

Saul and the captain rushed up the companion, hoping thereby to gain the upper ground, to have the advantage over their assailants. But they were met by the big Austrian and two other men, who had dodged past the officers in the struggle on deck, hoping to take them in the rear. Mattei, the Austrian, flung himself at the captain, his uplifted knife gleaming in the moonlight, and had it not been for Saul there is no doubt the old man would have been slain. But quick as thought Saul's left arm flew across the captain's breast, receiving the vengeful downward stab right through the fleshy part, while his right fist shot out like a catapult, taking Mattei on the point of the chin and breaking his jaw. Down fell the big man like a log, and across his prostrate body the skipper and Saul fought shoulder to shoulder against not only the two who had accompanied Mattei, but reinforcements that had arrived from below. But no valour, however fired, can make head against firearms in the hands of men unafraid to use them, and in a very few minutes the discomfited crew were being driven 'forrard' like a flock of sheep, all save the luckless ones who lay groaning and bleeding on deck.

Now there have been cases where such treatment of men by officers would have been wholly unjustifiable, where the men, goaded to madness by ill treatment and overwork, deserved all the success in overcoming and even slaying their persecutors that could possibly become theirs; but here it was not so. The *Colorado* was a good ship, had been made so, indeed, by the unremitting efforts of the officers at the commencement of the voyage, and only a sudden