

passing salute. Just as he did so a flaw of wind, which seemed to have been watching for just this opportunity, caught the sail: the boat veered, and in an instant "The Jolly Robin" was capsized. Ike clung to the boat, and yelled for help.

As soon as she saw the accident, Mrs. Partington ran screaming to her neighbour Grum, and begged him to rescue her boy, who was drowning in the creek. He told her very coolly, though the day was warm, that he should do no such thing: that he had a rheumatiz in his knee; and as for the boy, he could get out well enough, and that one intended to be hanged would never be drowned. She left in great indignation, and ran to Captain Bob, whom she found already engaged in preparations to rescue the young shipwrecked mariner. His other boats, "The Lively Turtle" and "The Storm Bug," were away, and so he had to invent some mode by which to reach him.

"Will he drown?" cried the old lady, wringing her hands.

"He can't, ma'am," replied the captain: "the water isn't more'n four feet deep where he is."

Captain Bob could very easily have waded out, but this would not be according to the rules of seamanship: so he took a large tub, made of the half of a hog'shead; and, launching it overboard, he seized a garden-spade that was near, and, getting into the tub, attempted to paddle it out to the boat, upon which Ike was crying violently for help. It was hard work for the captain, who had sailed on a great many far voyages in fore-and-aft vessels, but had never been in a round-and-round one before; for when he would try to paddle on one side, it would turn around instead of going ahead, and result the same when he tried the other side. At last, by putting his spade behind, and prying his queer craft along, he began to make some headway; and after great efforts he reached the wreck, and righted her, and Ike came ashore in her a "shipwrecked passenger," much to the delight of Mrs. Partington and the assembled neighbours. Ike made a very dismal figure, with his dripping clothes, and eelgrass in his hair; and Captain Bob told him to go home, and hang himself over a clothes-line to dry.

"I suppose you have seen many men drown," said one of the lookers-on.

"Well, I can't say that I have," replied the captain. "I forget how many chances there is of a fellow's escaping drowning, where there is any chance at all; but 'tis about the same as escaping being killed in battle, were they say it takes more'n a man's weight in bullets to kill him. Once when I

was going to the West Indies, one of our men fell overboard, and we thought he was drowned sure; but we found him, three days afterwards, setting on the head of the rudder!"

"How came he there?"

"He took hold of the rudder-chains when he drifted by, and lifted himself up."

"Why didn't he holler?"

"Because he'd rather stay there than work."

"But how did he live without eating?"

"Why, he'd climb into the cabin-window nights, and hook enough of the captain's provender to last all next day."

"But—"

"No matter about any more," said the captain: "some folks is made to tell stories, and some is made to believe 'em, and so the balance is kept just right; and that's what's the matter."

So they asked no more questions.

Ike was put to bed as soon as he got home, and went through a severe course of bitter tea and reproof, in order to keep out the cold. The next morning, at breakfast, Mrs. Partington pointed at a dress hanging on a line in view of the window, and said,—

"Do you see that garment, you offensive boy?"

"Yes," said Ike very penitently.

"Captain Robert brought that to me this morning, all satiated with water, and said he found it in the boat. Now, what did you take it for?"

"Took it for sail."

"Took it for sale! I could have sold it myself yesterday to a gentleman for a pair of decalico-maniac vases, but I wouldn't."

"I didn't take it to sell: I took it for a sail to make the boat go."

"Well, that is not so harmonious; but don't you do it again."

Ike promised her that he wouldn't, and went to school cheerfully, receiving ten checks during the day for his exemplary deportment. The ducking and the fright had a very beneficial effect on his health, and enabled him to take an active part in the Grum surprise-party, which took place soon after.

CHAPTER VI.

NEIGHBOUR GRUM'S SURPRISE PARTY.—BOYS ON THE GRASS.—GRUM A PRISONER.—AN IMPORTANT QUESTION.

There were great swimming-matches on the creek, in which rivalry ran, or swam,