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cago, Ill.

With that camaraderie that belongs to followers of salt water, Captain Jim joined the group. "I hate to see a good bet go with no takers, Mr. Anderson," he drawled; "it's like seeing good whiskey running out of a leaky barrel. With fair odds I might even risk a little bet against the Silence—altho' of course, she is a mighty good boat."

The young man winked slightly to the friend on his far side. The wink said plainly, "Soft snap," but the lips were smiling on Captain Jim. "Maybe you have a favorite of your own, Captain," he said, jokingly. "I'll give you long odds on her if you have. What would you want on Baby Mine, say, against the field?"

"Well, I'm willin' to meet yer even thar, if the odds is long enough," was the unexpected reply. "I'm great on long odds, yer know." The old fellow counted out laboriously, in all kinds of small silver and worn fractional currency and ragged dollar-bills and the outrageous memorandum was entered on the dainty tablets: "Capt. Jim—Baby Mine against field, one to ten in 50's."

Until quite recently, regattas on the Gulf Coast, from Pensacola to Galveston, started from the anchorage. Each class was lined up separately, the leeward boats being given a slight compensatory advantage in lead to prevent "covering" at the start. With mainsail and topsail up, a man at the jib halyards, another at the windward stay with hand on cable to start the anchor at the flash of the starting-gun, the yachts chafed at their short cables, and men hardly breathed as they watched in intense silence for the flash from the judges' boat.

It came!—and almost before the white puff had fully caught the moving influence of the fresh easterly breeze every anchor had been broke and swung aboard, every jib had flashed up, and the fine long lines of yachts, representing as many classes, were dashing for-

ward, with sail flattened down hard on their first tack to windward.

But either from native slowness or otherwise, Baby Mine dragged behind. Despite a magnificent start, satisfactory even to hypercritical Nick, she slowly dropped both to leeward and astern of the leaders, and finally even of the stragglers in her class.

Captain Jim, on the wharf, ground his teeth. Nick, in grim silence, threw lightning glances from topmost-head to deck, from bowsprit to boom-end, finally bringing up on the centre-case. Instantly a furious exclamation broke from him. His eye had lighted upon a piece of half-inch rope fast to a cleat, passing over the top and down into the centre-case. Nick's vocabulary was far more extensive than choice; and the offending rope had been attended to full five minutes before he had once more settled down to taciturnity. Meanwhile, Baby Mine had bounded forward, and was running, as Nick afterward put it, "like a scared dog," eating into the wind full half-point closer than anything in sight. Yacht after yacht was steadily overhauled and passed. Baby Mine, with her black canvas flat as a card, her crew lying or squatting, with only heads above deck, the bailing bucket and can working incessantly, a thousand pounds of sand-bags packed up on her windward quarter, and her mainsheet hauled in till the boom almost over the lee end of the trawler, was walking like a witch almost into the eye of the freshening breeze.

The crowds on the wharf and in the yachts were wild with excitement. Captain Jim was the centre of a frantic group. What was Baby Mine? Where did she come from? "He didn't know, but she seemed to him like a likely old tub, and he seemed to remember having seen her sometime somewhere. Ter save his hide, he couldn't place her." The Silence had made a big lead on the start, and it seemed doubtful if Baby Mine could overcome it. She swung around the second stake, and had start-

down before the wind for home, a full two minutes before Baby Mine rounded. When she had done so both crews prepared for a fight to the death. The wind had freshened to half a gale, two buckets had taken the place of one in the Baby Mine, and the bailers worked desperately to keep the water down. Every bag was packed astern, around the main-sheet tender on the after-deck, and the men crowded aft until Nick was almost jammed in at the helm; and yet with her black mainsail on one side and big balloon-jib on the other kept on even keel by Nick's marvelous steering, Baby Mine jammed her bow into the sea and squatted until her decks were inches deep, and nothing but the oval coaming was above the surrounding, hissing foam. Half-way in, amid a dead hush on both boats, but a pandemonium of yells and cheering ashore, Baby Mine passed the Silence. Thus the two boats rushed on to the finish with scarce a hundred feet between them. Baby Mine, as Nick said, "takin' in bar's of water at every jump." The boom of the gun from the judges' boat announced her victory, and the big event in the big regatta was over.

"Get in her mainsail, boys," shouted Nick. "We can't jibe her as she is. We must get her up in the wind somehow. Don't haul on her main-sheet like that, you idiots; you'll pull her in two. Be easy—"

But it was too late. The strain was more than the old boat could bear. With a crack like a rifle, followed by the sound of splitting wood, the starboard chain plate tore from the dozy timber, the stay swung inboard, the mast leaned for a moment with its terrible leverage on the rotten deck, and Baby Mine was literally split from stem to stern. The sand-bags slid overboard, and the disjointed hull settled into the rushing water with speed still on.

"Captain Jim," said the young S. Y. C. man, "you've won fairly, and I hope you'll get the Concordia the finest suit of sail and handsomest gilt figurehead on the Coast. But I want you to do something for me."

