

"Once more upon the waters! Yet once more!
And the waves bound beneath me as a steed
That knows its rider! Welcome to their roar!
Swift be their guidance, wheresoe'er it lead!
Though the strained mast should quiver as a reed,
And the rent canvas, fluttering, strew the gale,
Still must I on!"

The spirit of our old sea-king fathers is strong in England still; and the nation glows and thrills to-day over stories of ocean adventure—of devotion among messmates, of discipline stronger than death, of perils courageously braved, of scenes of wonder and mystery discovered—with a sympathy as full, and an admiration as hearty and as high, as filled our fathers' spirits when they read the stories of Cook's voyages in the wondrous southern seas, of the splendid battles of the Baltic or the Nile, or the crowning sea-fight that "was in Trafalgar's Bay."

The peculiar elements of uncertainty and constant danger which surround the ventures of those who "go down to the sea in ships, and do business upon the great waters," and the close neighbourhood and familiar intercourse in which they daily and nightly dwell with the great forces of nature—nothing but a board between them and the merciless ocean, the winds of heaven for their companions, no roof above them but that eternal ceiling "fretted with golden fire"—impart to the employments of the mariner a character of romance and poetry unknown in the ordinary occupations of landmen, and to which the continual succession of new scenes, strange incidents, and everchanging phases of danger from tempest, collision, fire, and exposure to the last extremity of hunger and thirst, add a perpetual, a fearful, and a fascinating variety. Enter a fishing village, and you may see in the distant and wistful expression of the eyes of the fisher folk—an expression as of men accustomed to search and dwell upon the far horizon of lonely seas—an index of the romantic element in the calling they pursue. The Merchant Service, also, is not without its character of romance, and the loyalty of captains to their owners when a valuable freight has been in danger, has shown itself in deeds of heroism and self-sacrifice unsurpassed in any other department of naval life. All honour to him who is "the last man to leave his ship," and who so often, rather than that his character for courage and faithfulness should in the last dreadful moment be doubted, has refused to leave his vessel, and chosen rather to go down with her when—

"Rose from sea to sky the wild farewell;"

thus carrying his sailing certificate into the next world undishonoured!

But if there is much to be said in praise of our fishermen and merchant