

him closely, but no trace of deceit appeared in his actions or countenance—only a look of uncertainty.

"Finally his doubt resolved itself. Calling at my lodging, he begged to mention something which, he said, had been troubling him: he had not had the courage to speak of it before.

"The man trembled like one in an ague. His face was white, and its features distorted with terror. It struck me that he might be on the verge of *delirium tremens*. He had been drinking hard ever since I met him.

"An explanation of this nature, however, did not altogether satisfy me: the man's ideas were clear and coherent.

"It was not long until suspicion was cleared up. The explanation of his strange demeanor was the very matter Vegeza wished to acquaint me with. His awful seriousness prepared me for something unpleasant; but the suddenness and unexpected character of the revelation even then took me by surprise.

"I didn't tell you that the *Mendoza* is haunted?" he whispered, hoarsely.

"Mechanically I forced a laugh that was half shudder. There are conditions under which anyone will be impressed by tales of the supernatural. Everbody listens to a ghost story told by candle light.

"I confess that I was uncomfortable. Little as I was accustomed to give credit to that sort of thing in my thinking moments, and especially by daylight, I caught myself shuddering in the presence of this panic-stricken sailor while he pictured his gruesome experiences of the past three months.

"I hardly knew what to say. My education and experience had taught me to regard stories of the kind as the merest moonshine. But this man, in his normal condition, was rational and intelligent; and his terrible seriousness almost overcame me.

"It appeared that the *Mendoza* had a history. On the voyage from Oporto to Valparaiso, there had been a mutiny on board—one of a singular character.

"The first mate had conceived an unaccountable dislike for the captain. A quarrel arose between the two, and the mate disregarded the orders of his superior. Enraged, the latter threatened him. Without provocation the mate drew a pistol; and the captain, in the heat of anger, yet in self-defence, shot the fellow dead.

"The case had been reported to the authorities at Valparaiso, and the captain was cleared of guilt.

"His conscience had troubled him ever since; for it was revealed at the trial that the mate at different times had suffered from mental aberration. Vegeza, consequently regarded himself a murderer, though perhaps not justly so.

"The ghost of his unfortunate victim had haunted him and his vessel ever since. This was the secret of the desertion of the *Mendoza* at Key West.

"It required an effort to quiet myself in the uncomfortable situation I found I was in. It was useless, foolish, to urge Vegeza that what he took for supernatural visitations were nothing but the coinage of his imagination. His superstitious fancies had become part of himself.

"I was glad to take the barque, however, with all her unpleasant associations. As to the ghost of the murdered man, that could hardly be expected to bother itself with me: my conscience was clear.

"We set sail. Vegeza came into the

cabin before we left and pointed out the spot where the fatal altercation had taken place. There, he said, appeared nightly, in all semblance of reality, the ghost of the dead mate. Vegeza was glad to get away out of sight of the ship.

"Out on the salt water again, resuming my old life, any depression that this unpleasant story had caused, disappeared. My officers and crew were good fellows, and the *Mendoza*, to my surprise, was a tolerable sailer.

"Though considerably stimulated by my agreeable surroundings, my health was not fully restored. The first night at sea I turned in early, utterly wearied from the labor of the day.

"Did I sleep, or was I half awake? I cannot tell, but my mind was running on the tragic occurrence in the *Mendoza's* cabin, and picturing in detail the murder itself and the supernatural appearances that struck terror into Vegeza.

"My sober opinion of the latter was that they were a figment of the brain, due to mental torture and, perhaps, to drink. Nevertheless, I had often remarked of myself, that, in spite of my firm convictions of the unreality of apparitions, my imagination was difficult to control.

"Was this reality, or imagination, that, in the midst of a confused train of ideas, I heard a step approach the door of my sleeping apartment?

"Was not this as Vegeza had warned? And this very room was the scene of the murder!

"I was awake now, at all events. The hearing may be exceedingly acute in moments of alarm, and the imagination may be skilful to frame imitations of real sounds; but that sound in the next room was a footfall.

