The Canadian Thresherman and Farmer Le Page 93



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He sprang behind Macpher-son, raised his bludgeon, holding it aloft for a moment as if to be fatally certain of his aim and the next moment it would have crashed into the skull of the mate; but while it was still raised in the air, the sharp voice of a well-known weapon shattered the night's silence, and with a groan and a curse, the gigantic form of the would-be murderer crashed on the deck.

Sam's eyes instinctively turned at the instant to the point whence the pistol flashed and to amazement, .here stood his Sonny or the apparation of the boy, for he was clad only in his night garments and the smoke from the shot that had found his mark still circled around and crowned him with a ghostly halo.

"Look for the skipper, Sonny -quick! and shake up the boys in the fo'c'sle!"

It was the mate who spoke, his voice hoarse with excitement and indignation, but it put nerve into the brave, little fellow and his wits sprang to his command at the instant at the instant. "Unc' Sam!" he

cried in terror when he found the pros-trate form of the skipper, but another shout quickly announced his joy as he found him alive, uninjured, and in possession of every faculty saving the powers of speech and locomotion.

He was cut free from every fetter, and the moment he could use his limbs he sprang assistance of the mate, while Sonny had the crew awakened on deck. The mate's fairly on deck. been fairly prisoner, having been fairly secured, the wounded man was taken in hand. Lights were procured and these were brought to where he lay, two members of the night police patrol came on deck, attracted by the gun shot, and matters were quickly explained to them. Poor old Josh had been rough-

ly handled but was gradually re-covering from the shock he had sustained. The scoundrel had sustained. The scoundrel had stunned the poor fellow the moment he had shown signs of disturbing them in their search, but from the keen interest he took in all that was going on, it was evident that the time had not yet arrived when he should pay in his checks. When he made inquiries about the sacred essel which had been his thought by day, his dream by night, Sam compassed him with lies and dodged every inquiry with his own matchless skill in the use of subterfuge lest the shock of its loss might kill him on the spot.

One of the crew with a ship's lantern, in guiding the operaforming the office of first aid to the victim of Sonny's bullet, flashed a strong shaft of the the man's face. It's ghostly aspect drew an exclamation from some one, and all turned to look

at it. "My God, its Elmer!" the old man cried, shivering in every



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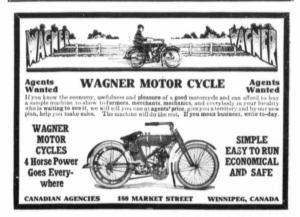
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