

BETWEEN DECKS.

"Now for a jolly evening!—our watch don't come yet these two hours. Bill, nick off the cabbage end of your mutton, and hand us over the grog:—that's all right! Send us over a little of the baccor, too, if you've got any beside ye;—my clay runs short of its lading; thankee! "Who'll sing us a song?" cried one of the group of bronzed seamen, gathered closely around a mess table, on end of conveniences for drinking;—pipes, tobacco stoppers, and boxes, half burnt papers, &c.

"I'd sing a song," returned another, "only my voice is a little out of order, and besides you've all my stock of songs over and over.—But mine's the right sort of singing when I'm in the way of it—'an't it boys? and I makes no bones over it, and that's better."

"You never larn't?" inquired a neighbour.

"Larn't!—larn't what?"

"How to sing."

"How to sing?—devil a bit! it all comed by natur! My mother was a precious good hand at a song, and some of her talent has comed down to me. Like father, like son, you know, an old saying, and I don't see why like mother like son, shouldn't be one too. Her father was an innkeeper;—a very 'spectable kind o' person,—worth plenty of blant, had kept house for a matter o' twenty year,—and he got lots o' custom to his place by squinting her in the tap room, and letting her sing of an evening to the visitors. She singed what they called Bacchanalian songs, and trolled 'em out so deuced well, that all those what heard her, listened with such relish, that they drank like fishes, and spent all their coppers like so many kings. Many and many's the half crown that my mother's put into her father's pocket.—He wouldn't let her marry, though there was plenty of tugging at him for her, because why?—because she kept the chink going at the bar, and drew more drinkers to the Adam and Eve,—that was the sign of the house, you know,—than all the other public houses in the street, could get together.—The voice had been in the family, on the mother's side a long time; her mother's maiden name was *Nightingale*—perhaps that was one of the reasons for it."

"It might have been," cried one of the neighbour's speaker's, "for sometimes people's names wonderfully agrees with their employments. I knowed a lawyer's clerk once at Truro, and his name was Clutchem; the schoolmaster said he was born for the profession; and his parents thought so, too, for they put him 'prentice to one in their town."

"Well, I says," cried another, "that some of you had better sing us a song, or tell us a story. Bob Wilkin's says he can't sing, and you know, he's our Appollyon, and so."

"Appollyon!—what's an Appoiton?"

"What's an Appollyon!—'Tan't a thing man; he was a human creatur. A God what singed and fiddled, a thousand—ay! two thousand years ago."

"And do you call me a God?" said Bob Wilkin's. "perhaps you mean that this Appollyon was the God of singing."

"Bob, you're as sharp as a needle. Appollyon was the God of music, you know, and singing and music you know are nigh hard the same thing."

"I say, Bill!" whispered one of the group on the opposite side of the table, to his immediate neighbour, "Hard-fists been reading a book!"

"A strange book to talk about Gods," was the reply. "I thought there was only one."

"If nobody'll sing," said a third, who had hitherto puffed in meditative silence, looking alternately at each speaker, "I'll tell you a story; (knocking the ashes out of his pipe,) and it shall be a true story. We've had lately enough *friction* to last us our life time. Who wotes for my story? Those who says ay! hold up their hands, and those who says no! keep them down. That's a straight forred way of doin' business. So!—let us see! what! five up, and three down—Carried by George!"

"Slip off!" cried two or three, swilling down the grog, and again looking out for their pipes.

"Well!—give us the lick. I can't talk till I've just moistened my throat a little." The speaker, whose name was William Duncan, took the readily proffered goblet, and gulped down half a pint, by moderate computation. He stopped suddenly, however, in the draught, and breathing hard, said, holding all the time the beverage within an inch of his lips—"Some people thinks,—it's just comed into my head,—that this here bump was brought into the throat by Adam—the man, you know, what was put into a garden, and—ad—had Eve along with him!"

"Ay! ay! we know," ejaculated all.

"Well! some says that the apple that he eat that Eve giv'd him, stuck in his throat and there it has been ever since. What do ye think? dy'e think it's likely?"

"It was the devil that giv'd to Eve," suggested Bob Wilkin's.

"The devil?—no!—doesn't it say in th Scriptures, it was a serpent?"

"A serpent!" cried Bob. "Ho!—I o, that's a jolly good 'un. I've heard she was persuaded to take it, and whoever heard of a serpent's having a voice?"

