

duster. So the long and short of it is that the second officer of the good ship *Benjamin Franklin* was set ashore at Rio to make his way back to the States as he could. And here I am.'

'I am sorry for it,' said I gently; 'for a better seaman seldom trod a plank, and if it were not for that unlucky habit to which you have alluded, you would have found the berth a good one, and your employers kind and liberal.'

Gregg's manner changed at once. 'You are a good fellow, Mainwaring,' he said, 'and I am—what you please. I tried to swagger out of it, but I do assure you I felt ashamed of myself, for abusing your kindness as I did, when first I set eyes on you here, than I have done since I ran away from school, up yonder in Rhode Island. Yes, old chap, you helped to pay for my outfit, and it was your recommendation that got me made second-mate of yonder three-master, and I was a black-guard to kick over the traces after you had done so much to help me out of the mire. Never mind; it will be all the same one hundred years hence;' and with another abrupt transition of manner, he drew a shining little flask from his pocket, and swallowed a considerable portion of the raw spirits which it contained, and then turned away his handsome reckless face, his bloodshot eyes, and streaming dark hair, towards the river, and hummed a tune, to which he beat time with one sun-burned hand on the mossy logs beside him.

A word of explanation as to the relative positions of Paul Merrion Gregg and myself, Alfred Mainwaring. The former was one of those young fellows, clever, audacious, well educated, but not over-burdened by scruples, of whom so many are sent forth from the populous hives of Northern Atlantic States. Of his parentage and early history I knew little, but from hints that he sometimes let drop, I conjectured him to be a truant member of a respectable and well-to-do family in his native place. Good manners he had done his best to discard, but his ability was undoubted, and his courage no less so. He had thrice risen to the command of small vessels employed in the coasting-trade, and had been a New Orleans pilot, mate and afterwards Captain of more than one Mississippi steamer, book-keeper in a store, bar-keeper at a great hotel, overseer of a plantation, and engineer of a Mexican mine, all of which situations he had forfeited through sheer misconduct.

Intemperance, wilful disobedience of orders, and the unchecked whimsicality of his capricious nature, were the chief faults of this born Bohemian, since, lax as were his principles, he had never, so far as I know, been taxed with actual dishonesty. But these drawbacks were too heavy to be got over, even in the case of a man of such dauntless resolution and readiness as Gregg possessed. There is no country in which a clever and helpful young fellow can, when American born, get so many new chances of mending his past errors by a fresh start in life as in the States, but at last every channel of employment had appeared to be closed to this born Bohemian. My own introduction to him was on this wise. Having foolishly ventured, through the promptings of idle curiosity, into one of those gambling dens which are the disgrace of New Orleans, a 'muss,' or affray, had been got up by the hangers on of the establishment, for the purpose of hustling and robbing the English stranger, who declined to be plundered by the more pacific means of marked cards and loaded dice. Beset by bullies armed with sling-shot and sharp knife, it would have fared but ill with me but for my finding an unexpected ally in Gregg, who came chivalrously to the rescue, and