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## CLIMBING THE HEIGHTS

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The English had determined to end the struggle with the French on this continent by seizing all their strongholds with one mighty effort. Chief among these was Quebec, and the task of conquering it devolved upon Admiral Saunders and the young but dauntless soldier, General Wolfe. The French by no means meant to become an easy prey. At the approach of the British fleet, every buoy and mark that made the navigation of the St. Lawrence comparatively easy was removed. This somewhat delayed the English, but the skill of a young sailor—Captain Cook—who was afterwards to become so famous for his voyages round the world, overcame the difficulty, and soon had the channel mapped out to the very base of the rocky citadel.

On June 26th, 1759, the whole fleet safely navigated the narrow channel, much to the amazement of the Frenchmen, and cast anchor to the south of the Island of Orleans. So accurate were Cook's soundings, and so skillful the masters of the vessels, that not so much as a keel grated the bottom. When the work was completed the jubilant sailors, after getting their vessels "snug," betook themselves to various sorts of amusement, to work off their surplus energy. On one of the vessels a crowd of rough laughing fellows collected about a delicate-looking boy, and teasingly said, "Now that we've fine weather, you'd better try goin' aloft."

The "bo'sun" was passing, and overhearing the remark, exclaimed "Is that that young dog, Beaumont? Here, you young coward, take these flag halyards, and go to the truck."

The poor boy took the halyards with a trembling hand, but said, "I can't sir; really, I can't. I've tried, and I could never go up."

"You can't, eh? Well, we'll see about that. Bring 'the cat,' Jerry."

A burly, coarse-featured youth rushed after the dreaded weapon, and soon reappeared, grinning with exultation.

"Up you go," roared the 'bo'sun,' "or I'll give you a taste of this."

The young sailor took the line in his teeth, and stepped into the rigging. He was trembling like a leaf, and not a few of the men would willingly have gone instead. He had climbed but a short distance when he stopped, and seemed unable to go a step higher.

"Up you go, you lubber!" cried the heartless 'bo'sun.' "You go up, Jerry, and see him over the round-top."

The sailor addressed needed no urging. He was the sort of a human animal that liked to see the weak in agony, perhaps to give him delight in his own brute courage, by contrast. When he reached the lad he gave him a light touch with the point of his knife. Beaumont made a mighty effort, and went a few steps further. He soon reached the round-top, and started to go through the "lubber's hole."

"No, you don't!" roared the 'bo'sun.' "Over it you go!"

The lad's trembling fingers seized the difficult rope-ladder, and made an effort to swing himself over the top, but, in doing so, lost his grasp, and would have fallen to the deck, but for the lad that was behind him.