

and the wet blades rose in the air and tumbled towards the bow with a crisp rattle.

"I have the honor to salute the captain of this ship," announced the officer, ceremoniously raising his hat as he stepped on deck. "In accordance with the usual custom I have been sent to go through the formality of examining papers and cargo."

Returning the speaker a most elaborate courtesy, Glenbucket welcomed him on board, and bowed the way to the after-cabin. The presumed merchant also received the officer's passing salutation in a fashion that caused the latter to examine him more closely. As the lieutenant did so, a look of amazement came over his face (unnoticed by the two adventurers, however), but without another word he followed the rotund skipper down the companion way.

"Here is our last clearance, Monsieur Lieutenant. It is from the port of Boston. Plainly and cleverly written," suavely cried Glenbucket, at the same time producing from a side locker an imposing bundle of documents and a decanter of wine. "Also, the register of my vessel, the 'Sea Foam,' and full list of cargo belonging to Mr. Montgomery, the owner, who you doubtless observed with me on deck. Study them carefully and I wager you find no flaw. At the same time, test the condition of this vintage, which I guarantee to be far and away the superior of"—

"In perfect order, as you so strenuously