

LITTLE JARVIS.

A STORY FOR THE YOUNG FOLKS.

(CONTINUED.)

Jarvis appeared, punctually in the evening, blushing very much, his face shining with the scrubbing he had given it, and his hair carefully soaped up. He also had on his new coat jacket. Brookfield had carefully coached him in ward-room etiquette, and Jarvis promised faithfully to remember it all; but unluckily, he forgot every word of it the moment he entered the wardroom. However, he managed to stow away a remarkably good dinner, partly from inclination and partly from Brookfield's warning that if a midshipman refused any dish that was offered him in the ward-room it was taken as a reflection on ward-room fare, and an affront to his superiors; and the officers drew lots as to which one should call him out.

The officers all treated Jarvis with great respect, although there were several sly allusions to duels to the



death, and a lively discussion as to whether "code" or "cod" were the proper spelling a word very much in use among midshipmen in those days. It was generally agreed that "cod" was right, to Jarvis's infinite relief, who remembered he had spelled it that way in his letter to Brookfield. During it all Jarvis, however, maintained perfect silence and great dignity. The lieutenant was very kind to him, although a twinkle in the eye revealed that there was a joke abroad connected with Jarvis; but, on the whole, Jarvis enjoyed himself hugely, and returned to the steerage with wonderful tales of the immense attention, consideration, and admiration bestowed upon him by the ward-room officers. According to Jarvis's account, he had come off victorious in a stout argument with the first lieutenant, and had browbeat several other officers who ventured to differ with him. Nobody believed him, of course; but as all the midshipmen brought back similar yarns when they dined in the ward-room, it was a point of steerage etiquette to profess unqualified belief in them; so Jarvis's account was received with perfect gravity.

After that, Brookfield and Jarvis became inseparable. Jarvis got no more lickings, although he was still called Little Jarvis.

It was February, and they were cruising among the West India Islands. The weather was beautiful, everybody was in good spirits and hoping to get a whack at a Frenchman, and little Jarvis was so full of pranks and mischief that it seemed as if he only came down from the tops to get his meals and sleep.

One golden afternoon Jarvis seemed possessed. The officer of the deck happened to be his friend, the lieutenant, who winked at everything, until he suddenly turned around and caught Jarvis in the act of a sword-swallowing performance, which wasn't exactly suited to an officer and a gentleman on the quarter-deck. So, in five minutes, Jarvis was enjoying as usual the fine view afforded from the cross trees. At first it was quite jolly up there, the sun shone so bright, and the salt air was so clear and fresh as the ship flew before the wind. Besides, Jarvis had a pencil and paper and some lead bullets in his pocket, and, having a knack of drawing, he drew a number of pictures of his whilom friend, the lieutenant, representing him in numerous grotesque and humiliating situations. These he rolled carefully up into a wad with a bullet in it, and dropped at Brookfield's feet as that young gentleman strolled leisurely along the deck. But, strangely enough, Brookfield did not see the wad, and not ten minutes afterward the lieutenant came briskly along and picked it up. At that, little Jarvis uttered a long and dismal whistle, and looked far across the dancing water.

"I'm in for it now," he groaned to himself.

Down in the ward-room that night the lieutenant suddenly remembered little Jarvis's pictures. He took the wad out of his pocket and spread the scraps of paper carefully out on the table. There was the lieutenant on his knees before a preposterous young lady in ringlets. Again he was bestriding a very lean donkey, who was in the act of shooting him into space, and underneath was scrawled, in a big, boyish hand, "Aint he a grate luetenant now."

The lieutenant got to laughing, and the other officers around the table joined in.

"Olever little rascal, that Jarvis," they all said.

"By Jove!" suddenly exclaimed the lieutenant, "I sent the little scamp aloft about five o'clock and forgot all about him!"

The lieutenant was a kind-hearted fellow, and he hurried up on deck, feeling remorseful for all the long hours that little Jarvis had been aloft.

The night had fallen, and with it had come that vast loneliness which only the ocean knows. Little Jarvis or once got a little down-hearted and orgot to whistle. It was quite dark, and the moon had not risen, although the stars were kindled in the blue-black sky. The ship was cutting fast through the water, the breeze was fresh, and as a gust occasionally struck the great mainsail, it flapped loudly, with a weird, reverberating sound. And besides being dark and dismal on little Jarvis's perch, it was cold and very lonesome. Jarvis began to think what a jolly time the other fellows were having down in the steerage, where it was warm and light, and it was getting to be supper-time, too. They were all skylarking, no doubt; the steward was probably begging them to let him have the table to serve supper; but as it was a favorite amusement to turn the table bottom upward, while the reefers piled in and slid up and down as the ship lurched, sometimes it was half an hour before they would let the much-badgered steward have it. Presently, though, as Jarvis looked about, he saw in the half distance, a long way off, a mere speck. It might be a sail. Jarvis, who had the sharpest eyes on board, concluded to watch that speck, and meanwhile try and keep his mind off his supper, of which there was at present a very slim prospect. The lieutenant, presently, hurrying along the deck, heard a sweet boyish voice far up aloft singing:

"Strike eight bells, call the watch,
Relieve the wheel and chain:
Won't we have a jolly time
When we got home again."

The "home again" had a little pathetic sound. Jarvis's song wasn't so merry as usual; it was sad, and chimed in with the time—night upon the ocean.

"Poor little chap!" thought the lieutenant, and calling out very loud, "Jarvis!" got a cheery "All right, sir," at if the boy had not been swinging up there for hours and hours in the darkness, and seeing the night descend upon the sea.

It seemed scarcely a moment before Jarvis had landed on deck. He went up to the lieutenant eagerly.

"If you please, sir," he said, saluting, "there's a sail off the port quarter. I tried to call out, but nobody heard me—and I believe it a big frigate."

At that moment the lookout on the quarter sung out, "Sail ho!"
(TO BE CONTINUED.)



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