

ENOCK CRANE

his berth, its glow screened by a green baize curtain, with a roller-shade attachment.

Enoch pulled up the curtain and continued in company with the Dormouse, Alice, and the March Hare, the Hatter joining them on the next page. So absorbed was he that he almost forgot it was Christmas Eve, or that he had missed his usual afternoon cup of tea and chat with his old friend, the captain. Finally he laid aside his book, stretched himself, flung himself out of his berth briskly, went to his port-hole and peered out at the mountainous leaden sea.

"A head sea," he said aloud, as the crest of a wave smashed against the port-hole. "The skipper was right; he expected it."

The perfume of a sizzling hot plum pudding from the pantry wafted down the corridor and over the ventilating space of his stateroom.

"So it's Christmas Eve," he said, turning from the dreary outlook to his wash-basin.

He put on a clean shirt, carefully combed his sparse hair, washed his face and hands vigorously, and rang for the steward.

"A rough night, Tim," said Enoch, as the man appeared with a steaming tin pitcher.

"'Tis cruel bad, sor," declared the Irishman. "'Twill be worse before mornin'. If it was the hot water, sor, you be after ringin' for, sure here it is, sor," said he, setting down the pitcher safely in the wash-basin. "I biled it meself. They be busy in the pantry to-night—seein' it's Christmas Eve."