know the worst. I think—I suspect—it is something about our first mate. This is going to be an unlucky voyage, I can see. Let us hear the worst quick, that we may do something to stop the leak."

The quartermaster, a stolid man, of Dutch temperament, and by no means to be hurried, proceeded as calmly as is he were spinning a yarn over the galley fire. "What I heard the first mate and the carpenter talk about only two hours ago was this. The ice-fog's come on, and the men (a bad lot in any weather, all but Davis and two or three more) are beginning to think we're running dangerously near the ice, and that we shall get nipped. The mate, when the captain is away, encourages them in this idea, and the worst of them talk now of forcing the captain to steer more southward, so as to keep clear of the ice-packs off Labrador."

The purser started, and uttered an exclamation of surprise and indignation.

"Belay there, Mr. Pennant," said the quartermaster, forcing his sou'wester firmer on his head to express hatred for the mate; "that was only the first entry in their log. Then they went on to propose sinking the ship, lashing down the captain and those who wouldn't join them, destroying all evidence, and taking to the boats as soon as there was a sight of land."

"But what for?"

"What for? Why, for this. The first mate, as he let out, has had the lading of the vessel. Well, what did he do, with the help of some scoundrel friend of his, a shipping agent, but remove two thirds of the machinery from the cases, unknown, of course, to Mr Blizzard, and pile them up with old iron, anknown to the captain, who was away because his father was dying, and now they want to sink the vessel, and then go home and sell the plunder. That's about the size of it."

"Come this moment and tell the captain of this scoundrel," said the purser, leaping up and locking his desk resolutely.

"Now, avast heaving there, not just yet, Mr. Purser, by your leave; let the thing ripen a little; let me pick up what I can in the fo'kasal, they don't mind a poor old beast like me."

"What's all this?" cried a shrill, spiteful voice, as the door was thrust violently open. "Where is this purser fellow?—Who is it dares to disobey my orders?—What do you mean, purser, by not serving out this rum? No skulking here.—Thompson, go on deck, see all made taut for the night, and the fog-bell rigged, or we shall be run down in this cursed fog."

Thompson slunk out of the cabin.

The purser did not flinch; he took his cap quietly from its peg. "Mr. Cardew," he said, "I only obeyed the captain's orders, and I shall continue to do so till you take command of the vessel. I'm going on deck for a smoke before I turn in. Good night, sir."

The mate's eyes became all at once bloodshot and phosphorescent with a cruel light.

"I tell you what it is, Pennant," he said; "if I *was* your captain, I'd maroon you on an iceberg before you were five hours older, and I'd let you know first, with a good bit of pickled rope, what it was to disobey your superior officer"

"Good night, sir; threatened men live long. And perhaps you will allow me to lock up my cabin? Thank you."

With this good-humored defiance the purser ran, laughing and singing, up the cabin stairs.

It was Sunday morning, and the ice-fog had lifted. The vessel had met with mere pancake ice, loose sheets thin as tinsel, but nothing more; the wind blew intensely cold as if from ice-fields of enormous size, but no bergs had been seen, and the captain, judging from the ship's reckoning, hoped still to make a swift and successful voyage, and to be the first to reach Quebec that season.

The men were mustered for prayers in the state cabin. It was a pleasant sight to see them file in, two and two, so trim, with their blue shirts turned back from their big brown necks, their jaunty-knotted black silk neckerchiefs and their snowy-white trousers, the petty officers in their best blue jackets, and all so decorous and disciplined, as they took their prescribed seats.

Pleasant, too, it was to see the hardy captain in that wild and remote sea so calmly and gravely reading the chapter from the Bible relating to Paul's voyage, with an unconscious commanding-officer air. If the ship-boy dared to cough, that stern, gray eye nailed him to his seat; if the boatswain shuffled his feet, there was a reproving pause between the verses; if even the spray broke over the hatchway, the captain was down upon it.

The purser was the last to leave the cabin when the service was over. As he collected the Bibles, the captain touched him on the shoulder.

"I want a word with you, Mr. Pennant," he said, sitting sorrowfully down at the table with his hand on his telescope, and his large prayer-book still open before him. "You are an honest, faithful fellow, and I want to ask you a simple question. Have you seen or heard anything lately that makes you think the first mate is playing double, and exciting the men to mutiny? Yes or no?"

"Yes, captain."