The laugh ran mightily against the wight who had mentioned the serpent.

"Well! that's neither here nor there," interrupted the promised story teller. "It might have been the devil, or it might have been the serpent; at all events, Adam eat the apple core and all; and according to the pop'lar version of the story, paid for it by not having it altogether to digest. Now, what I wants to know is, whether you think it likely that his eating the apple caused this here bump in the throat?"

"Why look ye here!" returned another, very gravely swaying himself backwards and forwards in his seat, as if he was laboring to get out something extremely profound—"the devil gave the apple to Eve, and we know the devil's very wicked:—now, if the devil's very wicked, it's not likely he bore any good will to Adam, he would not have tried to do him any good;—if he wouldn't have tried to do him any good, and gave the apple, it's plain the apple must be intended to do mischief,—now, if the apple was intended to do mischief, it's plain the apple wasn't good to eat, and if the apple wasn't good to eat, the apple couldn't go down, and if the apple couldn't go down, it must have stuck in Adam's throat; and the end of it is, that if the apple stuck in his throat, as there wasn't no doctors in those days, and it couldn't be distracted, there it must have stuck to everlasting;—and that's the reason we've got it now;—and there's plenty of logic for ye."

"Logic!—what's logic?"

"What I've been talking—it's the putting a thing in a convincing point o' view; so, there you've got it all now, and tip me over the grog and some baccor."

"Are you convinced, Bob?"

"Yes, I suppose I am; 'an't you?"

"Not altogether. This logic may be all very fine, but I'm blow'd if I understand it. Howsomer, we're certain that Adam eat the apple, and we suppose that it stuck in his throat.—Come, then, now for the story."

"Well, boys!" cried Duncan, "it was about a matter o' ten years ago, that I sailed for a cruise of fifteen months, in the *Fire-drake*, a bran new, beautiful going, thirty-six gun frigate. By George! but she was a beauty;—I fancy I've got her now in my eye—all sail set,—decks to the wind,—star-board tack,—bowling a long like a witch, as she was,—water hissing up at her bows,—green ripples flashing all about her,—and her streamers flacking aloft like trains o' fire. I was young at the time,—that is, younger than I am now."

"That's deucedly certain!"—cried Bob.

"Hold ye'r jaw, Bob—and as merry and happy as the day was long. Many's the watch I've held on her decks, with the moon a blinking above, and the water flopping below, the wind sighing through the cordage, and sights o' dolphins sporting about, poor things! all looking as merry as crickets. Many's the good story I've heard aboard her; such as 'ud make you crack your sides with laughing; and many's the jolly song we've sent to the clouds of a quiet night—but I am getting a little out of my reckoning. Well! we cut across the Atlantic in glorious style, sometimes hard down with a burst of bad weather, and sometimes slap becalmed—sails like rags—sea like glass. But on the whole, we had a very pleasant voyage; no end of amusements aboard us;—by the bye, bless'd if we didn't get up a play!—upon my soul we did, and I was the Fair Penitent, though I didn't make a very good hand at it; and our boatswain was a feller in it, that they call Coragio, or Boragio, or summit like that. Well, more o' that another time. We got to our cruising ground all in health and spirits, and began to look about us; but we hadn't much work. Now and then, perhaps, a tail of a gale would take us, and oblige us to take in some of our wings; but they generally didn't last long, and we had the old *ron time*, as they call it, of our service to go over again. We overhauled a few merchant brigs, and so on; sometimes we let 'em go, 'cause there wasn't much to keep 'em for, aboard 'em; and sometimes we kept 'em for prizes, and had 'em condemned. Well, the time passed on sleepily, like this, for seven of the fifteen months, and we began to look forred for the time o' being relieved. Not having much to do, a good many of our men took to fishing;—good sport we had sometimes, catching all manner o' 'em, good, bad and indiff'rent.—Well, one day—'twas a precious fine un—I remember it very well, the sun was up above, all flaring as hot as possible; the sea looked as shiny that we could scarcely bear to look at it, and it was so dreadfully close, that all on deck got quite drowsy. I and another man, named Tim Dowling—by the bye, he was a bit of an Irishman; at least his father and mother was Irish; they kept a crockery shop at Cork, very 'spectable people; Tim's grandfather had a post in the excise, with good wages, and now and then a good deal of condemned wares;—pass on the grog, will

