

marine coming. I was nowhere near him, but he hauled out of his course to come up to me and gave the bucket a boot that sent it twenty feet away, at the same time handing me a clout on the ear that about knocked me down. Now, I did not exactly know what a marine was, and this fellow had so many stripes on his sleeves that I thought he must be some sort of officer, so I just stood by. There was a gold-stripe (that is, a commissioned officer) on the bridge and I knew that if anything was wrong, he would cut in, so I kept looking up at him, but he stayed where he was, seeing everything, and never saying a word. And all the time the marine kept slamming me about and telling me to "get the hell out of there."

Finally I said to myself, "I'll get this guy if it's the brig [cells] for a month." So I planted him one in the kidneys and another in the mouth, and he went clean up against the rail. But he came back at me strong, and we were at it for some time.

But when it was over the gold-stripe came down from the bridge and shook hands with me!

After this they did not tease me much, excepting the regular tricks, like tying a sleeping man's feet to his hammock, such as you have got to expect, which you pull off on the next man when his turn comes. This was the beginning of a certain reputation that I had in the navy for fist-work. Later I had a reputation for swimming, too. That first day they began