

A FAIR EMIGRANT

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CHAPTER XXIX
HOLLOW PEGGY

When Bawn had got that churning of butter off her mind and had sent it away, beautifully packed, to London, she set herself to consider how she might penetrate into the recesses of the ruin of Shane's Hollow, and come face to face with its inhabitants. The first step was to make friends with "Hollow Peggy," as Betty called the poor woman who at periodical times went in and saw that the creatures were not starved in their dens. It was easy enough to persuade Betty to bring her to the Shanganagh, but not so easy, said Betty, to made her talk of her poor charges to a stranger.

However, Peggy was lured to Shanganagh one evening by Betty, and came stealing in at dusk to the little kitchen, a curious figure, plain and rugged of feature, with a startled look in her eyes, but a patient brow and mouth. Her face was weather-stained to the colour of oak, her head and shoulders swathed in a woollen shawl. She supped with Betty and Nancy, and Bawn, through the open door of her sitting-room, heard the conversation that passed among them. Peggy, not being very bright-witted, had no idea she was being cross-examined for a purpose.

"You were sarvint' wit' them long ago, wasn't you, Peggy?"

"I wuz," said Peggy, who was what Betty called "few-worded."

"Not when they were rich, but?"

"Na. When they were rale grand I wuz too wee. But I mind Miss Mave buyin' me a bonnet with a blue ribbon. She tied it on herself, and I never forgot it to her."

"It was when they were gettin' poor you lived wit' them?"

"Ay."

"Till they couldn't keep ye no longer?"

"My man tuk me out of it."

"Was the roof off then, Peggy?"

"Troth then it was beginnin' to go."

"An' they always lived by themselves, in separate rooms, then?"

"Deed an' they did. The men wuz always queer an' had ways of their own. Miss Julia got queer the soonest. Miss Catherine was't long behind her. Miss Mave was the best o' the lot, an' she's not right daft yet; only whiles when the pains dead be bad wit' her."

"Are you not afraid the roof will fall on her and kill her?"

"Faix an' I am. Mostly when I go in I do be expectin' to find her killed. But the Lord is good to her."

"You still go every evening to look after them?"

"I do that same, an' does what I can with Miss Mave's bed, an' makes them a sup o' tea, an' brings them an egg when I can, an' a bit o' bread. They don't eat more nor the micke would pick up in a house like this," said Peggy, looking round.

"An' you make up their fires, an' brings them coal and sticks, and leaves Miss Mave a drink of water where her hand can reach it. And then you see no more of them till the next evening again."

"Sure, you know all that."

"An' what do they ever say to you, Peggy?"

"Mr. Edmond sometimes says 'thank ye' humble enough, and Mr. Luke he lets a curse at me. But he would miss me all the same if I did not go. Miss Julia used to tell me—that's before she died—of the grand matches the ladies could 'a' had in the country rooms, only they were too grand for anybody that axed them. Miss Mave sometimes knows me and sometimes she dozzint. She tells me about her sister Catherine that's dead, and thinks she's with her still; an' sure that's great company to her. That's when she's in her daft fits. 'Peggy,' she says to me, 'dear Catherine, wakened me early this mornin', or 'she didn't call me till it was quite late. She wanted me to have a good sleep—dear Catherine! She won't eat no food till I make the same for Miss Catherine, and take it to her. Then she thinks she's going out, and says to her sister, 'Now, Catherine, Margaret will take care of you while I'm away, will give you a cup of tea and an egg, and I won't be long.'"

"Bawn listened, and thought of the beautiful face of the miniature, and Arthur Desmond's love, and her heart quaked.

"It turned her brain like when Miss Catherine died?"

"Sure it did. The two was always in the wan room. Miss Catherine's bed is there yet. An' Miss Mave doted on Miss Catherine. When she was dead she had her there for days tryin' to bring her to life again with turpentine. She was feared they would bury her alive. She cried and begged I would not tell outside that she was dead. But I had to tell at last, and the parish took her away and buried her. It had to be done at night. They pretended that she was goin' to the grand old burial place at Toome, where the Adares was always buried by torchlight. They have been fiercer about spakin' to any quality since then, an' Miss Mave got rale light-headed after it."

Here Bawn felt that she could keep hidden no longer, and came into the kitchen and slipped into a chair beside Peggy's fire.