ye Bob?—well, as I was saying, Tim Dowling an' I—he was a short sturdy-looking chap, with a devil of a brogue—was a stretching over the starboard bulwark, with what we call our haggling rods in our hands and a bit of a sheep's heart a-piece on our hooks. I said afore, that the day was very sultry. Well, I was a shutting my eyes, and feeling a little inclined to snooze, and Tim was a going off in downright earnest. By and bye, out slipped his rod out of his hand and over he fell!—Ay! right overboard by George!—But I had forgot to tell ye he had lost one of his pins;—the larboard one it was—and wear'd a wooden one. I'll tell you how it was: he happened to fall in a gale from the fore-yard, when he'd been sent up to help in taking in a reef: the doctor spliced it as well as he could,—a clever feller he was to—I could tell you a dozen *antidotes* of what wonderful things he did; but an inflammation comed on, and nothing could be done, but it must be topped off; so — but I'm steering a little wide, 'an't I? Let's see! where did I leave off?"

"Why, you'd just got him overboard."

"Ay!—now I've got it. Well, Tim fell smack over, and a devil of a fuss there was aboard when I sung out. I cocked my eye over the bulwark, and what should I see but a perditional great shark, rising up out of the deep water, and making way directly for poor Tim. Poor devil! he screamed like I don't know what. Down went the swings of the jolly through the davit-blocks, and the crew pulled hard out for him, for by this we had made some way, and he had drifted astarn. They warn't in time, for the shark had got hold of his leg;—but it was the *wooden one*, though, and master shark had no soft morsel. He looked as if he couldn't make out for the world what he'd got in his throat. Well! the shark tugged at Tim's pin, and the boat's crew tugged at Tim, till there was such splashing and haggling in the water never was seen. You never seed such fun. But they got the shark at last on board, and he began to beat about with his tail, like a fury. A hatchess soon brought him to his senses, and after Tim had been brought aboard again, and the boat was runned up, we had leisure to cut him open, and see what was inside. A mighty fine feller he was, indeed! I don't know how many feet long. We found inside, a *boat's rudder*, a *straw hat*, a *baccor-box*, a *spirit-flask*, a *sugar box*, *compass*, and *beer-barrel*; all in a very undressed state. We got off his skin, and throwed him overboard; and there's my story."

"Talking of falling overboard," said Bob Wilkin's, as William Duncan resumed his pipe, and began to smoke vehemently, "puts me in mind of a gallows good story that I knows myself for a fact. When I was aboard the *Dryhead*, 40, Captain Truncheon, there was a fo'castle man named Ned Curtis, a very good feller, and looked all things very easily. I remember once he fell much in the way as your man did, Duncan, only he was in a worse predicament, as the sea was running high, and we was making a good way. The captain jump'd to the side, "Hillo Curtis!" says he, "is that you overboard?" "Ay, ay, sir!" said Curtis, "take ye'r time; I feels very comfortable." But Ned wasn't left to feel himself comfortable very long; he was soon hauled in, and set again on his pins on deck. Well! we was lying snug enough off Havant, and this Ned Curtis had a wife; a strapping craft, broad in the beam, with a high stern, and very bluff in the bows! enough to have made on him. She was a tallow-chandler's daughter, and Ned had taken a fancy to her, when he was passing by her house, when she was down below in a cellar on a melting day looking at the men. Ned happened to leer down, and she happened to leer up, just at the same time, and it was a slap shot o' both sides; so he stoop'd, and not knowing well how to get another sight on her, walked into the shop, and asked the price of tens dips. He bought a pound on 'em, and dallied about the shop, waiting to see if she'd come up, taking a long time to fork out the blunt, and another long time in counting it, and passing the change into his starboard locker and another long time in looking at piles of soap, tin things full of oil, and papers o' starch. But at last, up com'd the young oman, looking as red as the field in the merchantman's bunting. Somehow or 'thother they all scraped acquaintance, and after a little conversation forred, they bore up for the parlour, and cast anchor round the pier. Ned was at that time jolly good company, so I don't wonder that he made his way among 'em: he'd ha' don'd it with old Nick—he'd got such an insinwatin way with him. They lived very comfortably together: she was of a 'commodating temper, and he was of a light-hearted, and pleasant and yielding disposition; so they got on famously, and was, as the second lieutenant used to say, a pattern of *connubial facility*; never having many breezes, and keeping generally speaking, very fair 'tween 'em. She was a little fond o' drink, to be sure! but that warn't no great harm, 'as every body's got their failings, and a taste o' grog is very comfortable sometimes, as we all knows. Howsomer, I'm steering a little wide. Well, one day she was a leaning out o' one of the weather bow-ports, a draining

