



Jack Tier

or, the Florida Reef



Part 1: Chapter 5

“He sleeps; but dreams of massy gold,
And heaps of pearl. He stretch’d his hands—
He hears a voice—

*“T’ll man withhold!
A pale one near him stands.”*

—Dana.

It was near night-fall when the *Swash* anchored among the low and small islets mentioned. Rose had been on deck, as the vessel approached this singular and solitary haven, watching the movements of those on board, as well as the appearance of objects on the land, with the interest her situation would be-likely to awaken. She saw the light and manageable craft glide through the narrow and crooked passages that led into the port, the process of anchoring, and the scene of tranquil solitude that succeeded; each following the other as by a law of nature. The light-house next attracted her attention, and, as soon as the sun disappeared, her eyes were fastened on the lantern, in expectation of beholding the watchful and warning fires gleaming there, to give the mariner notice of the position of the dangers that surrounded the place. Minute went by after minute, however, and the customary illumination seemed to be forgotten.

“Why is not this light shining?” Rose asked of Mulford, as the young man came near her, after having discharged his duty in helping to moor the vessel, and in clearing the decks. “All the light-houses we have passed, and they have been fifty, have shown bright lights at this hour, but this.”



"I cannot explain it; nor have I the smallest notion where we are. I have been aloft, and there was nothing in sight but this cluster of low islets, far or near. I did fancy, for a moment, I saw a speck like a distant sail, off here, to the northward and eastward, but I rather think it was a gull, or some other sea-bird glancing upward on the wing. I mentioned it to the captain when I came down, and he appeared to believe it a mistake. I have watched that light-house closely, too, ever since we came in, and I have not seen the smallest sign of life about it. It is altogether an extraordinary place!"

"One suited to acts of villany, I fear, Harry!"

"Of that we shall be better judges to-morrow. You, at least, have one vigilant friend, who will die sooner than harm shall come to you. I believe Spike to be thoroughly unprincipled; still he knows he can go so far and no further, and has a wholesome dread of the law. But the circumstance that there should be such a port as this, with a regular light-house, and no person near the last, is so much out of the common way, that I do not know what to make of it."

"Perhaps the light-house keeper is afraid to show himself, in the presence of the *Swash*?"

"That can hardly be, for vessels must often enter the port, if port it can be called. But Spike is as much concerned at the circumstance that the lamps are not lighted, as any of us can be. Look, he is about to visit the building in the boat, accompanied by two of his oldest sea-dogs."

"Why might we not raise the anchor, and sail out of this place, leaving Spike ashore?" suggested Rose, with more decision and spirit than discretion.

"For the simple reason that the act would be piracy, even if I could get the rest of the people to obey my orders, as certainly I could not. No, Rose: you, and your aunt, and Biddy, however, might land at these buildings, and refuse to return, Spike having no authority over his passengers."

"Still he would have the power to make us come back to his brig. Look, he has left the vessel's side, and is going directly toward the light-house."

Mulford made no immediate answer, but remained at Rose's side, watching the movements of the captain. The last pulled directly to the islet with the buildings, a distance of only a few hundred feet, the light-house being constructed on a rocky island that was nearly in the centre of the cluster, most probably to protect it from the ravages of the waves. The fact, however, proved, as Mulford did not fail to suggest to his companion, that the beacon had been erected less to guide vessels into the haven, than to warn mariners at a distance, of the position of the whole group.



In less than five minutes after he had landed, Spike himself was seen in the lantern, in the act of lighting its lamps. In a very short time the place was in a brilliant blaze, reflectors and all the other parts of the machinery of the place performing their duties as regularly as if tended by the usual keeper. Soon after Spike returned on board, and the anchor-watch was set. Then everybody sought the rest that it was customary to take at that hour.

Mulford was on deck with the appearance of the sun; but he found that Spike had preceded him, had gone ashore again, had extinguished the lamps, and was coming alongside of the brig on his return. A minute later the captain came over the side.

“You were right about your sail, last night, a’ter all, Mr. Mulford,” said Spike, on coming aft. “There she is, sure enough; and we shall have her alongside to strike cargo out and in, by the time the people have got their breakfasts.”

As Spike pointed toward the light-house while speaking, the mate changed his position a little, and saw that a schooner was coming down toward the islets before the wind. Mulford now began to understand the motives of the captain’s proceedings, though a good deal yet remained veiled in mystery. He could not tell where the brig was, nor did he know precisely why so many expedients were adopted to conceal the transfer of a cargo as simple as that of flour. But he who was in the secret left but little time for reflection; for swallowing a hasty breakfast on deck, he issued orders enough to his mate to give him quite as much duty as he could perform, when he again entered the yawl, and pulled toward the stranger.

Rose soon appeared on deck, and she naturally began to question Harry concerning their position and prospects. He was confessing his ignorance, as well as lamenting it, when his companion’s sweet face suddenly flushed. She advanced a step eagerly toward the open window of Spike’s state-room, then compressed her full, rich under-lip with the ivory of her upper teeth, and stood a single instant, a beautiful statue of irresolution instigated by spirit. The last quality prevailed; and Mulford was really startled when he saw Rose advance quite to the window, thrust in an arm, and turn toward him with his own sextant in her hand. During the course of the passage out, the young man had taught Rose to assist him in observing the longitude; and she was now ready to repeat the practice. Not a moment was lost in executing her intention. Sights were had, and the instrument was returned to its place without attracting the attention of the men, who were all busy in getting up purchases, and in making the other necessary dispositions for discharging the flour. The observations answered the purpose, though somewhat imperfectly made. Mulford had a tolerable notion of their latitude, having kept the



brig's run in his head since quitting Yutacan; and he now found that their longitude was about 83 degrees west from Greenwich. After ascertaining this fact, a glance at the open chart, which lay on Spike's desk, satisfied him that the vessel was anchored within the group of the Dry Tortugas, or at the western termination of the well-known, formidable, and extensive Florida Reef. He had never been in that part of the world before, but had heard enough in sea-gossip, and had read enough in books, to be at once apprised of the true character of their situation. The islets were American; the light-house was American; and the haven in which the *Swash* lay was the very spot in the contemplation of government for an outer man-of-war harbour, where fleets might rendezvous in the future wars of that portion of the world. He now saw plainly enough the signs of the existence of a vast reef, a short distance to the southward of the vessel, that formed a species of sea-wall, or mole, to protect the port against the waves of the gulf in that direction. This reef he knew to be miles in width.