The captain did not lift his eyes from the table at this answer, but giving a slight, half-disdainful sigh, poured out a glass of water and drank it, then rose, shook the purser by the hand, and looked steadily in his face.

"Come up with me, purser, on deck," he said, "and we will settle this matter at once. Some one has been altering the vessel's course, I feel sure, since the morning. If it is the mate, I will put him in irons. If it cost me my right arm, I'll keep him in irons. I'm a fool not to have seen it all before. I was warned about that man in Liverpool."

When the captain stood upon the deck, the chill, white ice-fog was again bearing down fast on the Shooting Star. It was bearing down with a spectral gloom that was depressing in a sea known to be still half blocked with ice-packs. A Sabbath calm reigned over the vessel. The men were lying down by the trim rope coils, come reading, some conversing; not a bolt-head or brass but shone as well as anything could shine in that lurid light. The mate and carpenter were sitting near the wheel, looking at the advancing fog; at the entrance to the fo'ksal were some men stretched out half asleep.

The captain said not a word, but walked straight up to the man at the wheel, and looked at the compass.

"Why, you're steering south," he said, quietly, "and I told nor'-nor'-west an hour ago."

"I am steering as the first mate told me," said the fellow, sullenly. "I can't steer as every one wants me. If it was my way, I'd 'steer home.'"

The first mate, as the man said this, came up and took the wheel from him insolently, as if in defiance of the captain.

"Jackson's steering right," he said.

"Right you call it," said the captain, storming. "I'm a plain man, and I like plain dealing Mr. Cardew, I've had enough of your lying tricks; let go the wheel, sir, and go to your cabin. Consider yourself under arrest for mutinous conduct. Purser, you are witness; take this man down."

Cardew still refused to let go the wheel. With the quickness of thought, the captain felled him with a blow; in a moment the deck seemed alive with shouting and leaping men. Five sailors threw themselves on the captain, three on the purser. The mutiny had had broken out at last. A cruel yell rang from stem to stern. All who favored the captain were in a moment, with curses and threats, overpowered and bound to the mast and rigging.

"Now, Captain Ritson," said Cardew, as he rose with a yellow face, down which the blood streamed, and advanced to where the captain stood bound and pale with rage, "you see I am stronger than you thought. If I choose, I could at once let you overboard with a rope and freeze you to death; I could have you pelted with bottles, or put an end to in some other agreeable way; but I shall spare you now, to pay you out better for that blow and other indignities. Last night you refused to join me in my sensible scheme for baffling the rascals who expose us to danger and then underpay us. Now I will not accept your partnership. O, you're a rash, violent man, though you are so pious; where's your Providence now? Come, my boys, leave these fools, and get out the wine; we'll have a spree to-night, for to-morrow we shall be on shore, and perhaps starting again for England. Come, get out this man's brandy. We'll have a night of it. It's cold enough for these fellows, ain't it? But it'll make them warm seeing us drinking."

That night, as the liquor went round, and the songs circulated among the mutineers to the doleful accompaniment of the monotonous and funeral fog-bell, the captain and seven friends lying bound against the frozen shrouds, the vapor lifted for a moment eastward and disclosed an aurora borealis that lit up all the horizon with a majestic fan of crimson and phosphorescent light that darted upward its keen rays, and throbbed and quivered with almost super natural splendor. The electric lustre lit the pale faces of the captain and his fellow-prisoners.

"Why, here are the merry dancers," said the first mate, now somewhat excited by drinking, as he walked up to the captain, and waved a smoking hot glass of grog before his face. "Why, I'll be hanged if they ain't the blessed angels dancing for joy because you and your brother saints will so soon join them. What do you think of Providence by this time, Ritson, eh?"

The mutineers put their glasses together, and laughed hideously at this.

"Just as I always did. God watches us at sea as well as by land," was the captain's calm reply. "I'd rather even now be bound here, than change my conscience with yours Cardew. I'm a plain man, and I mean it when I say that it's no worse dying here than at home in a feather-bed. It is less hard to part with the world here."

"O, if you're satisfied, I am. Here, glasses round to drink to the Pious Captain. All his gang are here but that boy, that little devil Harrison; search for him every where, men; he mus'nt be left; if he is in the hold, smoke him out with brimstone; never mind if he does'nt come out, he'll have his gruel if you keep the hatches well down."

"Ay, ay, sir," was the reply, with a brutal and disgusting laugh; and away the men went on their search, eager as boys for a rat-hunt.

