

I have essayed climbing a ladder, and the hatchway is barely wide enough; to let me through; half-way I stick hard and fast, and, to make matters worse, my feet slip off the rungs. I cannot help giving a cry of dismay, which attracts attention to my attitude above and below.

'Shall I give you a shove down?' says Baynes anxiously.

'Shall I give you a pull by the legs?' asks Macstane's muffled voice below.

'No, no, no,' I cry, struggling breathlessly to regain a footing on the ladder. 'I'm all right now.'

My last glimpse of the upper world shows me Sandy and Baynes grinning all down their backs; and I alight on the cabin floor in a heap, to find Macstane chuckling over me with a violence which threatens apoplexy. There are phases of yachting-life which are wholly devoid of romance.

'Hurt?' asks Macstane, trying to compose his features.

'Not at all,' I reply, rubbing my shoulder and trying to dissemble my feelings. 'I'm quite ready for my lunch, though.'

'There's one good thing about a calm, and only one,' says my host as we sit down—'we can lunch comfortably.'

To my mind a calm possesses but one drawback, and that is the necessity for some one to sit on the boom; but I didn't tell Macstane this opinion.

In spite of the threatening qualms which rendered me miserable an hour or two ago, I make an excellent meal off cold beef, cold apple tart, and bread and cheese. Under Macstane's advice, I take plenty of strong whisky-and-water. Just as it is the best cure, it's the best preventive of sea-sickness, he says, with the confidence of a man who knows; and as I have never heard anything to the contrary, I act upon his recommendation. It is very cool and pleasant down here in the cabin; and if it wasn't such an undertaking to get through the hatchway, I should like to stay below. But I must get on deck sooner or later, and I am perfectly certain that the least motion of the yacht would render quite impossible a feat I can only perform with difficulty in a dead calm.

'Going on deck?' asks Macstane as he sees me bracing myself up for the task. 'By all means, if you prefer it, then Baynes can come down to lunch.'

I squeeze myself through the hatchway with a mighty effort, and relieve Baynes, who is dozing over the tiller. He disappears below, leaving me in sole charge of the boat, for Sandy is snoring noisily on the deck forward. I won't awaken him unless I see some signs of wind and his services are required, for his manner when I spoke to him this morning did not impress me at all favorably. I cast a shuddering glance at the boom, which hangs over the water jerking lazily at the tackle; I would almost prefer a gale of wind for the rest of the day to another hour's duty sitting upon it. I had no idea one would meet with such disagreeables yachting.

There are half a score of yachts lying becalmed all round the *Rosebud*; one much too close to be pleasant, in case a breeze should spring up; but I suppose it can't be avoided in weather like this. I am yawning frightfully. What a sleepy day it is. There is something very soothing in the gentle cradle-like rocking caused by the swell; and the hum of voices below only add to my drowsiness. Everyone I can see on board the other yachts appears to be taking a siesta. It looks shamefully negligent.

I don't know how it happened, but next time I raise my eyes I see that the *Rosebud's* bowsprit is trying to force its way through the mainsail of the boat nearest her, and the crew are bawling in stentorian tones at me. Sandy wakes up and springs wildly to his feet shouting: 'Pit doon the hellum, pit doon the hellum!'

Of course I take my hand off the tiller as though the brass binding had become suddenly red-hot. It does not appear to be a wise proceeding at such a juncture, but Sandy ought to know best, and I obey him promptly. 'Ah! I thought he was making some mistake; the instant I let go my hold of the tiller, he rushes aft and seizes it himself, telling me very rudely to 'let be.' After a great deal of rushing to and fro and much unnecessary noise, which draws the attention of the whole fleet upon us, our bowsprit is got clear, and the two yachts lie side by side, as if they couldn't make up their minds to separate again. A stout man who has been bellowing orders to the men on the other boat now turns to me and stretches out his hand. 'I claim a foul, sir! A more unseaman-like bungle I never saw. I'll trouble you for your name.' He says this very angrily and rudely, and I am debating in my own mind whether to apologise and take no further notice of him, or to call up Macstane, when he begins once more: 'What's your name, sir? I claim a foul, I tell you—a foul!'