"It's only my mistress, Peggy. Ye needn't be afraid of her. She's none o' yer grand quality, only a decent young woman from America,"

"You're welcome to my little farm-house, Peggy. Have you had a comfortable supper? Now don't stop talking on account of me. I wish I could do something for that poor Miss Mave of yours."

Peggy eyed Bawn all over, and did not seem so scared of her as Betty had been afraid she would be.

"I wish she would let me come to see her, Peggy. She must be terribly lonely in that ruin."

"They won't let no quality near them, ma'am, nor not a soul at all, at all but me."

"But I am not quality, only a stranger in the country, don't you see. They needn't be too proud to speak to me. I would go as a human creature to another human creature. And I might be able to do something for Miss Mave Adare."

"If she would only look at you there would be no more trouble," said Peggy simply, "an' I'll ax her an' see what can be done. Only I don't think she'll let you cross the thrashel, ma'am."

"An' it would be the risk o' your life to do that same," said Betty.

"But Peggy does it every day."

"She knows where to pick her steps an' put her feet. Besides, Peggy's an' old sarvint' an' friend, an' you're a stranger that has no call to throw away your life on them. I'll say nothing again' Miss Mave, poor soul, but the rest o' them don't deserve it."

"It's only Miss Mave I want to help," said Bawn, and for the moment every other feeling was swallowed up in pity for this wretched woman.

"But you could not come noways, unless Mr. Luke allowed it," said Peggy.

Bawn was silent, and sat confronting in imagination Luke Adare, whom she considered her arch-enemy, and opposing her will to his.

"Try what you can do, at all events, Peggy," she said gently after a few minutes, "for my heart aches for your poor mistress."

The next evening Peggy appeared, coming towards the farmhouse with a quick step.

"She says she will see the lady from America. It was just as great a wonder to me as if a star out of the sky had dropped into my apron. When I said the lady from America had tears in her eyes talking about her, Miss Mave said, 'Tell her she may come, Peggy.' I went this mornin' to hear what Mr. Luke would say, and he turned his back to me, and I thought it was all over. But when I was goin' out of the hall Mr. Edmond follied me an' said:

"Tell the lady from America that it was always the custom for ladies to visit ladies. Miss Adare cannot call on Miss Ingram. Let Miss Ingram call on Miss Adare."

"Mr. Luke said nothing?"

"Nothin' at all, ma'am; but I'm thinkin' he will not put himself in the way."

Betty threw up her hands. "It's like the end o' the world," she cried vehemently. "Nobody would ha' believed it."

"Maybe it's death that's comin' near them," said Peggy, "but Miss Mave's wantin' you to go to see her, anyway. An', ma'am, if I might make bold to ask, if you could send her a bit of an ould nightgown, and a sheet or somethin' to dress her up, she wouldn't feel so ashamed, I think, of your visitin' her."

Bawn turned abruptly away, and before long reappeared with various articles of linen and clothing.

"Make her as comfortable as you can," she said, "and where may I meet you to-morrow?"

"At the hall door in the Hollow, ma'am," said Peggy.

CHAPTER XXX
THE ADARES AT HOME

Next morning Bawn appeared in the lights and shades of the mysterious Hollow, carrying a basket on her arm and with Sorley Boy at her heels. In picturesque contrast to the sombre shadows of the place was her gracious, womanly figure in a fresh print dress and coarse straw hat, under which the twists of her golden hair caught fire from the stray sunbeams. In her basket she had various articles of light food, new laid eggs, fresh butter, cream, custard, etc.

Peggy did not keep her waiting, and, having bidden Sorley Boy lie on the doorstep till her return, she found herself crossing the unhallowed threshold and following on the faithful servant's steps into the interior of the ruin. The sunshine pursued them a little way into the wide, low-ceilinged hall, showing the jagged rents in the boards, gaps bridged over by loose planks or pieces of slate, and the open holes, pitfalls for unwary feet, through which one might fall into the cellars below. A great number of tall stakes, young trees, looped and barked, were fixed between floor and ceiling at one side to support the latter, crowding round the rusted fire-place like welcome guests after a winter's journey.

Between these the splintered wood and softer stuffing of the upper floor bulged downward through the mouldered plaster. The pillars which separated the front from the back hall shook and tottered if touched, as Bawn found, having laid her hand on one while crossing a dangerous gap in the boards.