An hour after, all but the watch to toll the fog-bell, the mutineers on board the Shooting Star were sunk into a drunken and wallowing sleep. That night, from time to time, Captain Ritston kept his men's hearts up with cheerful words; the cold was hard to bear, but they survived it.—When day broke, they all united in prayer that God would allow them to die soon and together. They had sunk into a torpid semi-sleep, when the sound of a gun through the fog, in the distance, aroused them. At the same moment, the loud taunting voice of the mate awoke the bound men to a sense of their misery and despair.

"Good morning, Captain Ritson," said the mate. "Lord, lads, how chopfallen that smart fellow the purser is, and look at those A. B. sailors, who used to sneer at you, and call you skulkers, loafers, and Liverpool dregs. How our fat friend the quartermaster must miss his grog; hard, isn't it? Captain Ritston, it is my painful duty to inform you (lower the two boats there, quick, men, and stave the third) that we are about to leave this ship, which will sink, as I am informed by my excellent friend the carpenter here, almost exactly three hours after our departure. A more pliant disposition and a more graceful concession to those business arrangements, in which I solicited your co-operation, would have led to very different results; gentlemen, that gun is from a vessel lying off the ice-field which we are now skirting; that vessel will take us up. How about that blow now? We have money enough to pay for our passage. Farewell. Lower the boats there. Captain Ritson, I have the honor of wishing you a pleasant voyage to heaven."

Captain Ritson made no answer till the boats were lowered. "God will avenge us if it seemeth good to him," was the only malediction he uttered. "Men, I thank God that I still trust in his mercy, and, worse come to worst, I am ready to die."

"So am I," said the purser, "if I could only first look up and see that yellow rascal dangling at the yard-arm."

"It's all up with us," said the quartermaster. "I only wish the black villians had given us one noggin round before they left."

An hour passed, the last sound of the receding boats had passed away. The sailors began to groan and lament their fate.

"Have you any hope left, Captain Ritson, now?" said the purser, in a melancholy voice. "O Jenny, Jenny, my dear wife, I shall never see you again."

"As for my wife," said the quartermaster, "it's no great loss. I'm thinking more of myself. Oh, those villians."

"I have to hope," said the captain, bravely, "but I am ready to die. I trust in the mercy of God. He will do the best for us, and he will guard my poor chi dren."

Just then, like a direct answer from Heaven, the fog grew thinner, and the sun shone through with a cold yellow luster, showing the line of land for miles; alas! it was not land, but ice-pack, miles of it, rising into mountainous bergs, green as emerald, blue as sapphire, golden as crysolite, and stretching away into snow plains and valleys. The nearest cliffs were semi-transparent, and glistened with prismatic colors, but in the distance they merged again into cold clinging fog. The nearest ice was about two miles off.

The captain looked at his companions, and they at him, but they did not speak, their hearts were so full, for the water could be now heard gurgling and bubbling upward in the hold.

"We have two hours more to live, and let us spend it," said the captain, bravely, "in preparing for death. After all, it is better than dying of cold and hunger, and it is only the death us sailors have been taught to expect at any moment."

"I shouldn't care if it was not for my poor old mother," said one of the sailors, "but now she'll have to go on the parish. O, it's hard, bitter hard."

"Fie, man," said the captain, with his unquenchable courage, "have I not my children, and the purser his wife. What must be must be, must be,—bear it like a man."

At that moment a shrewd boyish face showed itself round the corner of the cabin stairs, and the next instant up leaped and danced Harrison, the ship's boy, with a sharp carving knife in his hand. He capered for joy round the captain, and was hailed with a tremendous shout of delight and welcome as he released the men one by one, beginning with his master.

"They thought I was in the hold," he said, "diden't they? but I was hiding under the captain's sofa all the time, and there I lay till I was sure they were gone. The vessel's filling fast, Captain Ritson; there is no time to lose. Hurrah!"

"It is quite true," said the purser, as he returned from below with the captain. "We have one hour, no more, to rig a raft in, so to it my lads, with a will. The leak's too far gone, and we've not hands enough to make the pumps tell on it."

The men were shaking hands all round, intoxicated with joy at their escape.

