A COUNTRY SABBATH.

How sweet, how calm, this Sabbath morn!
With silent corn and quiet grass,
And glimpses of dreamy shade
Heaven's golden fire and air of blue
An image of the heavenly world;
Within, her holy bower footed
The mother with her babe asleep.

The barbarous all around is hot,
With clamorous toil and din and dust,
With rattling wheels, and smoking clouds,
And rough jests, and swear and curse.

The twin fountains lay dark;
I linger in a humid house,
See in a dream the waters plunge
And things that are the food of grains.

In many an English cottage round
Japhets, Mary, Jeans, Sues
Her ruby-coloured sister is are;
And yet, perchance, not quite so fair.

The fair lakeborn dresses her curls,
And simpers with the blushes of youth;
Or golden meadows browse the flocks;
The crooked-bloom'd hyper sweepers.

The sweet-brier clothed in infinitely beauty;
I pass the wallflower's rich perfume;
And shadows with its dark-footed plume;
O world to banish dreams of death.

The scent of flower, the song of bird,
The hue of sky, and, the light of heaven,
Are vital with a mystic power
We have a soul for, not a sword!

Unless it be—the breath at death;
When the man sweaten is run down-hill
It breaks on him with a sudden spell
Across the May-embroidered sod;

Bathe, dreamer, bathe, the fever-fever, pinked
To new upon each other and!
The Sabbath sounds down the Jersey trees,
And fear seems to make thee—

—Chambers' Journal.

"SHIP AHOY!"

A Yarn in Thirty-six Cable Lengths.

FOURTH CABLE LENGTH.

HOW JEREMIAH BASALT WENT TO SEE THE WIDOW.

"I never drinks but one glass of grog a day at sea," said old Basalt; "never but one, Mrs. Gurnett. For why? 'Cause there's dooty to be done, and may be a watch to keep; and if your sooperior officers taken more than a good, for them, what is to be expected of your men? But now I'm ashore with nothing to do but amuse myself, I don't care if I do take another."

"And it's welcome you are here to so many as you like, and short you like, Mr. Basalt," said Mrs. Gurnett, rising with alacrity from her side of the fire in her snug bar to mix a fresh glass of steaming compound for her visitor, who took it with a relish of satisfaction, and already drank the donor's health before setting the glass down, smoking slowly and thoughtfully at his pipe as he stared at the glowing fire and the bright black bars.

A quarter-of-an-hour passed, during which Mrs. Gurnett, who was pleasant and comely in spite of her fifty years, knitted away at a pair of thick worsted stockings; and then Jeremiah Basalt spoke, saying in a early voice.

"I know I am!"

Mrs. Gurnett, laudably of the comfortable old lady, answered, "Eh, Jeremiah?" as he gave a start.

"Know you are what, Mr. Basalt?"

"Know as I'm welcome, and have been this ten year, or else I shouldn't come."

Mrs. Gurnett sighed. Her eye on the gray worsted ball for down in her pocket, changed one of her knitting-pins, and began a fresh row.

"Who's there for?" said Basalt, pointing at the stockings with the stem of his pipe.

"I was thinking of asking you to accept them before you go on your next voyage, Mr. Basalt—but I'm not going to be sent again."

There was another pause, of quite ten minutes' duration, before Basalt again spoke.

"What should I do ashore?"

"I don't know, I'm sure," said Mrs. Gurnett; "only it seems to me very dangerous if going on as you are, not at your age, as you need to be, Mr. Basalt. We some of us are."

"Ech?" said Basalt. "Fifty-seven, nobbut a boy yet. And as to danger, why, it's a deal safer for me than it is for men. I do not know. Why, I'll—I'm going up the sea, what'ed become of me? I should always be hanging about here, and then you'd get tired of me.

Mrs. Gurnett sighed, and continued her knitting.

"You're a good soul, though, and I like you, Mrs. Gurnett, better than any other woman I ever see in my life; and, if I was a marrying man, instead of a shock of old ash-plank and hardwood, and good for nowt but to knock sheet aboard ship, I'm blessed if I should not ask you to be my wife, and make a lady of you."

Mrs. Gurnett sighed again, and looked more attentively at her knitting, while Basalt smoked himself into the centre of a cloud.

"I think I'd make 'em a little more shek in the leg this time," he said at last. "Them others was so tight that they opened in the back seams, and you can't worry well sailor when you're out at sea."