Once in the back hall she felt on more solid ground for the moment, and could observe the doors-opening off on each side—massive frames deep set in the thick wall—and the passages, dripping with damp and choked with rubbish, wandering away unceasingly into the darkness and dilapidation of the lower part of the ruin.

"Down there the gentlemen has their rooms," said Peggy, looking round with awe and whispering as if in a church.

"Rooms?" returned Bawn in a like whisper. "What can be down there but dens and holes?"

"Call them what you like ma'am," said Peggy, "they're still covered in, at any rate."

"They'll be covered in more completely some day soon," reflected Bawn, and thought with a thrill of dismay of Luke Adare buried alive, and his secret with him.

From the back hall ascended gradually and slantingly a low, wide stair, with a great window gazing down the first flight, and the ascent for so far seemed easy enough. But after that came a shorter flight, slanting forward again to the centre of the house, and, having climbed this and placed her feet on the upper landing, the intruder seemed literally to carry her life in her hand.

The floor was breaking under foot, and on the totally unroofed side of the house the open arch, seen from without, yawned to heaven. Just below, an unroofed passage, barred by half-fallen beams and choked with rubbish, ran between the still covered back part of the house and the open wreck on the left front wing, and at the end of this wild corridor a crazy door hung off its hinges.

"That is Miss Julia's room," said Peggy. "They had hard work gettin' her out when she was dead."

To the right was a corresponding passage, roofed, and with a window at the end, an open lattice prettily contrived but dropping out of the broken wall. Through this a lovely vista of sunshine and greenery was to be seen, making the ghastly interior more deplorable by contrast.

Once what a sweet green nook on a hot summer's day, full of reflection from the waving boughs, and showing a long, delicious vista of moving gleams and shadows through the tunnel of the avenue.

Right in front as they ascended was the door of a hideous, rotting chamber, into which Bawn would have stepped to her death had not Peggy pulled her back. Floor and ceiling were both dropping down from the walls, and the crazy mass of both had hung over the intruder's heads as they entered the building. Miss Mave's room was now close at hand, to be approached by yet another venture up one more flight of shattered stair. Through the rents between the wall, and the steps on which they feared to place their feet, the hall below was plainly visible, and a heavy tread might have carried intruder and footholding into the ruin below. Peggy, accustomed to the danger, walked like a bird, and Bawn poised herself on tiptoe with vigilant care, crossing the worst bits of footing with a spring.

Even before this stair was sealed they could hear faint human walls coming through the yet closed door. Peggy pushed it cautiously and entered first, and Bawn stood on the threshold, rapidly taking in this new interior.

Though the room was large the light was obscure, because the fine windows were all blocked up with contrivances to keep out the wind and rain. The ceiling was upheld by young larch-trees, stripped, and used as stakes as in the hall below, only there was a greater forest of them crowding them all to one side of the apartment, while, in spite of their efforts to delay the descent of the ceiling, it sagged down between them, and the straggling fragments of decay, dropping lower and lower, gave warning of a coming crash.

Under the worst part of the ceiling, planted right against the inefficient props, an old bed, covered with a canopy, was placed, hardly discernible at first in the obscurity, and behind and around it ghosts of wrecks of furniture of all kinds, encrusted with dust, rubbish and cobwebs, mustered in weird array. The forming a grotesque, melancholy background for the bed and its occupant.

Advancing a step, Bawn feared to put her feet anywhere, for the floor was not only broken, but sunken, sinking towards the side where the bed stood, and settled into a hollow ready to slide away at any moment into the abyss of rottenness below it. Keeping on the threshold till invited by Peggy to advance, she glanced round the apartment with eyes getting accustomed to the lack of light. In the safest-looking spot opposite the door a kitchen table in a rusty old grate, a kitchen table in a window near was littered with a few utensils, a cup and saucer, a plate, some rough needle-work, probably Peggy's. A hole in the floor was evidently used as a sink, and by it were a crock and saucepan, etc.

After one swift glance at the bed Bawn closed her eyes a moment before looking again, and heard a plaintive, shrieking voice wailing to Peggy, and Peggy speaking in homely, comforting tones.

What Bawn had seen in the bed was a creature who looked like a white witch—a skeleton covered with white, fair skin, a small, spectral face gleaming under the mouldy old canopy, a pair of fleshless hands like claws, only wax white, fingering the wretched bed-clothes.

