

THOMPSON'S READINGS & RECITATIONS.

A YOUNG HERO.

“Ay, ay, sir; they’re smart seamen enough, no doubt, and they man half the Austrian navy; but they ain’t got the seasonin’ of an Englishman, put it how yer will! And what’s more, they ain’t got an Englishman’s *pluck* neither, not when it comes to a *real* scrape.”

“Can no one but an Englishman have any pluck, then?” asked I laughing.

“Well I won’t go for to say that; o’ course a man as is a man ’ull have pluck in him all the world over. I’ve seed a Frencher tackle a shark to save his messmate; and I’ve seen a Rooshan stand to his gun arter every man in the battery, barrin’ himself, had been blowed all to smash. But, if yer come to that, the pluckiest feller as ever I seed wan’t a man at all!”

“What was he, then?—a woman?”

“No, nor that neither; though, mark ye, I don’t go for to say as how women ain’t got pluck enough too—some on ’em at least. My old ’ooman, now, saved me once from a lubber of a Portigee as was just a-goin’ to stick a knife into me, when she cracked his nut with a