

With this prelude, therefore, I do not perceive that it is necessary to offer any apology for these "leaves." Truth needs none, and truth I intend to be the type of my book. It is not my intention to make a novel of it. Novels are easily written, easily concocted, and as easily sought after. These "leaves" contain nothing of the imagination, the incidents are noted daily, and truthfully extracted; and now, having cleared the "ways" with these few plain words, I knock away the "dog shores" from under my little volume, and "launch" it on the world, having truth for its guiding star.

On opening my MS. journal to extract the first "leaf," I find the introduction says:—

"Dedicated *solely* to fond and attached parents.

"An imperfect and scattered diary of a midshipman (their dutiful son), during a miserable existence of ten years within the dreary bulkheads of a cockpit."

The object of the writer will be fully gratified should the scenes and events of boyish days herein narrated while away an occasional lone and dreary hour of a wintry night.

"While pots and tiles and chimney tops are flying round,  
Thank Providence, Bill, that you and I are sailors!"