

to life. Have you nothing by Mrs. Radcliffe?"

Peter gave no sign of having observed her inconsistency. He handed her out a volume, with the remark that Mrs. Major Corrigan had wept over it so that her tear stains were still to be traced on the pages. With abstracted gaze Felicity put it in her basket, and then suddenly pulled it out again and thrust it into Peter's startled hands. "I couldn't read it: I should weep too much," and indeed she seemed on the point of doing so at the moment. "All the wickedness and sorrow of the world, that is what I am trying to escape from. But I fear I can never forget it." She shuddered. "It is the return of the awful war that depresses me. So much bloodshed and suffering. Think of the sorrowing widows, and the mothers who see their sons depart. Oh-h, to think that not so long ago I admired the officers! I clapped to see the red coats, I thought bravery the highest virtue" She clenched her little fists. "Why, I believe men only go to war because of their thoughtlessness and vanity. Just like savages."

"Them's not healthy nat'ral sentiments for a young miss to carry under her pretty bonnet," growled Peter into the back of a row of books. Felicity could not distinguish the words, but the growl sounded comforting. She succeeded in summoning a weak little smile to deprecate her outburst, and turned to go. When Peter slipped a book into her hand, saying "this is the very latest," she scarcely glanced at it, and dropped it absently into her basket. On her way down the street, biting her lip she whispered, "men are brutes," but she made a mental reservation in favor of the old sea-dog librarian.

In the afternoon Harry Bayfield, flushed with excitement, burst into the shop. "There's something I

want to ask you, Mr. Newton," he cried. The old man picked up his years at the formality. Usually "Peter old cock" was the more familiar term employed by this merry youth, who was entangling his important question in a skein of words: "I thought I'd ask you 'cause you were a sailor and that's nearly the same thing, and you always say something sensible about things like this—does a soldier feel frightened when he is going to war?" Breathless and round-eyed with the momentousness of his problem, he waited while Peter deliberately revolved the idea in his mind. At last the old sailor spoke, slowly and in a colorless tone. "I wouldn't venture to say he's actually frightened; leastways except for a spasm now an' then maybe; but he do keep thinkin' and thinkin' on things that have nothing at all to do with what's goin' on."

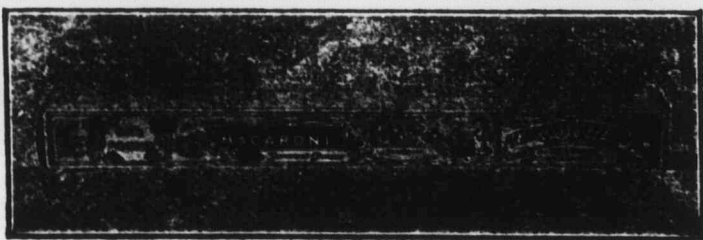
"That's it exactly," agreed Harry, apparently not needing to have the "things" any further defined. And in response to Newton's enquiring glance he declared dramatically, "Peter, the tyrant has escaped from Elba, and I'm going to fight him."

"So you've listed, Master Harry. Well, you've my blessing with it. But—aren't you too young?"

"Oh, Peter, I didn't think YOU would say that

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