"Was there, necessarily, anything remarkable about that, though? I had the self-possession to suggest that it might be the mate coming to me for directions. He was to rouse me at midnight.

"Was it so late yet? I had no correct idea of the time. It was only necessary to strike a match and look at my watch. But a strange influence held me.

"It was not the mate coming to call me. That footstep was undecided and mysterious. There was a hideous hollowness in its sound; and—Great Heavens! it was advancing toward my berth!

"I am willing to admit that I was vaguely alarmed, my fear growing into abject terror. As I have said, the dregs of fever still remained in my system; and now the old fever-delirium got full possession of me.

"I sprang from my bunk. The thing, whatever it might be, was invisible; but it was real. I came in contact with it. I touched the cold hand of the ghostly visitant.

"No word it uttered: no motion did it seem to make.

"Horror! I sprung from it, rushed half-naked from the cabin, up the companion way, and on to the deck.

"The night was dark, and the air warm and oppressive. Impenetrable clouds covered the heavens. The breeze had gone down, and the sails hung idly in the bolt-ropes.

"I spoke—rather, I shrieked to the man at the wheel. Perhaps my voice was not so audible as I supposed: there was no answer.

"Half dazed, I staggered aft, and to my utter consternation, there was no one at the wheel.

"Was I mad? Or was the ship herself a phantom? I fairly ran to the fore-castle.

"Blessed relief! There was a man on the look-out. I felt partly reassured.

"What does this mean," I shouted in anger. "The wheel is unmanned!"

"The fellow muttered something unintelligible, surprised, no doubt, by the wildness of my voice and attire, as well as by my announcement.

"Call up the men! Where's Mr. Josefa?" (the mate.)

"At the wheel, sir, when I went on lookout half an hour ago," was the answer.

"I was beside myself with panic and confusion. The responsibility of my position gradually dispelled the sensation of terror which had driven me on deck. There was a storm in the air, which would be upon us before very long.

"The mate did not appear.

"Then it occurred to me: Could it have been him that I had encountered in the cabin, and not an uncanny thing.

"The thought covered me with ridicule. Was it possible, then, that I could be such a child?

"But, no. Why should the mate act thus stealthily? Had some foul play been intended? Yet, where was he?

"Lantern in hand, I started down the companion, but only half determined.

"Dimly lighted by the lamp, I crossed the entry.

"What was that?

"The rays of light fell upon a figure erect and motionless. Two hollow, staring eyes confronted me.

"I was ready to sink now; not in terror, however, but for very shame. It was my own mate—a confirmed sleep-walker. I saw through all at once.

"It is unnecessary to say that I kept the story of my encounter with this ghost of the *Mendoza* a secret from my men during the voyage. I got a reputation among them for sharpness, too, that I did not deserve.

"Now, all through this unique experience, which, by the way, was no joke at the time, it might be wrong to say that I was afraid. Panic, or terror, such as had got possession of me, is, perhaps, quite distinct from mere fear, both in character and in cause; and it seems possible only where the imaginative faculty is over-active.

"Vegeza, I heard, some years later, became captain of a troop of cavalry in Uruguay, where he did good service for the Republic during the Blanco rebellion. Whether he ever again met the shadowy visitant of his seafaring days, I have not heard. Probably not, if he gave up his drinking habits."

DAVID SOLOAN.

That the spiritual intuitions of man demand justice in the affairs of divine government is incontrovertible, and any system of religion or form of creed that ignores this will be repudiated. Not only do we hear the Hebrew prophet warn anointed kings, but we listen while the Greek general, Xenophon, threatens the Persian monarch with the penalty of sin sure to be exacted of the gods. Atheism itself is more rational than a theism not just.—*The Interior.*

Quick is the succession of human events. The cares of to-day are seldom the cares of to-morrow; and when we lie down at night we may safely say to most of our troubles, "We have done your worst, and we shall meet no more."—*Cowper.*