'I'm not quite sure that I apprehend your meaning,' I said; 'but my name is Jones,' I spoke very

civilly indeed, conscious that I was to blame for the accident; but he flies into a passion almost before the words are out of my mouth.

'Don't play the fool with me, sir! I am Mr. Macstane of Drumblewhin. Will you give up your name, sir?'

I always make a point of being courteous to strangers, but this person's manner is really very offensive. I draw myself up and answer with dignified hauteur: 'My name, sir, is Algernon Sedgewick Jones, of No. 93 Cranwood Terrace, Tooting.' I fold my arms and look very hard at him as I say this; but he doesn't seem to be pacified at all, and is beginning again, when another gentleman, who has been sitting with his back to me, stops Mr. Macstane, and, turning round far enough to see me with one eye, says languidly: 'What is your cutter's name, sir?'

'The *Rosebud*. She belongs to my friend, Mr. Macstane of Glasgow.'

'Very good, sir. You have fouled the *Dido* most clumsily, and Mr. Macstane will claim the penalty.'

He adds something in an undertone which I do not quite hear, but it seems to amuse Sandy immensely. I cast a withering glance upon him, and go to the skylight to summons the others. They are both sound asleep (really, yachting-men are singularly lazy), and Macstane doesn't seem much pleased at being disturbed.

'What's happened?' he says. 'Breeze coming?'

'No,' I reply, feeling very much ashamed of myself. 'We fouled another yacht, the *Dido*.'

'Fouled the *Dido*?' exclaims my host.

'Fouled the *Dido*!' echoes Baynes, rubbing his eyes.

'Yes,' I reply. 'I am sorely vexed about it.'

Macstane rolls off his seat, and in half a minute appears at the hatchway. 'I would rather you had fouled any boat in the race—all the boats in the race—rather than the *Dido*,' he says with strained calmness. 'She belongs to The Mactavish of Drumblewhin.'

'So I was given to understand,' I answer sorrowfully, glancing at the *Dido*, whose deck is now deserted, except by two sailors.

'Is he on board himself?' asks Macstane, wheeling round upon me so sharply that I jump backwards and nearly fall overboard.

'He's aboard,' says Sandy, answering for me with a nod of profound meaning.

'If Mactavish is on board,' says Macstane solemnly to Baynes, 'every yachtsman on the Clyde will know to-night that the very first time the *Rosebud* started in a race she was handled by a—by a' (he looks at me and hesitates) 'by a man who doesn't know port from starboard; and they will say I did it.'

'I told Mr Mactavish my name,' I say eagerly.

Macstane waves me aside with a groan, and sits down with his hands in his pockets, kicking his heels in the cockpit.

'Mactavish will claim the foul as a matter of course; and it will be reported in the *Scotsman* and the *Glasgow Herald* and all the papers,' he continues, 'trying to fathom the deep disgrace I have brought upon him as a yachtsman.'

'I can't think of anything to say to comfort him. I am very, very sorry for the mishap; but I do think he takes it to heart rather too much. He sits in moody silence for a quarter of an hour, until the surface of the water is rippled by a breath of wind which makes the sails flap heavily.'

'It's no good now,' he says in a hollow voice to no one in particular.

'Nothing but my intense desire to make atonement would move me to make the offer, and I do it, forgetting that Macstane has no conception of the martyrdom it is to me.'

'Would you like me to go and sit on the boom again?' I ask humbly.

He shakes his head. 'No; thanks, old fellow. We are disqualified by that foul, and couldn't win now anyway.'

'Disqualified! Can't win now at all! And I am solely to blame for it. I will never, never place foot on the deck of a yacht again.'

TALKING THROUGH A MAN.

Victoria, B. C. Times.

One of those things which occasionally happens to paralyze the ordinary reporter, accustomed as he is to strange phenomena in court and out of it, occurred in this office the other day when the intelligent lineman of the Victoria Telephone company came in to make slight repairs to the instrument. There was something the matter with the wires which were pulled up and the ordinary connection with the system thereby cut off for the time being. The reporter intimated that he wanted to call up a party as soon as the things were in order for it. 'Go ahead' said the lineman, grasping the end of one of the wires with one hand and a gas pipe with the other; 'ring him up.' And sure enough he was rung up and for two minutes the reporter and the man at the other end carried on a conversation through that lineman, who is still alive and climbing,

AN INNOCENT THIEF.

