

14 WHEN LOVE CALLS MEN TO ARMS

body. When I was well into the ditch I peered out at the object of my dread. It was still swaying gently in the same place, although it might have been my imagination which had turned it to face in my direction.

I started to crawl slowly along the ditch, meaning to get to the safe side of the thing, when I would make a bolt for home. Now and then I raised my head, always to find that the thing was still there and facing me. Finally, when I was directly opposite the thing, I cautiously peered over the ditch-top just as a flare of light leaped from the Spanish ship, lingered a moment, then went out, leaving me in greater darkness and in greater terror. For I had seen a man!

He was not like our men. He wore no philabeg or plaid. He was tall and graceful, and his legs seemed to be in long hose. He had no bonnet, but in his hand he carried a long, thin, naked sword. And he swayed mysteriously on his heels.

All this I noticed in the flash of fire; but that which attracted me most was a pair of big, sleepy eyes gazing at me out of a very pleasant face. Then a voice spoke in a tongue which I did not understand, except to realize that I was face to face with a Spaniard! I crouched, trembling, in the ditch. Then the Spaniard said something which conveyed to my mind the idea that he wanted me to "come forth," but his words, spoken in English, became confused on his tongue.