There was little time for speculation, Spike soon bringing the strange schooner directly alongside of the brig. The two vessels immediately became a scene of activity, one discharging, and the other receiving the flour as fast as it could be struck out of the hold of the *Swash* and lowered upon the deck of the schooner. Mulford, however, had practised a little artifice, as the stranger entered the haven, which drew down upon him an anathema or two from Spike, as soon as they were alone. The mate had set the brig's ensign, and this compelled the stranger to be markedly rude, or to answer the compliment. Accordingly he had shown the ancient flag of Spain. For thus extorting a national symbol from the schooner, the mate was sharply rebuked at a suitable moment, though nothing could have been more forbearing than the deportment of his commander when they first met.

When Spike returned to his own vessel, he was accompanied by a dark-looking, well-dressed, and decidedly gentleman-like personage, whom he addressed indifferently, in his very imperfect Spanish, as Don Wan, (Don Juan, or John,) or Señor Montefalderon. By the latter appellation he even saw fit to introduce the very respectable-looking stranger to his mate. This stranger spoke English well, though with an accent.

"Don Wan has taken all the flour, Mr. Mulford, and intends shoving it over into Cuba, without troubling the custom-house, I believe; but that is not a matter to give us any concern, you know."

The wink, and the knowing look by which this speech was accompanied, seemed particularly disagreeable to Don Juan, who now paid his compliments to Rose, with no



little surprise betrayed in his countenance, but with the ease and reserve of a gentleman. Mulford thought it strange that a smuggler of flour should be so polished a personage, though his duty did not admit of his bestowing much attention on the little trifling of the interview that succeeded.

For about an hour the work went steadily and rapidly on. During that time Mulford was several times on board the schooner, as, indeed, was Josh, Jack Tier, and others belonging to the *Swash*. The Spanish vessel was Baltimore, or clipper built, with a trunk-cabin, and had every appearance of sailing fast. Mulford was struck with her model, and, while on board of her, he passed both forward and aft to examine it. This was so natural in a seaman, that Spike, while he noted the proceeding, took it in good part. He even called out to his mate, from his own quarter-deck, to admire this or that point in the schooner's construction. As is customary with the vessels of southern nations, this stranger was full of men, but they continued at their work, some half dozen of brawny negroes among them, shouting their songs as they swayed at the falls, no one appearing to manifest jealousy or concern. At length Tier came near the mate, and said, "Uncle Sam will not be pleased when he hears the reason that the keeper is not in his light-house."

"And what is that reason, Jack? If you know it, tell it to me."

"Go aft and look down the companion-way, maty, and see it for yourself."

Mulford did go aft, and he made an occasion to look down into the schooner's cabin, where he caught a glimpse of the persons of a man and a boy, whom he at once supposed had been taken from the light-house. This one fact of itself doubled his distrust of the character of Spike's proceedings. There was no sufficient apparent reason why a mere smuggler should care about the presence of an individual more or less in a foreign port. Everything that had occurred, looked like pre-concert between the brig and the schooner; and the mate was just beginning to entertain the strongest distrust that their vessel was holding treasonable communication with the enemy, when an accident removed all doubt on the subject, from his own mind at least. Spike had, once or twice, given his opinion that the weather was treacherous, and urged the people of both crafts to extraordinary exertions, in order that the vessels might get clear of each other as soon as possible. This appeal had set various expedients in motion to second the more regular work of the purchases. Among other things, planks had been laid from one vessel to the other, and barrels were rolled along them with very little attention to the speed or the direction. Several had fallen on the schooner's deck with rude shocks, but no damage was done, until one, of which the hoops had not been properly secured,



met with a fall, and burst nearly at Mulford's feet. It was at the precise moment when the mate was returning, from taking his glance into the cabin, toward the side of the *Swash*. A white cloud arose, and half a dozen of the schooner's people sprang for buckets, kids, or dishes, in order to secure enough of the contents of the broken barrel to furnish them with a meal. At first nothing was visible but the white cloud that succeeded the fall, and the scrambling sailors in its midst. No sooner, however, had the air got to be a little clear, than Mulford saw an object lying in centre of the wreck, that he at once recognised for a keg of the gunpowder! The captain of the schooner seized this keg, gave a knowing look at Mulford, and disappeared in the hold of his own vessel, carrying with him, what was out of all question, a most material part of the true cargo of the *Swash*.

At the moment when the flour-barrel burst, Spike was below, in close conference with his Spanish, or Mexican guest; and the wreck being so soon cleared away, it is probable that he never heard of the accident. As for the two crews, they laughed a little among themselves at the revelation which had been made, as well as at the manner; but to old sea-dogs like them, it was a matter of very little moment, whether the cargo was, in reality, flour or gunpowder. In a few minutes the affair seemed to be forgotten. In the course of another hour the *Swash* was light, having nothing in her but some pig-lead, which she used for ballast, while the schooner was loaded to her hatches, and full. Spike now sent a boat, with orders to drop a kedge about a hundred yards from the place where his own brig lay. The schooner warped up to this kedge, and dropped an anchor of her own, leaving a very short range of cable out, it being a flat calm. Ordinarily, the trades prevail at the Dry Tortugas, and all along the Florida Reef. Sometimes, indeed, this breeze sweeps across the whole width of the Gulf of Mexico, blowing home, as it is called—reaching even to the coast of Texas. It is subject, however, to occasional interruptions everywhere, varying many points in its direction, and occasionally ceasing entirely. The latter was the condition of the weather about noon on this day, or when the schooner hauled off from the brig, and was secured at her own anchor.

“Mr. Mulford,” said Spike, “I do not like the state of the atmosphere. D’ye see that fiery streak along the western horizon—well, sir, as the sun gets nearer to that streak, there’ll be trouble, or I’m no judge of weather.”

“You surely do not imagine, Captain Spike, that the sun will be any nearer to that fiery streak, as you call it, when he is about to set, than he is at this moment?” answered the mate, smiling.



"I'm sure of one thing, young man, and that is, that old heads are better than young ones. What a man has once seen, he may expect to see again, if the same leading signs offer. Man the boat, sir, and carry out the kedge, which is still in it, and lay it off here, about three p'int on our larboard bow."

Mulford had a profound respect for Spike's seamanship, whatever he might think of his principles. The order was consequently obeyed. The mate was then directed to send down various articles out of the top, and to get the top-gallant and royal yards on deck. Spike carried his precautions so far, as to have the mainsail lowered, it ordinarily brailing at that season of the year, with a standing gaff. With this disposition completed, the captain seemed more at his ease, and went below to join Señor Montefalderon in a siesta. The Mexican, for such, in truth, was the national character of the owner of the schooner, had preceded him in this indulgence; and most of the people of the brig having laid themselves down to sleep under the heat of the hour, Mulford soon enjoyed another favourable opportunity for a private conference with Rose.

