

out, "Hollo! back already? I did not expect you for a couple of days yet."

"Yes, father, we're back," said Dick, "and we have a pleasant surprise for you."

"You have, eh. What is it?"

"We have recovered the yacht," said Harry.

Mr. Norton looked as if he did not understand, and he said so.

"Yes," returned Harry, "we stole it back from those fellows who stole it from you, and have brought it home with us."

"There is some mystery here," replied his father. "The yacht had not been stolen last night when I was looking at it."

"I thought you had not found out yet," said Dick. "We got it this morning about twelve miles from here."

"You are not joking me?" said Mr. Norton, "for what you say is next to impossible, because I lent the yacht last night to three gentlemen friends of mine from the city—Harris, Marsh and Harmon—but, look here, surely you have not stolen it from them. Come here and tell me all about it, quick."

Mr. Norton then drew the whole story from them, and though he was angry with them for their treatment of his friends, he could not but feel amused over the incident.

The boys were dumbfounded. Where was their heroic rescue now? The pleasant greetings that they had got from the supposed thieves, together with the splendid equipments they had found in the yacht, were now explained, and they felt uncommonly foolish.

There was nothing more to be done now except to bring in the yacht and boats to the town, and to await the arrival of the gentlemen whom they had left ten or twelve miles down the stream, and whom Mr. Norton rightly guessed, would arrive about eleven o'clock.

They came at about that time, having hired a horse and buggy from a farmer, and presented themselves to Mr. Norton, expressed their regret at the loss of the yacht, and offered to fully recompense him for its loss, if it could not be recovered. He, however, soon put them at their ease by relating the true circumstances, and they,

after hearing it, said that it was a huge joke and that although they had been put to some inconvenience, they would freely forgive the boys, and say no more about it. The next morning they made a new start on their expedition, and this time nothing interfered with them.

The boys tried hard not to let the story get abroad, but in some manner it leaked out, and they consequently had to stand a great deal of chaff on account of it. It was a long time before they heard the last of their daring act in rescuing the yacht from the ferocious ruffians.

H. H. L.

ON THE CHINA SEA.

"How many of them are there, do you suppose?" was Harry's next question. "Probably 2,000, though, of course, they are not all in one band. They hover round the islands, three or four junks together, ready to pounce on any luckless craft that may pass. Besides, they have allies on the continent and several strong forts and fortified harbours to which to flee, when there is any danger of being captured. If we were so unfortunate as to meet with some of Tucker's followers, we might have a chance of seeing the forts, though I am not anxious to do so under such circumstances."

The steamer had now entered a comparatively narrow channel between two islands, and just as Jack finished speaking, an affrighted Chinese rushed up the hatchway followed by the engineer. The engines had suddenly stopped. The engineer hastened to the bridge to make his report and had begun: "That villain, sir, Lee Foo, has just thrown some handfuls of coal—" when two large junks, improvised as fireships, were seen to swing in from port and starboard towards the stern of the *Golden Pheasant*. "Their old trick," muttered Jack, "a rope under water stretched across a narrow channel, a junk at each end, the engines stopped and then"—and then, for a minute or two, there was the utmost confusion. Gongs and stink-pots discharged from the junks in the rear began to fly about, and though they did but slight damage they clearly showed how the Chinese crew