"Come, men, enough of that. I'm a plain man, and what I say I mean," said the captain, already himself. "We're not out of the wood yet, so don't holler. Come, set to at the raft, and get all the biscuts and junk those villains have left. I shall be the last man to leave the wessel. I sha'nt leave her at all till she begins to settle down.—Purser, get some sails for tents. Quartermaster, you look to the grub. Harrison, you collect the spars for the men; Davis, you see the work is strong and sure. It isn't the coast I should choose to land on; but any port in a storm, you know; and, purser, you get two or three muskets and some powder and shot. We may have to live on sea-birds for a day or two, till God sends us deliverance, death, or a ship; that is our alternative. Come, to work."

The raft was made in no time. But the stores proved scanty. The scoundrel mate had thrown overboard, spoiled, or carried off all but three days' provision of meat, biscut, and rum. The captain had almost to be forced from the vessel. They had not got half a mile away when the great ice-pack closed upon it, just as she was sinking. As the Shooting Star slowly settled down, Captain Ritson took off his cap and stood for a moment bareheaded.

"There," said he, "goes as good a wessel as ever passed the Mersey lights; as long as she floated she'd have done Messrs David and Blizzard credit."

"Good by, old Shooting Star," said the men. "If ever a man deserved the gallows, it's that first mate of ours."

The raft reached the shore safely.

"I take possession of this 'ere floating pack," said the captain, good-humordly, to keep up the men's spirits, as he leaped on the ice, "in the name of her blessed Majesty, and I beg to christen it Ritson's Island, if it is joined on to the mainland, we'll wait and see what the mainland is. I wonder if there are many bears, or puffins, or white foxes, on it. And now let's rig the tents, and then we'll measure out the food."

The next day brought no hope. The pack proved to be of enormous size, and a deep ice-fog prevented its complete exploration. The food was fast decreasing. The few penguins on the pack would not come within shot. Once they saw a white bear, but it dived, and appeared no more. The men's hearts began to sink; half the spars had been used up for the fires; one day more and the fuel would be gone; the rum gone; the meat gone Frost and starvation awaited them. There were now murmurs. Once the captain came on two of the sailors who were crying like children; another time he observed the men's fierce and hungry looks as they watched the quartermaster cowering under the tent, and he knew too well what those savage fires in their hollow eyes indicated.

"It must come to the casting of lots for one of us," he heard them whisper. "Every hour we can pull on gets us more chance of a ship."

The next day the purser shot two penguins, and ate greedily of the nauseous flesh. The fourth day the provisions were exhausted at the first meal. Then Captain Ritson stood up, his musket in his hand, for he had all this time kept watch at night like the other men, and shared every labor and privation. The quartermaster was lamenting his fate.

"If this voyage had only turned out well," he said, "I might have got a ship again; for the firm promised me a ship again if I only kept from drink and did my duty; and this time I have done it by them, and I should have saved the vessel if it hadn't been for this mutiny."

Captain Ritson began,—

"Mr. Quartermaster, silence. This is no time for crying over spilt milk. I dont wish to hurt your feelings, for you're an honest man, though you sometimes rather overdid the grog. I'm a plain man, and I mean what I say, and what I say is this,—here we are, and we don't know whether it is berg or mainland, and no food left,—not a crumb. Now what is to be done! We hear the bear growl, and the fox yelp; but if we can't shoot them, that won't help us much. We must spend all to-day in trying for the mainland; if we find the sea to the eastward, we must then turn back, commit ourselves to God, who directs all things in the heavens above and the earth beneath (you all heard me read that on Sunday, and I needn't repeat it), and take to the raft, whatever happens. But there's one thing I have to say, as a plain man, and that is,—if any coward here dares even whisper the word "cannibalish," I'll shoot him dead with this gun I hold in my hand, and mean to hold day and night. We are Christien men, mind; and no misery shall make wild beasts of us, while I am a live captain—so mind that."

The exploration destroyed the men's last hope. The mile's painful march only served to prove that wild tracts of sea, full of shaking ice, lay between the pack and the shore.

"I see something ahead like a man's boddy," said the pursuer, who had volunteered to climb an eminence, and report if any vessel could be discerned.

"It is partly covered with snow, and it lies on the edge of a deep hole in the ice"

The party instantly made for it. Harrison, being light of foot, was the first to reach it, and to shout,—

"O captain! captain! come here! it's Philips, the carpenter, that went away with the mate."

And so it was. They all recognized the hard bad face. An empty bottle lay by the body.

"I see it all," said the captain. "He got drunk, he lagged behind, and they lost him in the fog. Some vessel has taken them off,"

"I wish it had been the mate," said the purser

As he spoke, a huge black head emerged for a moment from the water, and all the men fell back and cried it was the Devil come for the carpenter.