"Harry," commenced the latter, as soon as they were alone; "I have much to tell you. While you have been absent I have overheard a conversation between this Spanish gentleman and Spike, that shows the last is in treaty with the other for the sale of the brig. Spike extolled his vessel to the skies, while Don Wan, as he calls him, complains that the brig is old, and cannot last long; to which Spike answered 'to be sure she is old, Señor Montefalderon, but she will last as long as your war, and under a bold captain might be made to return her cost a hundred fold!' What war can he mean, and to what does such a discourse tend?"

"The war alludes to the war now existing between America and Mexico, and the money to be made is to be plundered at sea, from our own merchant-vessels. If Don Juan Montefalderon is really in treaty for the purchase of the brig, it is to convert her into a Mexican cruiser, either public or private."

"But this would be treason on the part of Spike!"

"Not more so than supplying the enemy with gunpowder, as he has just been doing. I have ascertained the reason he was so unwilling to be overhauled by the revenue steamer, as well as the reason why the revenue steamer wished so earnestly to overhaul us. Each barrel of flour contains another of gunpowder, and that has been sold to this Señor Montefalderon, who is doubtless an officer of the Mexican government, and no smuggler."

"He has been at New York, this very summer, I know," continued Rose, "for he spoke of his visit, and made such other remarks, as leaves no doubt that Spike expected



to find him here, on this very day of the month. He also paid Spike a large sum of money in doubloons, and took back the bag to his schooner, when he had done so, after showing the captain enough was left to pay for the brig could they only agree on the terms of their bargain.”

“Ay, ay; it is all plain enough now, Spike has determined on a desperate push for fortune, and foreseeing it might not soon be in his power to return to New York in safety, he has included his designs on you and your fortune, in the plot.”

“My fortune! the trifle I possess can scarcely be called a fortune, Harry!”

“It would be a fortune to Spike, Rose; and I shall be honest enough to own it would be a fortune to me. I say this frankly, for I do believe you think too well of me to suppose that I seek you for any other reason than the ardent love I bear your person and character; but a fact is not to be denied because it may lead certain persons to distrust our motives. Spike is poor, like myself; and the brig is not only getting to be very old, but she has been losing money for the last twelve months.”

Mulford and Rose now conversed long and confidentially, on their situation and prospects. The mate neither magnified nor concealed the dangers of both; but freely pointed out the risk to himself, in being on board a vessel that was aiding and comforting the enemy. It was determined between them that both would quit the brig the moment an opportunity offered; and the mate even went so far as to propose an attempt to escape in one of the boats, although he might incur the hazards of a double accusation, those of mutiny and larceny, for making the experiment. Unfortunately, neither Rose, nor her aunt, nor Biddy, nor Jack Tier had seen the barrel of powder, and neither could testify as to the true character of Spike’s connection with the schooner. It was manifestly necessary, therefore, independently of the risks that might be run by “bearding the lion in his den,” to proceed with great intelligence and caution.

This dialogue between Harry and Rose, occurred just after the turn in the day, and lasted fully an hour. Each had been too much interested to observe the heavens, but, as they were on the point of separating, Rose pointed out to her companion the unusual and most menacing aspect of the sky in the western horizon. It appeared as if a fiery heat was glowing there, behind a curtain of black vapour; and what rendered it more remarkable, was the circumstance that an extraordinary degree of placidity prevailed in all other parts of the heavens. Mulford scarce knew what to make of it; his experience not going so far as to enable him to explain the novel and alarming appearance. He stepped on a gun, and gazed around him for a moment. There lay the schooner, without a being visible on board of her, and there stood the light-house, gloomy in its



desertion and solitude. The birds alone seemed to be alive and conscious of what was approaching. They were all on the wing, wheeling wildly in the air, and screaming discordantly, as belonged to their habits. The young man leaped off the gun, gave a loud call to Spike, at the companion-way, and sprang forward to call all hands.

One minute only was lost, when every seaman on board the *Swash*, from the captain to Jack Tier, was on deck. Mulford met Spike at the cabin door, and pointed toward the fiery column, that was booming down upon the anchorage, with a velocity and direction that would now admit of no misinterpretation. For one instant that sturdy old seaman stood aghast; gazing at the enemy as one conscious of his impotency might have been supposed to quail before an assault that he foresaw must prove irresistible. Then his native spirit, and most of all the effects of training, began to show themselves in him, and he became at once, not only the man again, but the resolute, practised, and ready commander.

“Come aft to the spring, men—” he shouted—“clap on the spring, Mr. Mulford, and bring the brig head to wind.”

This order was obeyed as seamen best obey, in cases of sudden and extreme emergency; or with intelligence, aptitude and power. The brig had swung nearly round, in the desired direction, when the tornado struck her. It will be difficult, we do not know but it is impossible, to give a clear and accurate account of what followed. As most of our readers have doubtless felt how great is the power of the wind, whiffing and pressing different ways, in sudden and passing gusts, they have only to imagine this power increased many, many fold, and the baffling currents made furious, as it might be, by meeting with resistance, to form some notion of the appalling strength and frightful inconstancy with which it blew for about a minute.

Notwithstanding the circumstance of Spike’s precaution had greatly lessened the danger, every man on the deck of the *Swash* believed the brig was gone when the gust struck her. Over she went, in fact, until the water came pouring in above her half-ports, like so many little cascades, and spouting up through her scupper-holes, resembling the blowing of young whales. It was the whiffing energy of the tornado that alone saved her. As if disappointed in not destroying its intended victim at one swoop, the tornado “let up” in its pressure, like a dexterous wrestler, making a fresh and desperate effort to overturn the vessel, by a slight variation in its course. That change saved the *Swash*. She righted, and even rolled in the other direction, or what might be called to windward, with her decks full of water. For a minute longer these baffling, changing gusts continued, each causing the brig to bow like a reed to their power, one lifting



as another pressed her down, and then the weight, or the more dangerous part of the tornado was passed, though it continued to blow heavily, always in whiffling blasts, several minutes longer.

During the weight of the gust, no one had leisure, or indeed inclination to look to aught beyond its effect on the brig. Had one been otherwise disposed, the attempt would have been useless, for the wind had filled the air with spray, and near the islets even with sand. The lurid but fiery tinge, too, interposed a veil that no human eye could penetrate. As the tornado passed onward, however, and the winds lulled, the air again became clear, and in five minutes after the moment when the *Swash* lay nearly on her side, with her lower yard-arm actually within a few feet of the water, all was still and placid around her, as one is accustomed to see the ocean in a calm, of a summer's afternoon. Then it was that those who had been in such extreme jeopardy could breathe freely and look about them. On board the *Swash* all was well—not a rope-yarn had parted, or an eyebolt drawn. The timely precautions of Spike had saved his brig, and great was his joy thereat.

