

## 254 The Wreck of the Rough-an'-Tumble

"She'll never worst *me!*" said he.

"She will."

"She'll not; she'll do my biddin' to the end of her days."

A Newfoundland crew is a free-and-easy company.

"You're dodderin'," said the cook; "we're cotched already."

"To the end of her days," the skipper repeated grimly, "I'll command her behavior."

Caught? It might be. It was blowing up. And it would blow harder. This was the youth of the gale. It was no place for the old schooner. She must find harbor or founder in the sea that was coming. The wind, running in long squalls and whirling gusts, jumping in from the open to make a lee shore of the coast, had a smart sting in the flung rain of it, and a heavy, gathering slap. Day was broken—a foul, drab day; inshore, where the night lagged, there was black fog not yet blown beyond the dripping cliffs, over the starved timber and into the barrens; and the *Rough-an'-Tumble*, having sped her course by dead reckoning and rule of thumb through the night, might dawdle where she pitched and rolled, under short sail, until the fog lifted above the landmarks. And dawdle she did, impatient for harbor, tossed like a chip with her nose in a smother of white water and her heels in the air; and while she waited for the somber