

"That's right, Jerry," grinned the 'bo'sun.' "Keep him to it! You'll make a sailor of him yet."

"I can't, sir; really, I can't!" piteously cried the boy.

"Take a rest, and at it you go again! I'll have you sliding all over the masts before the voyage is over. Make him try it once more, Jerry."

Just then the door of the cabin opened, and a tall, thin form stepped towards the group. He was a slim, clerkly-looking man, with red hair and homely features; but his eyes had a soldier's sharpness about them, and his mouth was peculiarly determined looking. It was General Wolfe.

In an instant he took in the situation.

"What does this mean?" he sternly demanded of the group.

The 'bo'sun' apologetically replied.

"The youngster, sir, refused to go aloft at sea. He's a great coward, and I thought it a good chance to break him in in this smooth water."

"Is it necessary to break him in at the point of a knife? Come down out of that, you rascal!" he commanded, in a voice of thunder, to Jerry. "Here you!" said he to one of the able-bodied seamen, "Go aloft, and see that the boy does not get hurt coming down. If I ever see anything like this again, it will not be my fault if it goes unpunished."

When young Beaumont reached the deck he was deathly pale, and trembled in every limb. The men slunk away ashamed, and left him standing alone with the General.

"Well, my lad," said the kind-hearted commander, "how is it you cannot go aloft?"

"I don't know, sir; but every time I go into the rigging I get nervous; I can hardly hold on; and, if I look down, my head grows dizzy. I have tried to overcome it, sir," he said respectfully, "but it's no use!"

"Well, my man, you're evidently not cut out for a sailor! I will see what I can do to get you transferred to the army. Would you like that better?"

"Oh, yes, sir! I don't think they could ever call me coward in that case! It's only the climbing that affects me."

"Well, I'll have a talk with your commander, and perhaps we shall be able to arrange matters. Now, run away and join your comrades. I don't think they'll bother you much, seeing that I have taken your part."

The lad respectfully touched his cap, and went below. He had expected to be tormented as usual, but his companions seemed to be only anxious to know what the General had said. Not a few were jealous of the lad's chance of getting into the army, and being under the immediate sight of the generous, lion-hearted soldier.

"I expect," said one, "Beauy'll be a commander before the war's over."

"Not if he has to climb the heights yonder for his rank. Eh! Beauy," added another.

The lad blushed crimson, but could not answer the remark. He had no fear on land; it was the swaying between heaven and the sea that made him lose his head.

On the following day the whole fleet was in a state of commotion. The forces had to be landed, and busy boats plied between it and the shore. Scarcely was this task completed when a raging storm came up, and the vessels dragged their anchors and pitched into one another. However, it subsided as quickly as it rose, and much to the chagrin of the French, who had hoped to see the fleet destroyed, only a few were injured by the gale.

The twenty-eighth of June was a busy day for both forces. The English were throwing up entrenchments

on the Island of Orleans, and devising various modes of attack. The French were equally eager in their strenuous efforts to offer a strong resistance, and were likewise making giant preparations to annihilate the fleet with fire-ships.

Vaudreuil, the Governor of Canada, had seven large merchant-men loaded with combustibles, and made ready to sweep down upon the enemy. He hoped, by setting fire to them as they neared the fleet, to see them utterly destroy the English vessels. The night was calm, and dark as pitch. The troops on shore were silent, and only the cheery cry of the watch- "All's well" - broke the stillness.

Suddenly a commotion rises on board the fleet. The seven huge vessels are seen creeping through the darkness. The tide and a light wind are both favourable. Scarcely are they observed, when sheets of flame dart from the deck of one and another, till all seven are sheathed in fire. The crash of exploding cannon that had been crammed to the muzzle is heard, and grape-shot ploughs the water in all directions. On glide the fiery monsters, straight for the fleet. For a moment the commanders stand dazed; and then the cry passes from lip to lip- "Into the boats and grapple them!"

A boat is hastily manned from the ship in which the preceding episode had occurred.

"Here, Beaumont!" cried the boatswain, "be of some use! Jump on board and take the tiller!"

With ready agility the excited boy leaped into the boat, and the sailors bent their oars towards the burning fleet. They were soon near the largest and foremost vessel; but the fierce heat and crashing explosives made them pause.

"It's no use trying to grapple now," said the commander of the boat. "No one could reach her alive."

A splash was heard, and a voice from the water exclaimed-

"Please, sir, hand me the grappling-iron. I can swim to her!"

"Well done, my lad! Here you are. Now, be careful. Drop it if you find it too heavy."

The line was payed-out, and the young swimmer approached nearer and nearer to the floating furnace. Ever and anon a shower of shot dashed the water about him; but he seemed to bear a charmed life, never checking his vigorous stroke for a moment. He quickly reached the ship, and, with heroic courage, grappled the charred-irons, while the fire hissed on all sides of him.

As soon as his work was done, he dived into the flood, and swam almost to the boat under water. In a moment he is on board, and a cheer rises from the lips of every man.

"Now, men, steady!" cries the commander. "Don't make a mess of the boy's work! There! her course changes! We'll have her ashore in a minute! Stand ready to cut the tow-line! I expect the masts will fall when she strikes. The fire has burned away all the stays."

They had not long to wait. A sudden tightening of the line is felt, and the knife of the sailor, held ready, severs the rope with one rapid sweep. A dull roar follows, and the sailors put a mighty effort into their strokes. They get their boat out of danger, but none too soon. The huge fore-mast snapped and fell in their track.

When the vessel grounded, the troops on the shore and the men on the fleet sent up cheer after cheer. The other boats followed the example of the first, and, in a very short time, all the blazing crafts were grounded,--not one of them doing the slightest damage to the English vessels.

Vaudreuil and his forces watched their fire-ships harmlessly burning out, but could do nothing. More