In the midst of the infernal din of the tornado, screams had ascended from the cabin, and the instant he could quit the deck with propriety, Mulford sprang below, in order to ascertain their cause. He apprehended that some of the females had been driven to leeward when the brig went over, and that part of the luggage or furniture had fallen on them. In the main cabin, the mate found Señor Montefalderon just quitting his berth, composed, gentleman-like, and collected. Josh was braced in a corner nearly grey with fear, while Jack Tier still lay on the cabin floor, at the last point to which he had rolled. One word sufficed to let Don Juan know that the gust had passed, and the brig was safe, when Mulford tapped at the door of the inner cabin. Rose appeared, pale, but calm and unhurt.

"Is any one injured?" asked the young man, his mind relieved at once, as soon as he saw that she who most occupied his thoughts was safe; "we heard screams from this cabin."

"My aunt and Biddy have been frightened," answered Rose, "but neither has been hurt. Oh, Harry, what terrible thing has happened to us? I heard the roaring of—"

"'T was a tornado," interrupted Mulford eagerly, "but 't is over. 'T was one of those sudden and tremendous gusts that sometimes occur within the tropics, in which the danger is usually in the first shock. If no one is injured in this cabin, no one is injured at all."

"Oh, Mr. Mulford—dear Mr. Mulford!" exclaimed the relict, from the corner into which she had been followed and jammed by Biddy, "Oh, Mr. Mulford, are we foundered or not?"



"Heaven be praised, not, my dear ma'am, though we came nearer to it than I ever was before."

"Are we cap-aside?"

"Nor that, Mrs. Budd; the brig is as upright as a church."

"Upright!" repeated Biddy, in her customary accent,—“is it as a church? Sure, then, Mr. Mate, 't is a Presbyterian church that you mane, and that is always totterin'.”

"Catholic, or Dutch—no church in York is more completely up and down than the brig at this moment."

"Get off of me—get off of me, Biddy, and let me rise," said the widow, with dignity. "The danger is over I see, and, as we return our thanks for it, we have the consolation of knowing that we have done our duty. It is incumbent on all, at such moments, to be at their posts, and to set examples of decision and prudence."

As Mulford saw all was well in the cabin, he hastened on deck, followed by Señor Montefalderon. Just as they emerged from the companion-way, Spike was hailing the forecastle.

"Forecastle, there," he cried, standing on the trunk himself as he did so, and moving from side to side, as if to catch a glimpse of some object ahead.

"Sir," came back from an old salt, who was coiling up rigging in that seat of seamanship.

"Where-away is the schooner? She ought to be dead ahead of us, as we tend now—but blast me if I can see as much as her mast-heads."

At this suggestion, a dozen men sprang upon guns or other objects, to look for the vessel in question. The old salt forward, however, had much the best chance, for he stepped on the heel of the bowsprit, and walked as far out as the knight-heads, to command the whole view ahead of the brig. There he stood half a minute, looking first on one side of the head-gear, then the other, when he gave his trousers a hitch, put a fresh quid in his mouth, and called out in a voice almost as hoarse as the tempest, that had just gone by,

"The schooner has gone down at her anchor, sir. There's her buoy watching still, as if nothing had happened; but as for the craft itself, there's not so much as a bloody yard-arm, or mast-head of her to be seen!"

This news produced a sensation in the brig at once, as may be supposed. Even Señor Montefalderon, a quiet, gentleman-like person, altogether superior in deportment to the bustle and fuss that usually marks the manners of persons in trade, was disturbed; for to him the blow was heavy indeed. Whether he were acting for himself, or was an agent of the Mexican government, the loss was much the same.



“Tom is right enough,” put in Spike, rather coolly for the circumstances—“that there schooner of yours has foundered, Don Wan, as any one can see. She must have cap-sized and filled, for I observed they had left the hatches off, meaning, no doubt, to make an end of the storage as soon as they had done sleeping.”

“And what has become of all her men, Don Esteban?” for so the Mexican politely called his companion. “Have all my poor countrymen perished in this disaster?”

“I fear they have, Don Wan; for I see no head, as of any one swimming. The vessel lay so near that island next to it, that a poor swimmer would have no difficulty in reaching the place; but there is no living thing to be seen. But man the boat, men; we will go to the spot, Señor, and examine for ourselves.”

There were two boats in the water, and along-side of the brig. One was the *Swash*’s yawl, a small but convenient craft, while the other was much larger, fitted with a sail, and had all the appearance of having been built to withstand breezes and seas. Mulford felt perfectly satisfied, the moment he saw this boat, which had come into the haven in tow of the schooner, that it had been originally in the service of the light-house keeper. As there was a very general desire among those on the quarter-deck to go to the assistance of the schooner, Spike ordered both boats manned, jumping into the yawl himself, accompanied by Don Juan Montefalderon, and telling Mulford to follow with the larger craft, bringing with him as many of the females as might choose to accompany him. As Mrs. Budd thought it incumbent on her to be active in such a scene, all did go, including Biddy, though with great reluctance on the part of Rose.

With the buoy for a guide, Spike had no difficulty in finding the spot where the schooner lay. She had scarcely shifted her berth in the least, there having been no time for her even to swing to the gust, but she had probably cap-sized at the first blast, filled, and gone down instantly. The water was nearly as clear as the calm, mild atmosphere of the tropics; and it was almost as easy to discern the vessel, and all her hamper, as if she lay on a beach. She had sunk as she filled, or on her side, and still continued in that position. As the water was little more than three fathoms deep, the upper side was submerged but a few inches, and her yard-arms would have been out of the water, but for the circumstance that the yards had canted under the pressure.

At first, no sign was seen of any of those who had been on board this ill-fated schooner when she went down. It was known that twenty-one souls were in her, including the man and the boy who had belonged to the light-house. As the boat moved slowly over this sad ruin, however, a horrible and startling spectacle came in view. Two bodies were seen, within a few feet of the surface of the water, one grasped



in the arms of the other, in the gripe of despair. The man held in the grasp, was kept beneath the water solely by the death-lock of his companion, who was himself held where he floated, by the circumstance that one of his feet was entangled in a rope. The struggle could not have been long over, for the two bodies were slowly settling toward the bottom when first seen. It is probable that both these men had more than once risen to the surface in their dreadful struggle. Spike seized a boat-hook, and made an effort to catch the clothes of the nearest body, but ineffectually, both sinking to the sands beneath, lifeless, and without motion. There being no sharks in sight, Mulford volunteered to dive and fasten a line to one of these unfortunate men, whom Don Juan declared at once was the schooner's captain. Some little time was lost in procuring a lead-line from the brig, when the lead was dropped alongside of the drowned. Provided with another piece of the same sort of line, which had a small running bowline around that which was fastened to the lead, the mate made his plunge, and went down with great vigour of arm. It required resolution and steadiness to descend so far into salt water; but Harry succeeded, and rose with the bodies, which came up with the slightest impulse. All were immediately got into the boat, and away the latter went toward the light-house, which was nearer and more easy of access than the brig.