"Oh, what a dire sight! That anything human should so lie here, deserted, from morning till night, and from night till morning again, in the storm in the rain, with this falling roof overhead and this sliding floor beneath, threatened momentarily with death from above and from below, suffering in the grip of pain, hunger, and cold, and, worst of all, face to face with the memory of

joys once present in those very walls! Bawn lowered her head and covered her face; and then she heard Peggy inviting her to come near the bed.

"And this is the American lady, Peggy," said the spectral creature, leaning on her fleshless elbow and looking at Bawn's fresh beauty as if she would shade her hollow eyes from so dazzling a sight. "You are welcome, my dear; welcome to Shane's Hollow. It is but a sorry place now to receive visitors in; but our good days are over here, are they not, Peggy? We had our good days, but they are gone. Peggy, give the young lady a chair and let her talk to me a little. How many years is it, Peggy, since I have spoken to anyone outside of this house besides yourself?"

"I am sorry you are so great a sufferer, Miss Adare," said Bawn, striving to speak in the most matter-of-fact manner, to appear as if quite accustomed to sit at bedside like this, quite unconscious of anything out of order around her, and unaware that they were, all three occupants of the room, in danger of death at any moment from a sudden collapse of the now rotten timbers that supported them.

"I am a great sufferer, my dear. Only for this post," she said, touching one of the larch trees, that was planted as a support between ceiling and floor at her side—"only for this I should fling myself out of the bed at night; and then there would be no one to pick me up. I hold on by it when the pain is terrible, when the pain is too dreadful to be borne."

Bawn looked at the stake and thought, with a new thrill of dismay, that surely one strong shake of this shaft, which was fastened securely to ceiling and floor, might be enough to bring about the end, to cause this wreck of a room with its occupant to come down like a house of cards.

"Sometimes I scream out quite loud," the poor ghost went on, "and then my brother Edmond comes up to me. He is a very kind creature is my brother Edmond."

Bawn looked at the midnight scene as presented to her imagination by these few words, and felt her warm blood beginning to freeze at the horror of it. She wondered did Luke also make ascent of that crazy stair in the night sometimes on such an errand of mercy? But it was her intention to ask no questions.

"Now, Miss Adare, you must forgive me for bringing you a custard of my own making. We Americans are handy people and think we know how to make sweets. If you don't think it good my pride will get a fall."

"Oh, you are a kind creature; you are a nice creature!" shrieked the bed-ridden woman. "Peggy told me you were, or I should not have allowed you to come here. You come from America, where everyone is free, and there are no old families; and you are better without them. Pride is a sin, though some people will never believe it. And some of us must suffer for our sins—oh! oh! oh!" she shrieked, finishing her sentence with a prolonged wail that seemed to express something more awful than the suffering of a body in pain.

"It's the pain that does be bad wit' her," explained Peggy, as the poor creature began to wave her skeleton arms, clutching the air and mourning with such cries as made Bawn think of the despair of a lost spirit.

"But God is very good when he has let me see Peggy," she added, unconsciously correcting the false impression her agony had produced. "Peggy is a good creature. And you are a good creature. You are very nice—oh! oh! oh! oh!" And again the wailing began, and her eyes rolled in her head, and she forgot everything but her anguish.

"This is dreadful!" whispered Bawn. "What does she suffer from?"

"Och, 'deed, everything," said Peggy, looking up and down. "The damp does be atin' her always, I think. And then a slight noise at the door made Bawn look round, and she saw that a woman was standing in the doorway, but so that he could not be seen from the bed.

"It's Mistor Rory Fingall from Tor," said Peggy. "O Lord! I hope none o' the gentlemen will see him!"

"Tell him to go away, then," said Bawn, and turned her face to the bed.

"O Arthur Desmond, Arthur Desmond!" suddenly screamed the poor, troubled creature in the bed. "Go away, Luke, and let me speak to him. Let him touch me with his finger and the pain will go away! O Arthur! Oh! oh! oh!"

Again the wail was prolonged, and Peggy came back from the door.

"It's no use your stayin' any longer, now, ma'am," she said. "She's begun to rave, and she won't talk to ye no more."

"But I mean to come again, Peggy. I must take her out of this den."

