

whether she'd snap or not in the pinch. An' I said to Sam: 'Lives o' men will hang on that chain one o' these days.' An' Sam rested his hammer on a red-hot link, an' he looked up an' laughed. An' he said: 'Was you thinkin' t' tell me something I didn't know?' An' I 'low that chain won't snap," the skipper concluded,—“if any chain, forged by the hand o' man, in the good faith o' God, would hold in a gale like this, if it swings full to the sou'east.”

“Anybody ever hear o' one o' Sam Gray's chains snappin'?” inquired the cook.

Nobody had.

“Somebody will,” the cook maintained significantly, “if this wind changes.”

And the wind changed. Late in the afternoon, it swung to the southeast, unabated, and drove in upon the rocks of Thumb-an'-Finger. It was a tempest. Sam Gray's chain, forged in the fear o' God, held its own; but the *Rough-an'-Tumble*, tossing in the greater seas, with the wind behind, began to drag. And that was the end of security—the end of speculation. Skipper Steve called the crew on deck. There was no commotion. The crew stood by for orders. For a little while the men waited expectant. The anchor might grip the bottom again; the slow, inevitable, accelerating drift of the schooner might be arrested. And the anchor caught, held its ground, and the drift of the schooner was arrested with a jerk. It was for an interval