"You have very fine legs, Mr. Basalt," remarked Mrs. Gurnett, glancing at her visitor's lower extremities approvingly, as she gave another tug at her worsted.

"They do right pretty, I dare say, and pliable, disagreeably; "and as long as I'm a-lying my going I don't care. But what do you think of our Cap's choice—speaking as a woman, now?"

"I did not know that he had made a choice," said Mrs. Gurnett, indifferently; the conversation was taking a turn in which she felt no interest.

"He has though," said Basalt; "and as nice a little creetur as ever I see, would wish to over—clean run, pretty counter, all taut slow and shek, and I should say good a lass as ever the ship we sail in, and as bears her name."

Mrs. Gurnett dropped her knitting, and gazed in her relative's face.

"You don't mean to say—"

"Don't I? Ain't I just do signifed what is there surprising in that? Here's Cap John Anderson, as smart a sailor and as handsome a young fellow as never stepped a deck, and Miss May Hallery, as pretty a gal; and if they wouldn't make a nice pair to consort together, and sail through stormy weather's life in company, why tell me."

Here old Basalt took a hasty sip of his grog, and stooped to pick up the knitting, which had glided to the floor, as Mrs. Gurnett sat dreamily motionless, gaze of her pleasant old cheeks with her knitting-needle.

"That's dropping stitches without, and for export," said Basalt, with a grim smile, as he laid the work upon its owner's lap; but the remark fortunately passed unheed, only Mrs. Garnett said, in a low, and tone.

"Dear—dear—dear—dear—dear!"

"What's dear, dear?" said Basalt gruffly.

"Oh, Mr. Basalt, I'm very, very, very sorry to hear all this."

"What, about the Cap?"

"Yes, very grieved indeed."

"Gammon!" said the old sailor. "Why, he loves the very ground she walks on; thinks about her all day and all night too. Many's the time he's walked the deck with me in a dark watch and talked about that girl—when she was a gal, you know, of ten and twelve and fourteen; but since she's become a woman, 'No,' says he to him—self—I know just as plain as if he'd told me—'she's too good and beautiful to be talked about as a rough sailor lad.' For true lovers a thing to be kept snug in the locker of yer heart like a precious jewel. Look here, Polly—"

Mrs. Gurnett started; for Jeremiah Basalt, in all the years she had known him, had never before addressed her by her Christian name.

"Look here, Betsey," he said, frowning his chair closer, so that he could lay one great horny paw upon the bottom piping white hand.

"It looks equally," he said—"very equally, Mrs. Gurnett, as I'm concerned, and as long as I'm alive, it seems to me whether I'm ashore or afloat, I'm bound to take a turn at the Lloyd's, and called the John Anderson my lady; and likewise of a sailor-dropper she loves, and that never come well into port, and her name—his name, I mean," he added, correcting himself with a slight confusion, "may anything short. But, anyhow, you know the bearings of the thing, and what I do, do here aboard. I have another glass the wallow, for I'm for all the world as if I'd shipped a fine young lady, and sailed her when I was in Mr. Halley's service," said Mrs. Gurnett. "It was from the old house in Gracechurch street that James Gurnett married me—being coachman, and having served a little money."

"I think I remember," said Basalt, huskily.

"And it's been going on now some time," continued Mrs. Gurnett. "There's a gentleman there comes to the house, and he wants Miss May, and they tell me at the house that she has him there to see her; and they do say that he has some hold on your old master, which I won't believe, for he's too rich and too high-spirited to be tempted on by any one. Anyhow, he's in the shipping trade, and probably he's a good one, and I do think they are to be married soon."

Jeremiah Basalt filled his pipe slowly, and stooped to the fire for a coal to light them, although there was splints in a holder upon the shelf above the fire-place, and, picked a glowing cinder from between the bottom bars with his sea-booted fingers, and lit his pipe with it, puffed the pipe bowl, and then sat rocking all for a few minutes before he spoke—Mrs. Garnett now ceasing her eyes and smoothing her hair.

"I'll shout break that poor chap's 'art," said Basalt, at last.

Mrs. Gurnett sighed, and that there was another pause. Then Basalt said,

"What's the gent's name?"

"Merritt—Mr. Philip Merritt."

"Never heard it afore," said Basalt, gruffly; "and I think as I heds's heard it some, And he's yet a Cu. I s'pose—all shippers has—Merritt & