

## The Rockwood Review.

tion of their cargo, he obtained permission to stay below in his bunk. Work proceeded without him, and at nine o'clock in the evening they sailed again, and it was not until they were a couple of miles on their way to Dimport that Mr. Legge rushed aft with the announcement he was missing.

"Don't talk nonsense," said the skipper, as he came up from below in response to a hail from the mate.

"It's a fact, sir," said Mr. Legge shaking his head.

"What's to be done with the boy?" demanded the mate, blankly.

"Sam's a unsteady, unreliable, tricky old man," exclaimed the skipper, hotly; the idea of going and leaving a boy on our hands like that. I'm surprised at him. I'm disappointed in Sam—deserting!"

"I expect 'e's larning like anything, sir," remarked Mr. Legge.

"Get forrard," said the skipper, sharply; get forrard at once, d'ye hear?"

"But what's to be done with the boy?—that's what I want to know said the mate.

"What d'ye think's to be done with him?" bawled the skipper. We can't chuck him overboard, can we?"

"I mean when we get to Dimport?" growled the mate.

"Well, the men'll talk," said the skipper, calming down a little. "and perhaps Sam's wife'll come and take him. If not, I suppose he'll have to go to the workhouse. Anyway, it's got nothing to do with me. I wash my hands of it altogether."

He went below again leaving the mate at the wheel. A murmur of voices came from the forecabin where the crew were discussing the late behavior of their late colleague. The bereaved Master Jones whose face was streaky with the tears of disappointment, looked on from his bunk.

"What are you going to do, Billy?" inquired the cook.

"I dunno," said the boy, miserably.

He sat up in his bunk in a brown study, ever and anon turning his sharp little eyes from one to another of the men. Then, with a final snuff to the memory of his departed parent, he composed himself to sleep.

With the buoyancy of childhood he had forgotten his trouble by the morning, and ran idly about the ship as before, until in the afternoon they came in sight of Dimport. Mr. Legge who had a considerable respect for the brain hidden in that small head, pointed it out to him, and with some curiosity waited for his remarks.

"I can see it," said Master Jones briefly.

"That's where Sam lives," said his friend, pointedly.

"Yes," said the boy, nodding, "all of you live there, don't you?"

It was an innocent enough remark in all conscience, but there was that in Master Jones's eye which caused Mr. Legge to move away hastily and glance at him in some disquietude from the other side of the deck. The boy, unconscious of the interest excited by his movements, walked restlessly up and down.

"Boy's worried," said the skipper, aside, to the mate; "cheer up, sonny."

Billy looked up and smiled, and the cloud which had sat on his brow when he thought of the cold-blooded desertion of Mr. Brown gave way to an expression of serene content.

"Well, what's he going to do?" inquired the mate, in a low voice.

"That needn't worry us," said the skipper. "Let things take their course; that's my motto."

He took the wheel from Harry; the little town came closer; the houses separated and disclosed roads, and the boy discovered to his disappointment that the church stood on ground of its own and not on the roof of a large red house as he had supposed. He ran forward as they had got closer, and, perching up in the bows until they were fast to the quay, looked