

THE GOOSANDER

A "DONALD" STORY

By W. ALBERT HICKMAN

NOTE—The "Donald" of this story is the same imperturbable old engineer of Mr. Hickman's story of the ice-crushers, "The Sacrifice of the *Shannon*."

PART II



NOW the fateful twelfth of September was only two days off. The time between was spent in putting on finishing touches and in testing and retesting everything from stem to stern. The afternoon before the race the whole Gulf was flooded with sunshine. Aleck and the children and Donald and his crew lay on the bank above the lobster factory and looked out over the Strait toward Charlottetown. The *Goosander* lay below at the wharf. Donald had Aleck's long telescope balanced across a log, and was sweeping the Island shore. Everywhere there hung lines of smoke along the horizon, and they were all converging on Charlottetown Harbour. Donald's smile was constant.

"Joost's a thoct!" he murmured, "they're all comin'; efery tow-boat from Sydney t' Miramichi! 'n' steam yachts 'n' launches, too. Theenk o' th' wheesky 't 'll tak' t' droon their recollection o' th' resoolt!" Carswell was studying the blotches of smoke.

"There's Long Rory's *Susan Bell*, the one he built for a pilot boat and put an engine in afterward. She's doin' about four miles an hour; an' there's the boat Johnnie Lawson brought from the States. He says she can do fourteen knots. That one up to wind'ard is the old *Micmac* that Henry Simpson runs to Cape Breton. She's listed to starboard, as usual. That one right off the Island Shoal is Colonel Dan McPherson's yacht, round from Halifax. That's all I can make out. There's lots of them, anyway!" This was evident, and Aleck came to believe less than ever in the *Goosander's* chances. But every addition to

the fleet seemed only to add to Donald's complacency. "Eets goin' t' be a gran' race!" he would say. Then he would sit in silence while the rest talked.

"When are you going to start?" they finally asked him.

"Oo, we'll joost wait 'n' ha' supper, 'n' go ofer by night. A'm fery modest; 'n' besides, a don't want to make any o' them jealous or t' scare th'm oot o' th' race. Eef they saw th' *Goosander* they might'n' care t' stait."

"By George! if they knew who was in her a lot of them wouldn't!" said Billy Dunn, warmly. The old man winced under the compliment.

"A'll try not t' frighten them!" he said suavely.

After supper they built a fire under the *Goosander's* new boiler. As a final test, Donald was going to take her across with the paddles alone. By the time they were ready the sun had been down an hour and the stars were out. Across the Strait they could see the light on Wood Islands and catch the blaze of Point Prim Light away up to the northward. Maisie and Dick were on the wharf to watch the departure, and were trembling with excitement.

"Y' mus' watch us wi' th' glass, Maisie," said Donald, as he climbed aboard with a suit of oilskins under one arm and the spaniel under the other, "'n' when we go ahead y' mus' cheer, d' y' see? A' can't hear y', but a'll know y're cheerin', 'n' that'll make us beat them." The children promised to do their best. The old man opened the throttle, the long-cylindere engine churned the water into froth, and the *Goosander* glided off under the stars, out toward the Gull Rock Light, leaving a trail of glittering phosphorescence behind. The two small figures