

to condescend to answer or not; but had no more idea what was in store for him than a child. At last said he, sulkily: "How so?"

"Why," said Bent, "he has got a vessel, the captain of which is mad, a mate that hasn't the moral courage of a lamb, and a lazy idle vagabond of a son, that's a disgrace to his name, place, and nation. I wish I was first mate here, by the roarin' Bulls of Bason, I'd make you obey my orders, I know, or I'd spend every rope's-end and every handspike in the ship first; and if that didn't do, I'd string you up by the yard-arm, or my name aint Jem Bent, you good-for-nothin', worthless rascal."

"Mr. Bent," said he, "say those words again if you dare, and I'll whip you within an inch of your life."

"Oh, yes!" replied the other, "of course you will, and great credit you'd get by it, a great big ongainly ugly brute like you, thrashin' a man of my size, that's taking his first voyage after the yellow fever. Why, I see you are a coward too; but if you be, I beant, so I repeat the words, that you are a good-for-nothin', worthless rascal; those were the words, and I'll throw in coward, to make it weigh heavier. Now, come on, and lick an invalide man, and then go home and get a commission in the horse marines."

He appeared to take all this trouble to make him strike first, so as to keep within the law. A fight is a fight, Squire, all the world over, where fightin' is the fashion, and not stabbin'. It aint very pretty to look at, and it aint very pretty to describe, and it don't read very pretty. It's the animal passion of man roused to madness. There aint much difference to my mind between a reproarious man and a reproarious bull; and neither on 'em create much interest. I wouldn't describe this bout, only a genuine Yankee fight is different from other folk's. Though they throw off their coats, they don't lay aside their jokes and jeers, but poke hard as well as hit hard.

While Eells was stripping for the combat, Bent bammed him: sais he, "I believe I won't take off my jacket, Enoch, it might save my hide, for I don't want to have that tanned till I'm dead."

The men all larfed at that, and it don't take much to make a crowd laugh; but what would it have been among Englishmen? Why it would have been a serious affair; and to show their love of justice, every fellow would have taken a side, and knocked his neighbour down to see fair play. But they have got this to larn, "*to bung up a man's eyes aint the way to enlighten him.*"

While Bent was securing his belt, sais he, "Enoch, whatever you do, spare my face; you would ruin me among the ladies, if you hurt that."

They fairly cheered again at that remark.

"Depend on it," sais one of them, "Bent knows what he's about. See how cool he is! He's agoin to quilt that fellow, and make pretty patchwork of him, see if he aint."