"Ye'll be clever if ye do that same, ma'am. There's nowhere for her to go but the porchouse, an' the gentlemen would burn the country if ye dared to take her there. Sure herself would go anywhere, poor lady; but Mistor Luke—"

Saying this Peggy signed to her to go, and, picking her steps to the door, Bawn came face to face with Somerled. She allowed him to help her down the stair and walked out into the open air with him. How sweet it tasted! How lovely was nature's wilderness after that hideous interior!

"Come out of this place!" were the first words that Fingall spoke to her, and, obeying him, she walked silently by his side till they emerged from the dilapidated gate at one end of the

Hollow into the open fields where grew the yellow lilies round the sky-blue pools, and where the cattle grazed.

"Are you quite mad?" he asked, suddenly stopping and looking at her with a blaze of mingled tenderness and anger lighting up his eyes.

"Why?" asked Bawn, quietly. "Do I look very wild?"

"I will not tell you how you look," he said, feeling, indeed, that he dared not say to her that he had never seen anything look so sane, wholesome, and beautiful, unless he wanted to start another quarrel and was prepared to go seeking for another dog as an excuse for a reconciliation. "It has nothing to do with the matter. You have been wantonly risking your life in that ruined house."

"Not wantonly. I have been visiting a fellow-creature in distress."

"It was not your business. You had no right to go in there," he continued, with concentrated excitement in his voice. His eye was still burning, his heart still shuddering at the thought of the danger she had been in.

"I have assumed the right and made it my business," she answered. "At all events, it appears that in doing so I have interfered with no one else, stepped officiously into nobody's shoes. Oh! I am sick of you," kindling into sudden anger and drawing back from him a step, "disgusted with the whole countryside of you! If I had been a man among you I would have walked in there and taken that poor creature on my back, and carried her out, and put her somewhere into a habitation fit for human presence. I would not have left her there screaming with pain and rotting alive in a den only fit for rats and owls."

She paused and caught her breath. He had turned quite pale, startled and shocked at her sudden passion. All the indignation had gone out of his own eyes as he watched the opening fire in hers.

"Perhaps we deserve blame," he said, "but not so much as you, a stranger, may think. Will you sit down here," pointing to a fallen tree, "and let me tell you about these strange people?"

"I am not tired. I will not sit down. I am going home."

"You will be tired before you have accomplished your long walk."

"You ought not to have followed me here."

"I did not follow you. I have some work going on over yonder, and this place gives me a short cut home-ward. That is how I met you here first, and how I have happened on you to-day. I saw the dog waiting for you at the door, and I went in to look for you, hardly believing that you could be there. Now will you sit down, and let us talk a little?"

Bawn yielded and sat on the fallen tree.

TO BE CONTINUED

THE TRUE CAPTAIN

"Day'll break in an hour now," said seaman Wallace hopefully, balancing his ice-coated oars and peering into the bleak cast, "an' then some steamer'll pick us up or we'll surely make the Connecticut shore." And he bent to his weary rowing.

Out of the cold stillness of the late night a seventh wave swelled up and the small lifeboat was lifted and shot into the dark trough. A sheet of Arctic water, sprayed the bows and, falling, soaked the bunched-up figure that lay under the smashed bowsprit. The figure moved heavily and moaned.

"Is it hurtin' much, Oscar?" asked the boy, who crouched at big Wallace's feet.

No answer! So he stopped his endless bailing and lifted the ship light. It cast a dingy yellow glow beyond the broad shoulders of the sailor and showed the indistinct form of the Swedish steward, and beyond and above the fog.

"He is in pretty bad shape, he is, Gene," Wallace never ceased to row. "That crazy leap from the boat deck did more than break his arm, I'm thinkin'; and," he added in a lower tone, "he'll freeze stiffer'n a marlin spike fore daylight this weather." To the boy at his knee he said:

"Cold, Cap'n?"

The boy compressed his lips and again braced the lantern against his foot, but Wallace noted how stiffly the fingers closed as he doubled to a continue bailing the slushy bilge.

So did the listening girl in the stern sheets. She glanced questioningly at her fellow-passenger, but he sat, head sunk on breast, and saw nothing—in the same position he had taken hours ago, when the seaman ordered him to take an oar, and the two had had words. Then she stretched her frosted muff and touched the blue pea-jacket.

"Come, lad. You have most of the water out now. Sit between us. It can't be colder here."