It is probable that one of these unfortunate men might have been revived under judicious treatment; but he was not fated to receive it. Spike, who knew nothing of such matters, undertook to direct everything, and, instead of having recourse to warmth and gentle treatment, he ordered the bodies to be rolled on a cask, suspended them by the heels, and resorted to a sort of practice that might have destroyed well men, instead of resuscitating those in whom the vital spark was dormant, if not actually extinct.

Two hours later, Rose, seated in her own cabin, unavoidably overheard the following dialogue, which passed in English, a language that Señor Montefalderon spoke perfectly well, as has been said.

"Well, Señor," said Spike, "I hope this little accident will not prevent our final trade. You will want the brig now, to take the schooner's place."

"And how am I to pay you for the brig, Señor Spike, even if I buy her?"

"I'll ventur' to guess there is plenty of money in Mexico. Though they do say the government is so backward about paying, I have always found you punctual, and am not afraid to put faith in you ag'in."

"But I have no longer any money to pay you half in hand, as I did for the powder, when last in New York."

"The bag was pretty well lined with doubloons when I saw it last, Señor."



“And do you know where that bag is; and where there is another that holds the same sum?”

Spike started, and he mused in silence some little time, ere he again spoke.

“I had forgotten,” he at length answered. “The gold must have all gone down in the schooner, along with the powder!”

“And the poor men!”

“Why, as for the men, Señor, more may be had for the asking; but powder and doubloons will be hard to find, when most wanted. Then the men were poor men, accordin’ to my idees of what an able seaman should be, or they never would have let their schooner turn turtle with them as she did.”

“We will talk of the money, Don Esteban, if you please,” said the Mexican, with reserve.

“With all my heart, Don Wan—nothing is more agreeable to me than money. How many of them doubloons shall fall to my share, if I raise the schooner and put you in possession of your craft again?”

“Can that be done, Señor?” demanded Don Juan earnestly.

“A seaman can do almost anything, in that way, Don Wan, if you will give him time and means. For one-half the doubloons I can find in the wrack, the job shall be done.”

“You can have them,” answered Don Juan, quietly, a good deal surprised that Spike should deem it necessary to offer him any part of the sum he might find. “As for the powder, I suppose that is lost to my country.”

“Not at all, Don Wan. The flour is well packed around it, and I don’t expect it would take any harm in a month. I shall not only turn over the flour to you, just as if nothing had happened, but I shall put four first-rate hands aboard your schooner, who will take her into port for you, with a good deal more sartainty than forty of the men you had. My mate is a prime navigator.”

This concluded the bargain, every word of which was heard by Rose, and every word of which she did not fail to communicate to Mulford, the moment there was an opportunity. The young man heard it with great interest, telling Rose that he should do all he could to assist in raising the schooner, in the hope that something might turn up to enable him to escape in her, taking off Rose and her aunt. As for his carrying her into a Mexican port, let them trust him for that! Agreeably to the arrangement, orders were given that afternoon to commence the necessary preparations for the work, and considerable progress was made in them by the time the *Swash*’s people were ordered to knock off work for the night.



After the sun had set, the reaction in the currents again commenced, and it blew for a few hours heavily, during the night. Toward morning, however, it moderated, and when the sun re-appeared it scarcely ever diffused its rays over a more peaceful or quiet day. Spike caused all hands to be called, and immediately set about the important business he had before him.

In order that the vessel might be as free as possible, Jack Tier was directed to skull the females ashore, in the brig's yawl; Señor Montefalderon, a man of polished manners, as we maintain is very apt to be the case with Mexican gentlemen, whatever may be the opinion of this good republic on the subject just at this moment, asked permission to be of the party. Mulford found an opportunity to beg Rose, if they landed at the light, to reconnoitre the place well, with a view to ascertain what facilities it could afford in an attempt to escape. They did land at the light, and glad enough were Mrs. Budd, Rose and Biddy to place their feet on terra firma after so long a confinement to the narrow limits of a vessel.

"Well," said Jack Tier, as they walked up to the spot where the buildings stood, "this is a rum place for a light'us, Miss Rose, and I don't wonder the keeper and his mess-mates has cleared out."

"I am very sorry to say," observed Señor Montefalderon, whose countenance expressed the concern he really felt, "that the keeper and his only companion, a boy, were on board the schooner, and have perished in her, in common with so many of my poor countrymen. There are the graves of two whom we buried here last evening, after vain efforts to restore them to life!"

"What a dreadful catastrophe it has been, Señor," said Rose, whose sweet countenance eloquently expressed the horror and regret she so naturally felt—"Twenty fellow-beings hurried into eternity without even an instant for prayer!"

"You feel for them, Señorita—it is natural you should, and it is natural that I, their countryman and leader, should feel for them, also. I do not know what God has in reserve for my unfortunate country! We may have cruel and unscrupulous men among us, Señorita, but we have thousands who are just, and brave, and honourable."

"So Mr. Mulford tells me, Señor; and he has been much in your ports, on the west coast."

"I like that young man, and wonder not a little at his and your situation in this brig—" rejoined the Mexican, dropping his voice so as not to be heard by their companions, as they walked a little ahead of Mrs. Budd and Biddy. "The Señor Spike is scarcely worthy to be his commander or your guardian."



“Yet you find him worthy of your intercourse and trust, Don Juan?”

The Mexican shrugged his shoulders, and smiled equivocally; still, in a melancholy manner. It would seem he did not deem it wise to push this branch of the subject further, since he turned to another.

“I like the Señor Mulford,” he resumed, “for his general deportment and principles, so far as I can judge of him on so short an acquaintance.”

“Excuse me, Señor,” interrupted Rose, hurriedly—“but you never saw him until you met him here.”

