

be long, sir, afore the Buster'll 'ave snakes and tigers.'

"Don't dror on that wonderful himagination of yours, Spike," says the skipper: 'come to the point.'

"Seeing as 'ow you puts it that way, sir," says Spike, 'I will. The fact is, sir, we're for leavin' 'er. Hevery man for'ard is for takin' to the boats.'

"Never," says the old man, looking werry dignified: 'never with my permission. If you men 'ave made up yer minds to such an hunlawful course I shall not interfere with you. But me,' he says 'me and the Buster sinks or swims together.'

"Well, young gentlemen, when the old man says that I feels purty much like cryin'. 'Ere's one, captin', says I, 'as'll stan' by yer.'

"Thank you, Mr. Rattlin," says 'e: 'you're a man. Is there any more men aboard?

"But there wasn't another hanswer. Even the mate—a chicken-'earted swab he were—went over to the men's side.

"Next morning they began clearing away three of the boats. It were a tough job, I tell yer, and it were a week before they was ready to start for the African coast, which the mate reckoned were about 700 miles to the eastward. At the last minute the mate stands up in the stern of his boat and begs the captin' and me to go along with them.

"Wot's the sense, captin'," he says, waving his 'and, 'of you two standing by a mounting o' green stuff like this? You can't save 'er, and she wouldn't be wuth anythin' if you could. She'll go down with yer one o' these days, like a lump o' lead. Leave 'er,' he says, 'you've done yer dooty by the owners: now save yourself.'

"All the hanswer the old man made was to turn on his 'eel and walk into the cabin.

"Good-by," shouts the mate, when he sees we was determined to stay by the brig. 'Good luck to ye.' And with that the boats shoved off and sailed away.

"About a week after the men 'ad left us, as I were creepin' fo'ard to the galley one morning, for o' course I were cook, mate and crew at that time, I noticed that it were like going up 'hill, and I told the old man about it when I went aft with the coffee.

"Aye," he says, 'I've known it for two days. She's a settlin' by the stern.'

"Wot's yer horders then captin'?" says I. 'We can't stay in this 'ere cabin and be drowned like rats.'

"Oh, there's no 'urry, Mr. Rattlin,'" 'e says. 'With the cargo she's got in 'er the Buster'll sink wery slow; in fact, 'e says, 'I doubt wery much if she goes down altogether.'

"That's comfortin', sir," says I; 'but don't you think it would be advisable to make a few preparations in case she should go down?'

"Quite hunnecssary, Mr. Rattlin," he says. 'When the cabin floor's awash we'll shift to the fo'c's'le head, and when the bow goes under we'll take to the maintop, and if that ain't high enough we can straddle the cross-trees, or hang on to the truck. There's no fear of us bein' starved with all these 'ere wegetables and hinsects aboard, and ther's plenty o' rain in these lattitoods.'

"Just as the skipper were a talkin' the Buster's stern give a peculiar sort of sag down and stayed there.

"Eavings," I says: 'she's beginnin' a ready. We'd better go for'ard, sir.'

"Now, please don't get excited, Mr. Rattlin," he says, as cool as a cow-cumber. 'There's no water in the cabin yet.'

"Hexcuse me, sir," says I, 'but I've got a fam'ly at 'ome as I 'opes to see once more.'

"Well, young gentleman—you can believe me—I'd 'ardly sat myself down on one of the night heads when, all of a sudden, the Buster rears up, with 'er jibboom pointin' to the sky and 'er whole stern under water up to the mainmast. Nothin' but them 'ere pertater vines prevented me from fallin' and losin' the number o' my mess. O' course I thinks the old man were gone, and I feit uncommon bad about it, seein' as 'ow he'd allers been a good friend o' mine, and when I had settled myself comfortably on the nose o' the figure-head I shed a few tears to his mem'ry. In the middle of my mournfulness, howsumever, blow me if the old man didn't poke his 'ead around the bowsprit.

"Oh 'ere you are, are you," says 'e. 'I was afraid as you'd fell over board. I've had a nice refreshin' bath,' he says.

"No 'urry, I s'pose, in gettin' out o' the cabin, sir," I said, sarcastic like.

"Dear me, no," 'e says. 'As the water come in at the porthole and sky-light I floated up out o' the door. But I must hadmit, Mr. Rattlin, that my calculations was a bit off. But now that the brig has taken this position I think you'll find that she'll sink wery slow—certainly not more than three foot a day. The end o' the jibboom is still forty-five foot out o' water; so, you see, we'll 'ave 'er under us for at least fifteen days.'

"And, sure enough, the old man's figgerin' were correct. The Buster settled two foot nine per day to a hinch. Before she got down to the foremast I were able to fill one of the chicken coops, as was floatin' around, with sweet pertaters, which I tethered with a stout manilla line to the jibboom end. In this 'ere way we kep' our provisions with us.

"Lower and lower sunk the Buster 'till at last there was only three foot stickin' out o' the water. Both on us then was lashed with one rope, with the thin end of the jibboom between us.

"Now, Mr. Rattlin," says the cap-

ting to me, 'we must get a good sleep to night, for the sea will be up to our necks in the mornin'.'

"Werrv good, sir," says I; 'I'll do my best.' But, bless yer, wot with the cold water a-creeping' np toward my throat, and the old man's snorin', I couldn't get a wink.

"As soon as the sun comes up I says to the old man:

"If you've no objection, sir," I says. 'I'll cast off this 'ere lashin' and take to the 'en coop. Not but wot I likes yer company, sir, but I'm a swallerin' a trifle more salt water than is good for my stomnick.'

"By all means, Mr. Rattlin," 'e says.

"Ain't you a-comin', too, sir?" says I.

"Oh, there's no 'urry 'bout me, Mr. Rattlin," he says. 'You see, me and the Buster's bin friends so long I just 'ate to leave 'er.'

"I've a sort o' haffection for the old gal! myself, sir," says I; 'but I'm more taken at present with the 'en coop.'

"About noon that day I begins to get sort o' hanxious about the old man: though he kep' his face up, I see 'e were shippin' a good deal o' water. But 'e wouldn't leave 'er. I talked to 'im perlite, and I said bad words to 'im. I told him 'e were a hijut and a sooicide, and did all I could to get 'im to unlash 'isself. But 'e only shook his 'ead, and said, 'She's stood by me this twenty years and now I'll stand by 'er.' And them were his last words.

"Ow were I saved? Oh, I were picked up by a Cape steamer two days after. I were takin' a bit o' lunch, when I 'ears a voice behind me sayin', 'Wot ship is that?'

"'En coop number one, starboard side of 'he brig Buster,' says I.

"With that they sends a boat for me, and—"

At this point Captain Rattlin suddenly stopped. Excusing himself on the plea of "business," he rolled up the beach toward a second edition of himself.

"There's only one thing about that story that I don't understand," said one of the boys, after the master mariner was out of hearing. "He says he was picked up by a Cape steamer. Now, there weren't any ocean steamers in 1830."

"Let's ask him about it," suggested one of the listeners.

But it was too late. Captain Rattlin and his companion had disappeared behind the doors of the Ship Inn.

Housekeeper—Why are apples so high in price?

Market Man—'Cause they're scarce, mum.

"But the papers say the crop was so enormous that apples were rotting on the trees all over the country."

"Yes'm. That's why they're scarce. It didn't pay to pick 'em."—*New York Weekly*.