

A surge—another—and a third still heavier, beat upon the noble ship, and sent a thrill through every timber. On they rolled, and dashed, and groaned. But her iron heart only seemed to gather strength from the conflict, and inspire us with a feeling of perfect safety.

"A fine sea-boat is the Vancouver, gentlemen," said Captain Duncan, "she rides the storm like a petrel:" and with this comfortable assurance we seated ourselves at the table.

I had nearly forgotten Tom, the cabin-boy; a mere mouse of a lad; who knew the rock of a ship and the turn of a corkscrew as well as any one; and as he was spry, had a short name, a quick ear, and bore the keys to the sideboard and some things elsewhere, all well-bred stomachs would not fail to blast my quill, if I omitted to write his name and draw his portrait.

Well, Tom was one of those sons of old England, who are born to the inheritance of poverty, and a brave heart for the seas. Like many thousand children of the Fatherland, when the soil refused him bread, he was apprenticed for the term of seven years to seamanship. And there he was, an English sailor-boy, submitting to the most rigorous discipline, serving the first part of his time in learning to keep his cabin in order, and wait at the table, that when, as he was taught to expect, he should have a ship of his own, he might know how to be served like a gentleman. This part of his apprenticeship he performed admirably. And when he shall leave the cork-screw and the locker for the quarter-deck, I doubt not he will scream at a storm, and utter his commands with sufficient imperiousness to entitle him to have a Tom of his own.

"Tom," said Captain Duncan, "bring out a flagon of Jamaica, and set on the glasses, lad. This storm, gentlemen, calls for cheers. When Neptune labors at this pace, he loves his dram. Fill, gentlemen, to absent wives." This compliment to the sacred ascendancy of the domestic affections was timely given. The storm howled hideously, for our lives, our families