

handspike. But this un as I'm a-talkin' on was a little lad not much bigger 'n Tom Thumb, only with a speerit of his own as 'ud ha' blowed up a man-o'-war a'most. Would yer like to hear about it?"

"Why, yes."

"Well, 'bout three years ago, afore I got this berth as I'm in now, I was second-engineer aboard a Liverpool steamer bound for New York. On the mornin' of the third day out from Liverpool, the chief engineer cum down to me in a precious hurry, lookin' as if somethin' had put him out considerably.

"'Tom,' says he, 'what d'ye think? Blest if we ain't found a stowaway.' (That's the name, you know, sir, as we gives to chaps as hides theirselves aboard outward-bound vessels, and gets carried out unbeknown to everybody.)

"'What's that?' says I. 'Who is he, and where did yer find him?'

"'Well, we found him stowed away among the casks for'ard; and ten to one we'd never ha' twigged him at all, if the skipper's dog hadn't sniffed him out and begun barkin'.'

"I didn't wait to hear no more, but up on deck like a sky-rocket; and there I *did* see a sight and no mistake. Every man-Jack o' the crew, and what few passengers we had on board, was all in a ring on the fo'c'stle, and in the middle stood the fust-mate, lookin' as black as thunder. Right in front of him lookin' a reg'lar mite among all them big fellers, was a little bit o' a lad not ten year old—ragged as a scarecrow, but with bright curly hair, and a bonnie little face o' his