

We supply th' village an' th' vessel, y'know. Then we hev ship's gear, canvas, blocks, fishin' gear, lobster rope, paint, oil, tar, oilskins, cloth, clothing for men, women, an' children, an' 'most everything what's needed in a place like this. I hev a post office now an' two deliveries an' collections a week, an' I also brought a telephone line over th' mountain. I'm an insurance agent, gasolene engines, farmin' implements, an' patent fencin' as well—in fact, I'm representative in Long Cove an' vicinity for nigh a hundred different concerns."

The old sailor looked around the piled shelves and the long counters. He scanned the posters upon the wall, and the boxes, barrels, and bales which encumbered the sides of the room. The scent of tar, oil, paint, matches, and oilskins came to his nostrils, and his brain surged with all an old sailor's notions of trade. The fancies of long watches at sea came to his mind, and for a space he pictured himself serving out goods behind that long counter; yarning around the stove on winter days, and lolling with his kind out on the sun-flooded porch in summer. Wouldn't he just like to be holding forth on this particular brand of goods to some customer; advocating insurance and talking fertilizers and horse feed with the farmers. A sailor's ambitions—farming or store-keeping. The old longings came back to him with the sight of the place, and his sea-weary heart hungered for the realization of long-deferred hopes. Timidly, he turned and spoke to the waiting Westhaver.

"You—you must be kep' pretty busy 'round here?"

"I am," answered Frank. "Too busy, in fact. I can't attend to my book-keepin' an' th' fish business 'count o' servin' here. I was thinkin' o' gittin' someone t' help me in lookin' after th' store. To run it, in fact, an' give me a chanst in the office."

The old Captain nodded eagerly. "Hev you planned on who you're goin' t' git?"

"Waal, no, I haven't," replied the other slowly. "I was thinkin', when Lil an' I got married, I'd maybe offer it to you an' keep you near us, but——"

"But?" queried the Captain, with a trace of anxiety in his voice.