

## The Rockwood Review.

smile of greeting with an icy stare and started convulsively as the skipper beckoned him aboard.

"He's been rather neglected, Sam," said the skipper, shaking his head.

"Wot's it got to do with me?" said Sam, violently. "I tell you I've never seen 'im afore this arnoon."

"You hear what your father says said the skipper— ('Hold your tongue, Sam). Where's your mother, boy?"

"Dead, sir," whined Master Jones. "I've on'y got 'im now."

The skipper was a kind-hearted man, and he looked pityingly at the forlorn little figure by his side. And Sam was the good man of the ship and a leading light at Dimport.

"How would you like to come to sea with your father?" he inquired

The grin of delight with which Master Jones received this proposition was sufficient reply.

"I wouldn't do it for everybody," pursued the skipper, glancing severely at the mate, who was behaving foolishly. "but I don't mind obliging you, Sam. He can come."

"Obliging?" repeated Mr. Brown hardly able to get the words out. "Obliging me? I don't want to be obliged."

"There, there," interrupted the skipper. "I don't want any thanks. Take him forrad and give him something to eat—he looks half-starved, poor little chap."

He turned away and went down to the cabin, while the cook, whom Mr. Brown had publicly rebuked for his sons the day before, led the boy to the galley and gave him a good meal. After that was done Charlie washed him and Harry, going ashore, begged a much-worn suit of boy's clothes from a foreman of his acquaintance. He also brought back a message from the foreman to Mr. Brown to the effect that he was surprised at him.

The conversation that evening after Master Jones was asleep turned on bigamy, but Mr. Brown

snored through it all, though Mr. Legge's remark that the revelations of that afternoon had thrown a light upon many little things in his behavior which had hitherto baffled him came perilously near to awakening him.

At six in the morning they got under way the boy going nearly frantic with delight as sail after sail was set, and the ketch, with a stiff breeze, rapidly left London behind her. Mr. Brown studiously ignored him, but the other men pampered him to his heart's content, and even the cabin was good enough to manifest a little concern in his welfare, the skipper calling Mr. Brown up no fewer than five times that day to complain about his son's behavior.

"I can't have somersaults on this 'ere ship, Sam," he remarked, shaking his head; "it ain't the place for 'em."

"I wonder at you teaching 'im such things," said the mate, in grave disapprobation.

"He?" said the hapless Sam, trembling with passion.

"He must 'ave seen you do it," said the mate, letting his eye rove casually over Sam's ample proportions. "You must ha' been leading a double life altogether, Sam."

"That's nothing to do with us," interrupted the skipper, impatiently. "I don't mind Sam turning cart-wheels all day if it amuses him, but they mustn't do it here, that's all. It's no good standing there sulking, Sam; I can't have it."

He turned away, and Mr. Brown unable to decide whether he was mad or drunk, or both, walked back, and, squeezing himself up in the bows, looked miserably over the sea. Behind him the men disported themselves with Master Jones, and once, looking over his shoulder, he actually saw the skipper giving him a lesson in steering.

By the following afternoon he was in such a state of collapse that when they put in at the small port of Withersea to discharge a por-