“Never—I understand you, Señorita, and can do full justice to the young man’s character. I am willing to think he did not know the errand of his vessel, or I should not have seen him now. But what I most like him for, is this: Last night, during the gale, he and I walked the deck together, for an hour. We talked of Mexico, and of this war, so unfortunate for my country already, and which may become still more so, when he uttered this noble sentiment—‘My country is more powerful than yours, Señor Montefalderon,’ he said, ‘and in this it has been more favoured by God. You have suffered from ambitious rulers, and from military rule, while we have been advancing under the arts of peace, favoured by a most beneficent Providence. As for this war, I know but little about it, though I dare say the Mexican government may have been wrong in some things that it might have controlled and some that it might not—but let right be where it will, I am sorry to see a nation that has taken so firm a stand in favour of popular government, pressed upon so hard by another that is supposed to be the great support of such principles. America and Mexico are neighbours, and ought to be friends; and while I do not, cannot blame my own country for pursuing the war with vigour, nothing would please me more than to hear peace proclaimed.’”

“That is just like Harry Mulford,” said Rose, thoughtfully, as soon as her companion ceased to speak. “I do wish, Señor, that there could be no use for this powder, that is now buried in the sea.”

Don Juan Montefalderon smiled, and seemed a little surprised that the fair young thing at his side should have known of the treacherous contents of the flour-barrels. No doubt he found it inexplicable, that persons like Rose and Mulford should, seemingly, be united with one like Spike; but he was too well bred, and, indeed, too effectually mystified, to push the subject further than might be discreet.

By this time they were near the entrance of the lighthouse, into which the whole party entered, in a sort of mute awe at its silence and solitude. At Señor Montefalderon’s invitation, they ascended to the lantern, whence they could command



a wide and fair view of the surrounding waters. The reef was much more apparent from that elevation than from below; and Rose could see that numbers of its rocks were bare, while on other parts of it there was the appearance of many feet of water. Rose gazed at it with longing eyes, for, from a few remarks that had fallen from Mulford, she suspected he had hopes of escaping among its channels and coral.

As they descended and walked through the buildings, Rose also took good heed of the supplies the place afforded. There were flour, and beef, and pork, and many other of the common articles of food, as well as water in a cistern, that caught it as it flowed from the roof of the dwelling. Water was also to be found in casks—nothing like a spring or a well existing among those islets. All these things Rose noted, putting them aside in her memory for ready reference hereafter.

In the mean time the mariners were not idle. Spike moved his brig, and moored her, head and stern, alongside of the wreck, before the people got their breakfasts. As soon as that meal was ended, both captain and mate set about their duty in earnest. Mulford carried out an anchor on the off-side of the *Swash*, and dropped it at a distance of about eighty fathoms from the vessel's beam. Purchases were brought from both mast-heads of the brig to the chain of this anchor, and were hove upon until the vessel was given a heel of more than a streak, and the cable was tolerably taut. Other purchases were got up opposite, and overhauled down, in readiness to take hold of the schooner's masts. The anchor of the schooner was weighed by its buoy-rope, and the chain, after being rove through the upper or opposite hawse-hole, brought in on board the *Swash*. Another chain was dropped astern, in such a way, that when the schooner came upright, it would be sure to pass beneath her keel, some six or eight feet from the rudder. Slings were then sunk over the mast-heads, and the purchases were hooked on. Hours were consumed in these preliminary labours, and the people went to dinner as soon as they were completed.

When the men had dined, Spike brought one of his purchases to the windlass, and the other to the capstan, though not until each was bowsed taut by hand; a few minutes having brought the strain so far on everything, as to enable a seaman, like Spike, to form some judgment of the likelihood that his preventers and purchases would stand. Some changes were found necessary to equalize the strain, but, on the whole, the captain was satisfied with his work, and the crew were soon ordered to "heave-away; the windlass best."

In the course of half an hour the hull of the vessel, which lay on its bilge, began to turn on its keel, and the heads of the spars to rise above the water. This was the easiest



part of the process, all that was required of the purchases being to turn over a mass which rested on the sands of the bay. Aided by the long levers afforded by the spars, the work advanced so rapidly, that, in just one hour's time after his people had begun to heave, Spike had the pleasure to see the schooner standing upright, alongside of his own brig, though still sunk to the bottom. The wreck was secured in this position, by means of guys and preventers, in order that it might not again cant, when the order was issued to hook on the slings that were to raise it to the surface. These slings were the chains of the schooner, one of which went under her keel, while for the other the captain trusted to the strength of the two hawse-holes, having passed the cable out of one and in at the other, in a way to serve his purposes, as has just been stated.

When all was ready, Spike mustered his crew, and made a speech. He told the men that he was about a job that was out of the usual line of their duty, and that he knew they had a right to expect extra pay for such extra work. The schooner contained money, and his object was to get at it. If he succeeded, their reward would be a doubloon a man, which would be earning more than a month's wages by twenty-four hours' work. This was enough. The men wanted to hear no more; but they cheered their commander, and set about their task in the happiest disposition possible.

The reader will understand that the object to be first achieved, was to raise a vessel, with a hold filled with flour and gunpowder, from off the bottom of the bay to its surface. As she stood, the deck of this vessel was about six feet under water, and every one will understand that her weight, so long as it was submerged in a fluid as dense as that of the sea, would be much more manageable than if suspended in air. The barrels, for instance, were not much heavier than the water they displaced, and the wood work of the vessel itself, was, on the whole, positively lighter than the element in which it had sunk. As for the water in the hold, that was of the same weight as the water on the outside of the craft, and there had not been much to carry the schooner down, beside her iron, the spars that were out of water, and her ballast. This last, some ten or twelve tons in weight, was in fact the principal difficulty, and alone induced Spike to have any doubts about his eventual success. There was no foreseeing the result until he had made a trial, however; and the order was again given to "heave away."

To the infinite satisfaction of the *Swash's* crew, the weight was found quite manageable, so long as the hull remained beneath the water. Mulford, with three or four assistants, was kept on board the schooner lightening her, by getting the other anchor off her bows, and throwing the different objects overboard, or on the decks of the brig. By the time the bulwarks reached the surface, as much was gained in this way, as was



lost by having so much of the lighter woodwork rise above the water. As a matter of course, however, the weight increased as the vessel rose, and more especially as the lower portion of the spars, the bowsprit, boom, etc., from being buoyant assistants, became so much dead weight to be lifted.

