

ungovernable temper. He would pace the deck with a charged revolver in his hand as the symbol of authority; and by way of a freak he would fire at anybody who happened to displease him. When they arrived at the Canadian port, the terrified crew, with the exception of James Hampton and the mate, fled from the vessel, leaving only three persons on board to return to England. These three actually had the hardihood to cross the Atlantic alone, and to brave unheard-of perils. They put out just so much sail as they could manage without risk, and thus went gently along. Yet the privation suffered was extraordinary. The rations were execrable; such sleep as could be indulged in had to be taken in snatches on deck, while Hampton's clothes, unchanged for five weeks, and soaked with brine and rain water, rotted on his back, until he was not in a fit state to land when he at last arrived in the Channel. When he boarded the *Abiroth* the pilot at Dover looked around on the scene in stark astonishment, and at first could hardly believe that the men were not practising some deception.

This state of ocean life not being altogether satisfactory, it seemed to be both desirable and reasonable that some further venture should be made on *terra firma*. Mr. Hampton now allied himself as ganger-in-chief, with half-a-dozen others, some of whom were real, while the others were pseudo-sailors—to undertake another English singing tour. This business was not very successful; the war enthusiasm had died out, and bawl and flourish as they might, the song "Miss Nightingale" no longer exercised its talismanic influence to draw forth showers of public plaudits and coins. Three months of this experience sufficed to convince the ganger that he was not formed by nature to excel in any calling on land; and hence he resigned his command, and once more

walked to Gravesend, where he accepted another engagement, this time on board the good ship *Waterwitch*. All things seemed to prosper for a time, but in an evil hour the *Waterwitch* struck on the rocks off the Isle of Wight, became a total wreck, and James Hampton was only rescued from a watery grave after he had battled with the waves for six hours. He appears to have lost what little he possessed, and to have been carried into Cowes in an exhausted condition. Still the roving sailor seemed to have a charmed life, and the physicians who in the hospital likened him to a cat does not appear to have spoken wide of the truth.

Not cowed, however, by his dangerous adventures off Cowes, James Hampton felt no desire to desert the sea. The late affair was clearly an accident, and as such ought not to be allowed to bias a candid mind. After perfectly recovering from such fright and inconvenience as were inseparable from the occasion, he was again seen at Gravesend, when he embarked in the *Florist*, a merchantman, bound for the island of St. Vincent. The captain was a shrewd trader; and, as it served his purpose to do so, he allowed his vessel to ride at anchor for fourteen months in her tropical harbour. The society of the place, and especially its facilities for drinking, suited the predilections of the English sailors, each of whom every morning before breakfast went ashore to drink half-a-pint of rum, which cost one halfpenny. At this time a tragedy occurred on board the *Florist* which, as illustrative of what can possibly take place in an English vessel, and of the example afforded by a supposed Christian nation to a more unfortunate race, it would be unfair to pass over in silence. Half-a-dozen men, all of whom were suffering from *delirium tremens*—the effects of new rum—were rioting together on board, and