

cumstance electrified Tom, and opened his word loom to the following yarn.

"The lubber, that whale! I would like to be in the bow of a staunch boat, with four stout oarsmen, and a bold fellow to steer upon him; I would soon make him spout blood instead of water!

'I was telling you the yarn of my becoming a sailor, when the old man coiled up my thoughts among the halyards. Now that whale brings them back again, and while he is taking his observation, and blowing his nose, I'll finish my yarn. I was about nineteen when I blundered against the capstan of a whaler, and shipped at New Bedford for a three years' cruise. We left port with as good an outfit of harpoons, lines, knives, trying-pans, stores, and ship's crew as ever swam the brine. I remember we had a studdin-sail breeze a longer time on our passage out, than I ever saw before or since, except in the trades. We put out all sail in sight of the New Bedford Light, and never took in a rag until we had crossed the equator; and then we struck a dead calm, which continued fifteen days. That was the worst siege at oakum and spun yarn that Tom ever saw. The sun seemed to pour down fire! It was so warm that the tar in the deck fried and bubbled; and the old long boat shrunk so much that you could stick your thumb through between the planks; and the decks were so hot that we were obliged to keep them constantly wet to enable us to stand on them. And as to breathing, we found that the hardest work of all. The great atmosphere seemed to have escaped, and left a perfect void! The ocean was smooth; not a rough spot upon it as big as a cent, except when the cook threw his slush overboard! It lay and rolled like a bending sea of glass! The vessel, with its sails hanging loose on the mast, rose and fell on it like a sheet upon the breast of the dying. The sky was awfully bare and deserted! Not a shred of a cloud dotted it for fifteen days! I never felt lonesome till that time. I had rather lay to under storm sail a twelvemonth, than be compelled to