Spike kept a watchful eye on his spars, and the extra supports he had given them. He was moving, the whole time, from point to point, feeling shrouds and back-stays, and preventers, in order to ascertain the degree of strain on each, or examining how the purchases stood. As for the crew, they cheered at their toil, incessantly, passing from capstan bars to the handspikes, and vice versa. They, too, felt that their task was increasing in resistance as it advanced, and now found it more difficult to gain an inch, than it had been at first to gain a foot. They seemed, indeed, to be heaving their own vessel out, instead of heaving the other craft up, and it was not long before they had the *Swash* heeling over toward the wreck several streaks. The strain, moreover, on everything, became not only severe, but somewhat menacing. Every shroud, back-stay, and preventer was as taut as a bar of iron, and the chain-cable that led to the anchor planted off abeam, was as straight as if the brig were riding by it in a gale of wind. One or two ominous surges aloft, too, had been heard, and, though no more than straps and slings settling into their places under hard strains, they served to remind the crew that danger might come from that quarter. Such was the state of things, when Spike called out to "heave and pall," that he might take a look at the condition of the wreck.

Although a great deal remained to be done, in order to get the schooner to float, a great deal had already been done. Her precise condition was as follows: Having no cabin windows, the water had entered her, when she capsized, by the only four apertures her construction possessed. These were the companion-way, or cabin-doors; the sky-light; the main-hatch, or the large inlet amid-ships, by which cargo went up and down; and the booby-hatch, which was the counterpart of the companion-way, forward; being intended to admit of ingress to the fore-castle, the apartment of the crew. Each of these hatch-ways, or orifices, had the usual defences of "coamings," strong frame-work around their margins. These coamings rose six or eight inches above the deck, and answered the double purpose of strengthening the vessel, in a part, that without them would be weaker than common, and of preventing any water that might be washing about the decks from running below. As soon, therefore, as these three apertures, or their coamings, could be raised above the level of the water of the basin, all danger of the vessel's receiving any further tribute of that sort from the ocean would be over. It was to this end, consequently, that Spike's efforts had been latterly directed, though



they had only in part succeeded. The schooner possessed a good deal of sheer, as it is termed; or, her two extremities rose nearly a foot above her centre, when on an even keel. This had brought her extremities first to the surface, and it was the additional weight which had consequently been brought into the air that had so much increased the strain, and induced Spike to pause. The deck forward, as far aft as the foremast, and aft as far forward as the centre of the trunk, or to the sky-light, was above the water, or at least awash; while all the rest of it was covered. In the vicinity of the main-hatch there were several inches of water; enough indeed to leave the upper edge of the coamings submerged by about an inch. To raise the keel that inch by means of the purchases, Spike well knew would cost him more labour, and would incur more risk than all that had been done previously, and he paused before he would attempt it.

The men were now called from the brig and ordered to come on board the schooner. Spike ascertained by actual measurement how much was wanted to bring the coamings of the main-hatch above the water, until which, he knew, pumping and bailing would be useless. He found it was quite an inch, and was at a great loss to know how that inch should be obtained. Mulford advised another trial with the handspikes and bars, but to this Spike would not consent. He believed that the masts of the brig had already as much pressure on them as they would bear. The mate next proposed getting the main boom off the vessel, and to lighten the craft by cutting away her bowsprit and masts. The captain was well enough disposed to do this, but he doubted whether it would meet with the approbation of "Don Wan," who was still ashore with Rose and her aunt, and who probably looked forward to recovering his gunpowder by means of those very spars. At length the carpenter hit upon a plan that was adopted.

This plan was very simple, though it had its own ingenuity. It will be remembered that water could now only enter the vessel's hold at the main-hatch, all the other hatchways having their coamings above the element. The carpenter proposed, therefore, that the main-hatches, which had been off when the tornado occurred, but which had been found on deck when the vessel righted, should now be put on, oakum being first laid along in their rabbetings, and that the cracks should be stuffed with additional oakum, to exclude as much water as possible. He thought that two or three men, by using caulking irons for ten minutes, would make the hatch-way so tight that very little water would penetrate. While this was doing, he himself would bore as many holes forward and aft as he could, with a two inch auger, out of which the water then in the vessel would be certain to run. Spike was delighted with this project, and gave the necessary orders on the spot.



This much must be said of the crew of the *Molly Swash*—whatever they did in their own profession, they did intelligently and well. On the present occasion they maintained their claim to this character, and were both active and expert. The hatches were soon on, and, in an imperfect manner, caulked. While this was doing, the carpenter got into a boat, and going under the schooner's bows, where a whole plank was out of water, he chose a spot between two of the timbers, and bored a hole as near the surface of the water as he dared to do. Not satisfied with one hole, however, he bored many—choosing both sides of the vessel to make them, and putting some aft as well as forward. In a word, in the course of twenty minutes the schooner was tapped in at least a dozen places, and jets of water, two inches in diameter, were spouting from her on each bow, and under each quarter.

Spike and Mulford noted the effect. Some water, doubtless, still worked itself into the vessel about the main-hatch, but that more flowed from her by means of the outlets just named, was quite apparent. After close watching at the outlets for some time, Spike was convinced that the schooner was slowly rising, the intense strain that still came from the brig producing that effect as the vessel gradually became lighter. By the end of half an hour, there could be no longer any doubt, the holes, which had been bored within an inch of the water, being now fully two inches above it. The auger was applied anew, still nearer to the surface of the sea, and as fresh outlets were made, those that began to manifest a dulness in their streams were carefully plugged.

Spike now thought it was time to take a look at the state of things on deck. Here, to his joy, he ascertained that the coamings had actually risen a little above the water. The reader is not to suppose by this rising of the vessel, that she had become sufficiently buoyant, in consequence of the water that had run out of her, to float of herself. This was far from being the case; but the constant upward pressure from the brig, which, on mechanical principles, tended constantly to bring that craft upright, had the effect to lift the schooner as the latter was gradually relieved from the weight that pressed her toward the bottom.

The hatches were next removed, when it was found that the water in the schooner's hold had so far lowered, as to leave a vacant space of quite a foot between the lowest part of the deck and its surface. Toward the two extremities of the vessel this space necessarily was much increased, in consequence of the sheer. Men were now sent into the hatchway with orders to hook on to the flour-barrels—a whip having been rigged in readiness to hoist them on deck. At the same time gangs were sent to the pumps, though Spike still depended for getting rid of the water somewhat on the auger—the carpenter



continuing to bore and plug his holes as new opportunities offered, and the old outlets became useless. It was true this expedient would soon cease, for the water having found its level in the vessel's hold, was very nearly on a level also with that on the outside. Bailing also was commenced, both forward and aft.

Spike's next material advantage was obtained by means of the cargo. By the time the sun had set, fully two hundred barrels had been rolled into the hatchway, and passed on deck, whence about half of them were sent in the lighthouse boat to the nearest islet, and the remainder were transferred to the deck of the brig. These last were placed on the off side of the *Swash*, and aided in bringing her nearer upright. A great deal was gained in getting rid of these barrels. The water in the schooner lowered just as much as the space they had occupied, and the vessel was relieved at once of twenty tons in weight.

