

flags, all seen under the powerful radiance of the electric lights, made up a very pretty picture.

Ronald Monteith thought so, at all events—and Mr. Monteith was a very good judge of beauty, especially if it were feminine. He leaned lazily against the bulwarks and surveyed the festive scene with a smile on his handsome face, but—Joseph like—took no notice of the many glances he received from bright eyes. Tall and sinewy, with fair hair and mustaches, blue eyes, and a skin bronzed by exposure to the hot southern sun, Monteith was decidedly good-looking, and by no means undervalued his personal appearance. His father was a wealthy Australian squatter, who owned large stations in the Riverina District, and, being a liberal-minded and liberal-handed man, had sent his son forth to see the world. Master Ronald, nothing loth, departed with a goodly supply of money, several letters of introduction, and a huge capacity of enjoyment; so, as can easily be seen, this lucky young man's lines were cast in pleasant places. There were lots of pretty girls on board who would have liked to marry him, nevertheless, his highness threw his handkerchief to none of them, yet flirted with all. He was not a clever man by any means, but he could ride, shoot, swim and box to perfection, all of which athletic accomplishments found favour in the eyes of women; he was, moreover, an honourable gentleman, with a kind heart and a generous spirit.

As he stood there in a meditative attitude, wondering if he could summon up sufficient courage to dance with the thermometer at somewhere about eighty, a young fellow who rejoiced in the name of Patrick Ryan, came up and took him by the arm.

"Come and have a drink, me boy," said Mr. Ryan, with a slight touch of the brogue. "I'm half dead with dancin', not to mention the way I've to talk to the girls, and tell 'em enough lies to make me recordin' angel take to shorthand."

"Then why the deuce don't you stop it?" retorted Ronald, as he accepted this bacchanalian invitation and they went down to the bar.

"Oh, begad, think how the girls would tear their hair, and mine too, if I didn't look after them," replied

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