

indignant looks to make a lofty speech to the boatswain's mate, was fortunately hurried on among the crowd of his fellow-voyagers. The list was read, John Runnymede answered to his name, and with his fellows was dismissed. "Why don't you take the bounty?" asked a sailor, whom, from his superior appearance, together with a heavy switch, formed of three pieces of plaited ebony, adorned with a silver top and ferule, under his arm, Jack considered to be a person in authority—the ebony being, no doubt, the insignia of his office. "You may as well have the bounty."

"You are very good, sir, indeed," replied Jack to the boatswain, for it was that intelligent disciplinarian, opening his eyes at the elaborate politeness of the pressed man; "you are very good, sir; but—I have other views."

The boatswain was puzzled; he knew not whether to laugh or to swear. He scratched his cheek in doubt, and Jack, with the greatest civility, again addressed him. "I beg your pardon, sir—but I do assure you, I should accept it as a lasting favour at your hands, if you would have the kindness to inform me, where I can see the captain of this vessel."

There was something in the politeness of Runnymede that quite disarmed the boatswain; he felt himself quite overlaid by the fine manners of the ragged pressed man. Jack paused, and smiled in the boatswain's broad blank face for a reply: he then repeated "the captain of this vessel?" (the vessel being a seventy-four.)

"The captain?—why, you see—he's gone to dine with the admiral—I'm sorry, we can't man a boat for you,"—said the satirical functionary.

"Don't mention it," observed Runnymede, joining his hands, and making his lowest bow.

"Perhaps the first lieutenant will do?" suggested the boatswain. "he's next in command."

"You're very good—very kind, indeed," exclaimed Runnymede, suddenly seizing the hand of the boatswain, who quite unused to such a mode of thanksgiving from such a person, instantly raised his ebony wand to acknowledge it. He was in a moment disarmed by the vivacity of Runnymede—"the first lieutenant—where can I find him?"

"Just now he's at school—in the gun-room," answered the boatswain.

"What! have you a school aboard?" asked Runnymede.

"And nine-pins, and cricket, and everything you like. Here, Splinters, show this gentleman to the gun-room; he wants the first lieutenant." Splinters, looking at the boatswain, knew there was some game to be played to the cost of the pressed man, and, therefore, with great alacrity, conducted Runnymede to the door of the gun-room. What was his astonishment to hear the "evening hymn" chaunted by boy's voices, the school closing every night with that solemnity! Runnymede edged himself into the school-room, and saw standing on each side a desk some half-dozen little midshipmen looking—Mr. Dickson, the first lieutenant, being present—very serious; and

at another desk, boys of the second and third class, with the children of the warrant officers and sailors of the ship. Mr. Dickson very frequently attended the performance of the evening hymn, the master of the ship, a choleric Prussian, whose berth was on the star-board side of the gun-room, as frequently mounting to the deck until the hymn was ended. On the present occasion, however, Mr. Dickson had another duty to fulfil: for, in addition to his official labours, he had taken upon himself the task of watching over the morals, and punishing the transgressions of all the children in the ship; who, although no more than seven or eight years old, were, in common with adults, submitted to the visitation of the cat.

The evening hymn concluded, the punishment was about to commence. The culprit was led in: he was, in the present instance, a pale thin little boy, perhaps seven years old. He shivered beneath the stony eye of Mr. Dickson, who stood with his old bare cocked-hat hugged under his arm—his withered features set with determination—his shoulders slightly bent—the very personification of stern duty in repose. The child begged for mercy, but Mr. Dickson nodded to the boatswain's mate. The boy was tied up; and the first lieutenant proceeded to dilate upon the enormity of the culprit's offence: he had dared to spin his peg-top on the after-deck, and had more than once been detected trying experiments on the temper of the he-goat, that animal we presume, for his great services to his Majesty's fleet, being an object of particular interest to Mr. Dickson. "Now, little boy," said the first lieutenant, and he seemed overflowing with kindness towards the offender, "you will be flogged for these offences; you know, little boy, that peg-tops are not allowed in the ship,"—"I didn't—indeed, sir—I didn't," cried the child—"and you know, little boy, that the goat is not to have its beard pulled. Hem! hem! Boatswain's mate,"—and Mr. Dickson, eyeing the cat, spoke quite like a father—"one tail, boatswain's mate;" and with one cord selected from the nine, the child was taught to eschew peg-tops as long as he was afloat, and to have on all and every occasion a particular respect for the he-goats of his Majesty's fleet.

Jack Runnymede was so confounded by the ceremony—so astonished at the importance which Mr. Dickson threw around the peccadilloes of the boy, and more than all, so disheartened by the appearance of the officer himself—that he did not venture to accost him, but resolved to keep his complaint for the ear of the captain alone. "What—what kind of a gentleman is Mr. Dickson?" Runnymede, purely out of curiosity, ventured to inquire of a sailor who had, as Jack thought, a communicative countenance.

"What sort? Why he messes by himself, and sells his rum," answered the sailor.

"Has he been long in the service?" asked Runnymede.

"You can see that by his coat, for he never had any other."