San Francisco Examiner.

In 1865, when the telegraph was comparatively a new thing in Southern California, the operators of the Los Angeles circuit found their communication suddenly cut off. Linemen were sent out to discover the break and effect repairs, but they returned with the surprising intelligence that the break was a serious one, and called for a lot of supplies.

About a mile of wire and poles had disappeared as completely as if the earth had opened and swallowed them up. Further search showed no trace of the missing materials, and at considerable expense new ones were furnished, and the line was reconstructed.

Then a detective was employed to investigate the mystery. The country was nothing but a desert, and the detective worked for three weeks without success. At the end of that time, however, he stumbled upon a small ranch, at which he put up for the night. He found the ground enclosed with a neat wire fence, and in the morning taxed the ranchman with having stolen the telegraph. The man admitted the fact at once. 'Oh, yes,' he said, 'I've been living here high onto three years, and have watched that old telegraph wire all that time. I never see nothing go over it, and reckoned it wasn't used.'

There seemed no reason to question the man's sincerity, and the detective contented himself with giving him a lecture on the invisibility of the electric current. The case was reported to headquarters, of course, but no prosecution followed.

WHO KNOWS?

New York Graphic.

Herbert Faught is an observing young man on Broadway. The other day he was seen with a pencil and paper tackling several of his friends, and enquiry revealed the cause.

'Do you know how to write Roman letters?' Mr. Faught asked the inquirer.

Being answered in the affirmative, Mr. Faught then said: 'Just write for me on this paper how the fourth hour of the afternoon is indicated on clock and watch dials.'

The figures IV were promptly written, and Mr. Faught burst into laughter. 'I knew,' said he, 'that you wouldn't get it right. I have never known any man yet who didn't make the same blunder. I'll tell you how it is,' continued Mr. Faught.

'Everybody who has been to school knows the Roman numerals; and they are always used on clocks and watches. What everyone don't know, however, is that the representations of the fourth figure on the dial of a timepiece are never made as they should be, according to the arithmetics, for instead of being made IV, it is invariably written IIII.'

'Just why this is done has never been reasonably explained. Some watchmakers say it is to avoid mixing up IV with V, and VI, and really that is the only reason that I have ever heard. But nobody seems to know without looking at a timepiece how it is written, and I have never met anyone yet who did not when asked write it IV, instead of IIII, and I never yet saw a timepiece on the dial of which four o'clock was written IV.'

THE EFFECT OF THUNDER ON DOGS.

Hartford Courant.

An interesting story was told last year of a supposed mad dog out in Litchfield County that was killed because of its strange conduct, and afterward it was found to have been only frightened by the thunder. It had run twelve miles and then taken to a strange house, ran upstairs, and refused to stir, and so was shot. It was a Scotch collie, and those dogs are peculiarly susceptible to and utterly cowed by thunder. There is one in this city not quite so bright as the sunshine in fair weather that becomes an utter imbecile as soon as thunder or even a fire-cracker is heard. Yesterday afternoon, amid the distant rumble of a far-away storm, he laid aside his intelligence and ran wildly off from home without it. A long search for him proved futile, but in a couple of hours he returned all wet and muddy, at his owner's office ready to be escorted home. On the penitential journey homeward they met another dog, not quite so big as this one, and, at the sight of the large and ruffled collie, the strange dog dropped flat upon its belly and lay cringing and trembling, the victim of abject fear until the dog scared by a crack of thunder had walked proudly by. There are all sorts of coward.

ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING AT ANN ARBOR.—The board of regents of the University of Michigan (Ann Arbor) have authorized a course of study in the university leading to the degree of Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering. This course will be parallel with those in civil, mechanical and mining engineering, with the same requirements for admission. In addition to special electrical courses, laboratory work, etc., complete tests of central electric light and power stations will be undertaken, and students will be made acquainted with the best practice in electrical manufacturing and engineering by visits to places where such enterprises may be seen on a large scale.