"Nonsense, you flock of geese," said the captain; it was only a black seal. I only wish he'd show again, and we'd have a shot at him; he'd keep us for two days. Now then, push on, for we must get on the raft and into the open sea before dark, and the Lord guide and help us."

Slowly and silently the melancholy band, with only two sound-hearted men left among them, the captain and the purser, ascended the last snow hill leading to the shore, where the raft and the tents had been left six hours before. The sun, a globe of crimsom fire, was setting behind banks of gray and ominous mist. Two of the men were now frostbitten in the cheeks, and lay down to be rubbed with snow by their companions.

The captain strode forward alone to the top of the hill to reconnoitre. He was seen by them all striding forward till he reached the summit, but slowly now, for that giant of a man was faint with hunger and fatigue. The men sat down waiting for him to return, and rubbing themselves with snow. He returned slower than he had ascended, feeble and silent. He did not look his companions straight in the face, but wrung his hands, pulled his sou'wester over his eyes, and sat down by the tired men. Then he rose gravely, with his old impregnable courage, and said,—

"Men I bring you bad news; but bear it like Christians. It's all sent for a good purpose. Our raft has been carried off by a flow of drift ice. We have only a few hours to live. I'm a plain man, and mean what I say. Let us die with a good heart, and without repining. It is not our own fault as to this."

Two of the men uttered yells of despair, and threw themselves on the ground; the rest seemed to actually grow smaller, and shrink together in their hopeless despair. The purser rocked to and fro, holding his hands. The quartermaster shook with the cold, and turned purple with fear. The boy burst into an agony of tears.

"Come, men, let us light a fire," and Captain Ritson. "We are not women. Let us collect any remaining wood, and, having prayed together and committed ourselves into his hands (the captain took off his hat and looked upwards), let us sleep and in that sleep, if it is His will, death will take us."

But nothing could rouse them now. The purser, and the purser only, had strength enough left to collect the few pieces of driftwood outside the tents. It was like digging one's own grave, as the night began to fall, and shut out the white cliffs and desolate tracts of ice.

"Light it, Pennant," said the captain, "while we kneel round and commit ourselves to Him who never leaves the helm, though he may seem to some times when the storm hides Him."

The fire crackeled and spluttered; then it rose a thin wavering flame.

"Before this is burnt out, messmate we shall have started on another voyage, and pray God we get safely to port. Now, then, load all the muskets, and fire them at the third signal I give. If there is a vessel within two miles of the pack, they may perhaps hear us. One, two, three."

The discharge of the five guns broke the ghastly stillness with a crash explosion, which seemed to rebound and spread from cliff to clig till it faded far away in the northern solitudes, where death only reigned in eternal silence, and amid eternal snow.

"There goes our last hope," said the captain; "but I am thankful I can still say, His will be done; and I trust my children to His mercy."

"My wife don't need much praying for," said the quartermaster. "She'll fight *her* way, I bet."

Just then the purser, who had been staring at the horizon, trying to pierce the gloom to the right, leaped on his feet, shouted, screamed, cried, embraced the captain, and danced and flung up his hat.

Every one turned round and looked where he was looking. There the saw a light sparkle, and then a red light blazed up, and then a rocket mount in a long tail of fire till it discharged a nosegay of colored stars. It was a ship answering their light. Then came the booming sound of a ship's gun. It was a vessel lying off the pack, and they were saved.

An hour's walk (they were all strong enough now) brought the captain and his men to the ship's side. The ship was only three miles off along the shore, but the fog had hidden it from them when they had returned to lay down and die.

As honest rough hands pressed theirs, and helped them up the vessel's side, and honest brown faces smiled welcome, and food was held out, and thirty sailors at once broke into a cheer that scared the wolves on the opposite shore, Captain Ritson said: "Thank God, friends, for this kindness. I'm a plain man, and I mean what I say; but my heart's too full now to tell you all I feel. Purser, I did lose hope just now, when I saw the raft carried off."

One autumn afternoon, four months later, three men entered Mr. Blizzard's office and inquired for that person.

"He is engaged just now," said a new clerk (the rest had left), and pointing to an inner glass door that stood ajar. "Engaged with Captain Cardew, of the Morning Star; he sails to-morrow for Belize. Take seats."

