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CONCLUSION

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nautical knowledge in a fortnight—and, in reply to Dick's letter acquainting Williams with the fact, came a letter announcing his appointment to the *Hadrian*, four-masted ship, Captain Custance, loading in the East Indian Docks for Panama.

Willie and Dick only skimmed the letter before they made all haste on board, and found her to be, as far as they could see, the finest ship of their experience. The captain was on board and, being told by the steward of his visitors, greeted them very warmly. He was loud in his praises of the generosity with which his new owner had treated him—never before in all his life had he been given such pay or had so lavish a list of stores, both for officers and crew.

"And besides," he went on, "there is a bonus for each officer at the end of the voyage, if completed successfully. You may be sure, Mr. Mort, that I am only too glad to welcome you, even though I understand you are a considerable shareholder, having heard so glowing an account of you from the agents. I am not in the least jealous—all I crave for is efficiency, and the better a man is the more I love and admire him, even if he shows me by his life what a poor thing I am as compared with him. Now let's have a look round the ship."

Closer acquaintance with her only confirmed