

The shades of evening were fast gathering around us ; the wind was freshening into a stiff breeze ; many parcels, boxes and other matters of baggage and stores were lying about the decks which the sailors were busy putting under hatches, and no doubt some of the passengers felt they were in the way, or they might have another and not unusual reason for seeking rest. Be that as it may, several sought their cabins, and among others our new passenger and his son, a lad some twelve years old. Their quarters were in the improvised room or second cabin, and thither their trunks and things were sent after them.

Nothing at all particular disturbed the monotony of our life for the next four days. We were gaily proceeding with a fair wind, and our taut little craft being a good sailor, and but partly laden, our progress was every way satisfactory. Most of the passengers had got over their sea-sickness, and might be found on the quarter-deck from early dawn to starlit eve ; but it was observed that Mr. Calvey came not. Indeed he had not as yet crept out of his berth, and in answer to inquiries about his health, his son represented him as ailing. But he was quiet. He troubled no one, and no one seemed disposed to trouble him.

This was on or about the 10th of April, when it is broad day at five o'clock in the morning ; but before that hour there was a considerable stir in the second cabin, where, in berths arranged on the four sides, there slept some sixteen persons, the subject of this sketch and his boy included. Through the slight partition which divided our quarters I could hear a steady stream of words, rising at times into earnestness, anguish, or passion, and then other voices would mingle. Among the latter I recognized that of an Irish gentleman, of very quiet and retiring habits, who, however, had an adequate appreciation of his rights as a passenger, and who therefore objected in no very mild terms to the noise made by the principal speaker. We had also two Frenchmen, brothers, as passengers, both of them persons of exceeding kindness and civility ; but they too objected very emphatically to the disturbance.

These altercations fully awakened me, and I passed into the room to ascertain the causes of this disquiet. I was not long in doubt. The leading voice was that of a man agonizing in prayer,