The muffled-up sailor-looking men took seats near the half-open door, through which came low words of talk.

"Riston was too reckless," said a disagreeable voice, "and quite lost his head in danger."

"No doubt," said another voice. "Take another glass of sherry, captain."

"The purser, too, was not very honest, I fear, and very careless about the stores. By the by, did I ever tell you about that drunken quartermaster, Thompson, losing that ship of yours, the Red Star, off the Malabar coast. He had just returned from Quebec, so Sennant told me, who sailed with him. He had been sotting at Quebec, and when the vessel returned, he said he wouldn't go. They found him obstinately drunk. Will you believe it, he remained drunk the whole voyage till they came and told him he was near Glasgow. Then he leaped up, shaved himself, put on his best coat and a white tie, and went on shore to see our agents, old Falconer and Johnson, fresh as paint. Ha! ha!"

The other voice laughed too. It was Mr. Blizzard, from his throne of large capital; he was probably about to replace a ledger, and consult the almanac, as he had done that afternoon four months before.

"You must make a better voyage with the Morning Star than Captain Ritson did with his unfortunate vessel," said Mr. Blizzard. "Don't be afaid of the sherry."

But Cardew never drank that glass of sherry, for the door just then bursting open dashed the glass to pieces in his hand, and Captain Ritson seized him by the throat.

"I'm a plain man, Mr. Blizzard, sir," he said, "and I mean what I say; but if ever there was a mutinous, thieving, lying, false, shark-hearted scoundrel, it is this man who sunk the Shooting Star, and left me, and the purser, and six more of us, to die off Labrador on the ice-pack. Purser, bring in that policeman, and we'll have justice done!"

At the next assizes, Cardew was sentenced to nine years' transportation for frauds on the house of David and Blizzard, and for conspiring to sink the Shooting Star, and part of her crew, off the coast of Labrador. A Liverpool paper, a few months ago, mentioned that a bushranger of the same name had been shot in an encounter with the mounted police. As the name is not a common one, the bushranger and the mate were probably the same persons.

The firm tried the quartermaster with another vessel, and he acquitted himself well; and as for Ritson, he is now the most respected captain in their service.

For the Reporter.

EDUCATIONAL.

No. 1. COMMON SCHOOLS.—Our present system of Common Schools is based upon the idea that Education should be the common inheritance of all the youth of the State. The State undertakes to educate its own children; and truly, it can bequeath no richer legacy than Education. Its benefits can not be over estimated. The school system affords the *means* to accomplish this noble object, and places them within the reach of all—the poor as well as the rich. It does not offer education as a *gift*, affords to all alike the opportunity of *acquiring* it. If any remain in ignorance it is because they do not accept the benefits within their reach. And it is a lamentoble fact that all do not accept—that many in our own County are growing up in comparitive ignorance, notwithstanding all the pains taken to educate them. A large number entitled to school benefits attend only in the Winter term—many of these so irregularly as to scarcely "hold their own"—while others do not even have their names enrolled upon the Report book. There is a wrong somewhere. We believe it owing more to the fault of the parents than of the children. The latter are often kept at home, or in the streets, because, at school, they are required to submit to some kind of restraint, and their parents encourage them in so doing. The remedy to this evil must be applied to society. To do this there must be a stronger *public sentiment* in favor of intelligence. Do you ask how this is to be awakened? By agitatation, by calling the attention of the people to their *own interests;* by discussing educational matters, by holding educational meetings, and Teacher's Associations. Scatter the school-law, and educationel reading, among the people. Ask of your law-makers that *intelligence* be made a requisite to franchisement. Let the Pres reiterate the truth that the future happiness of our country depends upon the proper education of the young. Yes! "Keep it before the people" that *ignorance* is synonymous with *crime*. What a vast improvement in public sentiment might be brought about, if every newspaper in the State would devote one column to educational interests. The "leven" would then come in contact with the "whole lump." Our Common Schools, the Press, and the Pulpit, are the three great levers upon which we must rely for the elevation of Society. These levers should work in perfect harmony. Let there be unity of effort. Although our school system is accomplishing much, there is much to accomplish. Let the friends of this system strive to remove every "hindering cause" to its full efficiency. Now that "this cruel war is over," let us try to impart to our educational machinery, an *accelerated motion*. "Move direct upon the enemie's works" and ignorance must begin to capitulate.

ALPHA BETA.

"PRIDE goeth before a fall." It frequently goeth before a waterfall.