the water from a pot o'atoes, and the craft giving a heel over, she was fairly chuck'd overboard. A precious scream she gived when she found herself a tumbling; all on the deck was in fine commotion, and Ned com'd running up, quite flabbergasted; he runs to the port and looks over. But all wan't no use;—the poor o'man swimm'd like lead, and down she was, afore you could say "Jack Robinson!" "Shiver my timbers!" cries he, slapping his hand agin his forehead, "if she hasn't gone over with the kay of the tea caddy! Bless'd if I musn't break it open!" That's a fact, 'cause I heer'd it.

BILL ROGERS.  
Late H.M.S. "Fire-Fly."

MANSION-HOUSE.

Mr Johnson, an extensive wholesale export ironmonger in Aldgate, was summoned before Alderman Scholey by the ward inquest, under the following circumstances.

Mr Freeman foreman of the inquest, stated that in going through the ward, in the performance of their duties, they found weights in the defen'ant's shop which were neither stamped as required by act of Parliament, nor of proper weight. The Jury left word at the shop that if they should on a future occasion, find that there was similar, cause of complaint, they should seize the weights. On Tuesday last, they visited the shop again, and found there weights which were not stamped, and some of which were lighter and others heavier than the standard at Guildhall.

Mr Thomas Pallet, scale maker, stated that he attended the Jury on the occasion alluded to. At the desire of the Jury, the defen'ant's servant brought to the door from the interior four half-hundredis, and two quarter hundredis. Some were deficient in weight; others were too heavy, and they were all unstamped. They appeared to have been in the shop for use.

The defen'ant said that the course pursued by the inquest was dictated by prejudice; that they knew he had a vast number of weights which were not stamped, nor accurately defined as to weight, and that it was by no means usual to have the requisite forms according to the Act of Parliament observed until the weights were sold. That he sent weights to many other countries, and could not affix the stamps to such, and that in fact, it was quite impossible for a tradesman, situated as he was, to do as they required. He added, that the Act of Parliament never contemplated such a thing as obliging a man who dealt in the article to have all the weights in his possession stamped and regulated according to the standard, and that he should resist any attempt of the kind.

The gentlemen of the inquest stated that the other persons in the trade had observed the necessary regulations; that not the least prejudice existed in the minds of the Jury against the defen'ant, although he had treated them with incivility; but that they felt it due to all the other inhabitants in the ward to make him answer for his regardlessness to the law. They did not wish that any penalty should be inflicted, but would be satisfied if Mr Johnson would promise to submit as the other tradesmen did.

Alderman Scholey thought the proposal of the inquest very reasonable, and advised the immediate adoption of it.

Mr Johnson said that to comply with the proposal would be impossible. He assured the Alderman that in his business he never used any weights but those which were stamped at Guildhall, and of course nothing should induce him ever to do otherwise.

The Alderman, having referred to Mr Hobler for advice, did not seem disposed to decide against the defen'ant, and expressed a wish that a compromise should take place.

Mr Hobler said that the question was one of rather nice description. It did not appear to him to be reasonable that an export ironmonger should have all his weights stamped. He, however, wished that the City Law Authorities should be consulted.

The Foreman—Some expenses have been incurred; is not Mr Johnson to pay them?

Defen'ant—Certainly not; I would rather that the question should be decided against me here. I am not in the wrong, and will not pay a farthing.

The Foreman said the weights which had been objected to were in the Justice room, and he wished to know what was to be done with them?

Alderman Scholey—Return 'em to him on condition that he will promise not to make use of them as weights.

A PRETTY LIP.—A writer of romance thus describes his hero's under lip:—"It was a lip without model although not without shadow. It poured down a real cataract of lip. It was of the shape and size of a half grown hounds ear, and circled over his chin in ample apology. At a distance you would have mistaken it for a tongue, too large for the capacity of his mouth—or a red banner, hung out to tell which way the wind blew."

A Butcher in Philadelphia has been convicted of using false scales in his business, and was sentenced to thirty days imprisonment in gaol.