"Cap'n" looked up to the rower, who nodded, so dropping his bulter, he wiggled back between the two. His teeth chattered as he mumbled, "Thank ye, M-Miss," and the girl felt the uncontrollable shaking of the small frame. With quick sympathy she commanded the raw hands and folded them in her furs. He raised grateful eyes to her face.

"That's right, Miss. Warm up the Cap'n's flippers."

"The owner of the flippers grinned. "Is Cap'n your name?" said the girl.

Wallace replied: "He's the captain's son and,"—he shot a contemptuous glance at the male passenger—"if anything should

happen to me, the boy's the only man to take command here."

With his left he back-paddled, keeping the lifeboat head on to the invisible swells. Then, as though continuing his thoughts aloud:

"Yes; and he would, Miss, for he's shown tonight there's the makings of the true captain in him. Haven't you, old man?"

Gene nodded solemnly. "But ain't you chilled yourself, Miss?" The big sailor spoke again.

"More than a bit, but my furs protect me yet. Thank God, it was cold in my stateroom and I kept 'em on, or, when it happened, I'd never have thought of them. I didn't save much." She added with a failure of a smile, shuddering at the remembrance of the indelible horror of midnight.

"Well, you were lucky to save yourself, girl. There are many won't do that to-night." Complained the man seated with her. "We're not ashore yet, not ashore yet."

She turned to the voice that came crying from the muffled throat.

"Oh! I thought you were asleep, Mr. Mr.—"

"Asleep?" snorted Wallace, and then checked himself with a savage pull at his oars.

The ship-light sputtered and flared up, and Miss Madison caught a sharp snaphot of the other's features. Instinctively she drew the boy Gene closer, for the flash revealed the florid face of the passenger that had staggered into her, when they were crossing the gangplank under the white arcs at Fall River.

That was only last evening in actual time, but now it seemed a crowded eternity since she had boarded this sound steamer for New York. While she slept, a silent ship had glided out of the fog and cut the mortal gash in the City of Worcester. She had awakened at the shock and saw the dying electric in the stateroom ceiling. Terrified, she groped along the rapidly slanting passage-way, up the difficult main stairway, and out into the black scramble on the deck. There she had pushed and been pushed; she had been frightened by the wild shrill cries about her and later calmed by a steady voice and its cool commands that came unceasingly from the hidden bridge.

Then came a rush towards her. She had swayed and fainted—how long she knew not—but she remembered distinctly hearing the same steady voice, this time leaning over her say: "Here's another woman. In with her." Steel arms had lifted to hurl her into this lifeboat, as it was being lowered from the creaking davits.

Then occurred the second horror of the night, and she remembered gripping the seat when the bow-falls parted, and half the boatload slipped into the inky surface, and she still felt the nip of the bitter water the boat shipped in righting herself. It burnt like a surgeon's scalpel.

"Where are we sailor?"

Seaman Wallace did not reply. "We're not," she hesitated to word her thought, "are we?"

"Not yet, Miss," lied the sailor. But encouragingly, "With daylight I'll be able to row towards the other boats. Can't be far off. We'd never have parted company, if it weren't for this cursed fog. But anyway, light'll lift that an' show the Connecticut shore, an' there,"—he nodded to the attentive boy—"we'll find the captain awaiting us."

The captain's son sniffed.

"No; we won't find Pa there, 'cause," he added with a side glare, "he's capt'n of the Worcester and no capt'n would leave his ship when his ship's hurted that way."

Emphatically, "Not my Pa."

And again Miss Madison thought she heard the ring of the steady voice from the bridge, and she knew what the boy said was so.

But with the coming of the desired dawn, snow flurried and lifeboat No. 9 bobbed aimlessly to the slaty waves of Long Island Sound. The fog thickened to a solid gray; shutting out everything but the cold. This was biting like pincers now, and even the last barrier of Miss Madison's furs had long been carried.

Through the January air she saw the broad hands of seaman Wallace, like blue claws, pulling mechanically at the long shiny oars; while back of him, under the broken seat, the twisted shape of the Swedish steward lay motionless; his blue eyes open wide and one arm doubled back in a grotesque attitude. And she recalled as connected with this unnatural arm, the screaming leap of this poor fellow from the black above; the thud with which he had struck the bowsprit; the shottike crack that followed, and his commencing to moan.