

in a short time to carry me from the land of my birth, Sam Scott was to make a descent from the maintop-gallant yard of a celebrated old Spanish line of battle ship, and he was to fire two pistols and turn a somersault while in the air. Thousands of persons assembled to witness this extraordinary feat; the working-men of Her Majesty's Dockyard obtained either a half-holiday, or were permitted to retire from work earlier than usual; the tide was low, but flowing fast; and the patches of mud held numbers endeavouring to get as near to Sam as possible; many were wet, myself among the number. Sam appeared at the yard-arm; all was intense anxiety, silence, and suspense, for Sam had kept us two hours later than was expected. Close by my side stood some dockyard mateys; some with a plane under their arms, some saws, and some with adzes on their shoulders. One of the latter who had been standing near me (over our boots in water) was considerate enough to look behind, to see his adze did not touch any one. While so doing, Sam leaped: the dockyard matey saw nothing. I never beheld a countenance so blank!

By-the-bye, I forgot to introduce myself to my readers, and this must be done to atone for the boyish scenes and tricks that will occasionally be brought to light, especially during the younger portion of my life.

You can imagine a youth (an Irish youth) just let free from school, thirteen or fourteen years of age, longing to go to sea, and expecting every post to bring the acceptable letter. Sharp, cute, and thoughtful; his outfit already packed in his chest; the gold band, dirk, and brass buttons on top; and in hourly expectation of