"What's that?" said the old fellow whose eyes were still blazing with the excitement and triumph.

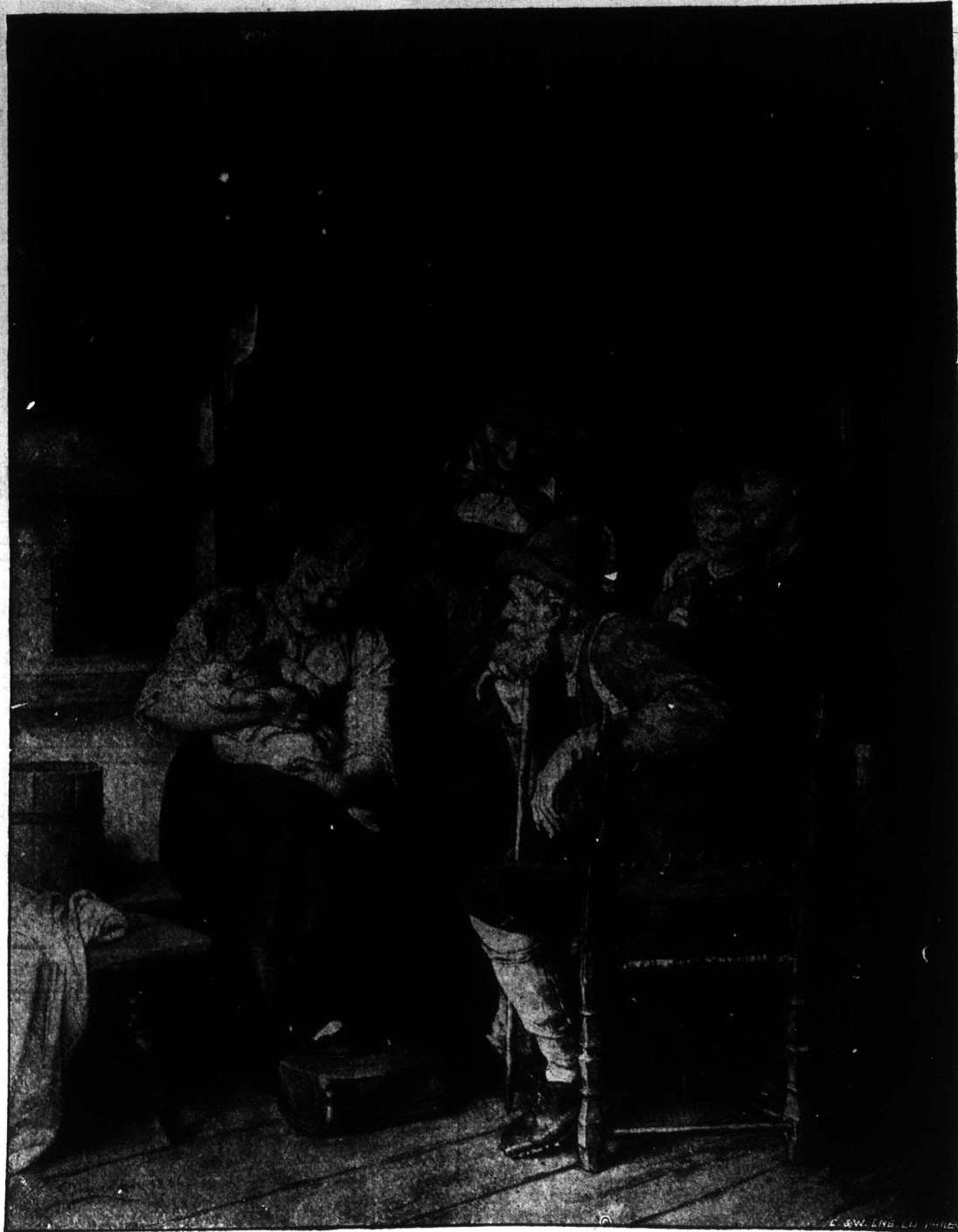
"I want you to tell me, before the whole crowd gets on to it, who Baby Mine was."

"I was kinder puzzled erbout her at first," replied the Captain, "but I seemed to kind er remember her in a hazy way, and then my memory got a jog somehow, and I went down to my cabin and got this, and rowed over and sort uv studied the thing out. You needn't read the first part about the other boats—just that part thar," handing Anderson the slip and pointing to a paragraph about half-way down the column.

Anderson read aloud to his sympathizing chums: But the Lymnas, built by the same firm for C. H. Harris, of Pensacola, Florida, was the fastest and most famous of this class of American centreboard sloops ever built in the United States. "Do you mean to say, Captain," he asked in a voice of hushed intensity, "that that old wreck out there, Baby Mine, is the Lymnas?"

"That's what," said Captain Jim sententiously.

"But, Captain," persisted the young fellow, still pathetically argumentative, "I don't understand it yet. The



Nellie's First Born.