

old fisherman by the name of Jedediah Spinnet, who owned a schooner of some hundred tons burden, in which he, together with four stout sons, was wont to go about once a year to the Grand Bank for the purpose of catching cod-fish. The old man had five things about which he loved to boast—his schooner, "Betsy Jenkins," and his four sons.

The four sons were all that their father represented them to be, and no one ever doubted his word when he said that their like was not to be found for fifty miles around. The oldest was twenty-two, while the youngest had reached his sixteenth year; and they answered to the names of Seth, Andrew, John, and Samuel.

One morning a stranger called upon Jedediah, to engage him to take to Havana some iron machinery belonging to steam engines for sugar plantations. The terms were soon agreed upon, and the old man and his sons immediately set about putting the machinery on board. That accomplished, they set sail for Havana, with a fair wind, and for several days proceeded on their course without an adventure of any kind. One morning, however, a vessel was descried off the starboard quarter which, with some hesitation, the old man pronounced to be a pirate. There was not much time allowed them for doubting, for the vessel soon saluted them with not a very agreeable whizzing of an eighteen pound shot just under their stern.

"That means for us to heave to," remarked the old man.

"Then I guess we had better do it, hadn't we?" said Seth.

"Of course."

Accordingly the Betsy Jenkins was brought up into the wind, and her main boom hauled over to windward.

"Now boys," said the old man, as soon as the schooner came to a stand, "all we can do is to be as cool as pos-