

on the face with such effect, that his hold of me relaxed, and I thought that I had stunned him.

"In a moment I gained my feet and fled, but had not quieted my antagonist; he was nearly as quick as I was, and pursued me closely. I rushed through the passage by the side of the ship, across the stoke-hole, through the passage between the engines, and thence to the platform and up the ladder leading to the deck. The chief was close behind me, so that I dared not lose time by turning my head; and I remember how I heard his feet slip as he crossed the iron floor of the stokehole directly after me. I tried to fling open the door—the door of the companionway, and gain the deck—I thought my escape was certain.

"But oh, sir, I had no sooner touched the door, than I found it was fastened on the outside. I looked down. The chief was standing on the platform at the foot of the ladder; he held a revolving pistol in his hand, and was then in the act of cocking it! There was no time for hesitation, and I flung myself right off the ladder upon him. He fired, but without having time to take aim, and I was not hit. With the force of my fall we both rolled off the platform into the passage between the engines, the pistol being at the same time dashed from his hand.

"How we both escaped being crushed by the machinery I scarcely knew; but so it was, and directly we were both on our feet again and struggling through the passage on the slippery stokehole floor.

"Here, still grasping each other's throats, we paused to take breath; and I saw then that Macpherson and the stokers and trimmers of the watch were lying either dead or dead drunk about the platforms and stokehole. I shouted as loud as I could, but without avail; and then a thought flashed across me—the steam whistle! There was a handle by which it could be sounded from the engine-room. If I could but reach that, I must alarm all the ship, and we might yet be saved! But at that moment the companion was opened, and the chief's accomplice descended.

"He came down the ladder hastily, but he had no sooner turned and seen what was going on, than he paused, as if frightened and irresolute how to act. The chief saw him as soon as I did, and sung out to him:

"The pistol! the pistol! There, between the engines!"

"The youth picked up the pistol, and, coming forward, presented it at me, but I could see, even at that moment, that he omitted to cock it. He pulled the trigger, but of course without avail. The chief saw, as I did, the cause of the failure. 'Cock it d—n you, cock it!' he cried out, and then I heard the click of the hammer as it was drawn back, and the chamber revolved. It was now or never for me. I am a Cornish man, sir, and, like most from that country, a little bit of a wrestler. I had regained my strength a little, and skill took the place of what was wanting. It was my only chance. So, quick as lightning I gave the chief the 'toe,' as we call it in our country, and turned him over like a top towards the side on which the youth was standing. He fired at the same instant, but the sudden turn I gave my antagonist changed our positions, and the bullet, after inflicting a flesh wound in my arm, entered his body instead of mine. The youth gazed for a moment with a look of horror, and then, with a scream, threw herself on the body. At that same instant I saw who it was. It was no youth, but a woman, and our captain's wife. But I did not wait to speculate