Just after the sun had set, Señor Don Juan Montefalderon and his party returned on board. They had staid on the island to the last moment, at Rose's request, for she had taken as close an observation of everything as possible, in order to ascertain if any means of concealment existed, in the event of her aunt, Biddy, and herself quitting the brig. The islets were all too naked and too small, however; and she was compelled to return to the *Swash*, without any hopes derived from this quarter.

Spike had just directed the people to get their suppers as the Mexican came on board. Together they descended to the schooner's deck, where they had a long but secret conference. Señor Montefalderon was a calm, quiet and reasonable man, and while he felt as one would be apt to feel who had recently seen so many associates swept suddenly out of existence, the late catastrophe did not in the least unman him. It is too much the habit of the American people to receive their impressions from newspapers, which throw off their articles unreflectingly, and often ignorantly, as crones in petticoats utter their gossip. In a word, the opinions thus obtained are very much on a level, in value, with the thoughts of those who are said to think aloud, and who give utterance to all the crudities and trivial rumours that may happen to reach their ears. In this manner, we apprehend, very false notions of our neighbours of Mexico have become circulated among us. That nation is a mixed race, and has necessarily the various characteristics of such an origin, and it is unfortunately little influenced by the diffusion of intelligence which certainly exists here. Although an enemy, it ought to be acknowledged, however, that even Mexico has her redeeming points. Anglo-Saxons as we are, we have no desire unnecessarily to illustrate that very marked feature in the Anglo-Saxon character, which prompts the mother stock to



calumniate all who oppose it, but would rather adopt some of that chivalrous courtesy of which so much that is lofty and commendable is to be found among the descendants of Old Spain.

The Señor Montefalderon was earnestly engaged in what he conceived to be the cause of his country. It was scarcely possible to bring together two men impelled by motives more distinct than Spike and this gentleman. The first was acting under impulses of the lowest and most grovelling nature; while the last was influenced by motives of the highest. However much Mexico may, and has, weakened her cause by her own puny faith, instability, military oppression, and political revolutions, giving to the Texans in particular ample justification for their revolt, it was not probable that Don Juan Montefalderon saw the force of all the arguments that a casuist of ordinary ingenuity could certainly adduce against his country; for it is a most unusual thing to find a man anywhere, who is willing to admit that the positions of an opponent are good. He saw in the events of the day, a province wrested from his nation; and, in his reasoning on the subject, entirely overlooking the numerous occasions on which his own fluctuating government had given sufficient justification, not to say motives, to their powerful neighbours to take the law into their own hands, and redress themselves, he fancied all that has occurred was previously planned; instead of regarding it, as it truly is, as merely the result of political events that no man could have foreseen, that no man had originally imagined, or that any man could control.

Don Juan understood Spike completely, and quite justly appreciated not only his character, but his capabilities. Their acquaintance was not of a day, though it had ever been marked by that singular combination of caution and reliance that is apt to characterize the intercourse between the knave and the honest man, when circumstances compel not only communication, but, to a certain extent, confidence. They now paced the deck of the schooner, side by side, for fully an hour, during which time the price of the vessel, the means, and the mode of payment and transfer, were fully settled between them.

“But what will you do with your passengers, Don Esteban?” asked the Mexican pleasantly, when the more material points were adjusted. “I feel a great interest in the young lady in particular, who is a charming señorita, and who tells me that her aunt brought her this voyage on account of her health. She looks much too blooming to be out of health, and if she were, this is a singular voyage for an invalid to make!”

“You don’t understand human nature yet, altogether, I see, Don Juan,” answered Spike, chuckling and winking. “As you and I are not only good friends, but what a



body may call old friends, I'll let you into a secret in this affair, well knowing that you'll not betray it. It's quite true that the old woman thinks her niece is a pulmonary, as they call it, and that this v'y'ge is recommended for her, but the gal is as healthy as she's handsom'."

"Her constitution, then, must be very excellent, for it is seldom I have seen so charming a young woman. But if the aunt is misled in this matter, how has it been with the niece?"

Spike did not answer in words, but he leered upon his companion, and he winked.

"You mean to be understood that you are in intelligence with each other, I suppose, Don Esteban," returned the Señor Montefalderon, who did not like the captain's manner, and was willing to drop the discourse.

Spike then informed his companion, in confidence, that he and Rose were affianced, though without the aunt's knowledge,—that he intended to marry the niece the moment he reached a Mexican port with the brig, and that it was their joint intention to settle in the country. He added that the affair required management, as his intended had property, and expected more, and he begged Don Juan to aid him, as things drew near to a crisis. The Mexican evaded an answer, and the discourse dropped.

The moon was now shining, and would continue to throw its pale light over the scene for two or three hours longer. Spike profited by the circumstance to continue the work of lightening the schooner. One of the first things done next was to get up the dead, and to remove them to the boat. This melancholy office occupied an hour, the bodies being landed on the islet, near the powder, and there interred in the sands. Don Juan Montefalderon attended on this occasion, and repeated some prayers over the graves, as he had done in the morning, in the cases of the two who had been buried near the light-house.

While this melancholy duty was in the course of performance, that of pumping and bailing was continued, under the immediate personal superintendence of Mulford. It would not be easy to define, with perfect clearness, the conflicting feelings by which the mate of the *Swash* was now impelled. He had no longer any doubt on the subject of Spike's treason, and had it not been for Rose, he would not have hesitated a moment about making off in the light-house boat for Key West, in order to report all that had passed to the authorities. But not only Rose was there, and to be cared for, but what was far more difficult to get along with, her aunt was with her. It is true, Mrs. Budd was no longer Spike's dupe; but under any circumstances she was a difficult subject to manage, and most especially so in all matters that related to the sea. Then the



young man submitted, more or less, to the strange influence which a fine craft almost invariably obtains over those that belong to her. He did not like the idea of deserting the *Swash*, at the very moment he would not have hesitated about punishing her owner for his many misdeeds. In a word, Harry was too much of a tar not to feel a deep reluctance to turn against his cruise, or his voyage, however much either might be condemned by his judgment, or even by his principles.

It was quite nine o'clock when the Señor Montefalderon and Spike returned from burying the dead. No sooner did the last put his foot on the deck of his own vessel, than he felt the fall of one of the purchases which had been employed in raising the schooner. It was so far slack as to satisfy him that the latter now floated by her own buoyancy, though it might be well to let all stand until morning, for the purposes of security. Thus apprised of the condition of the two vessels, he gave the welcome order to "knock off for the night."

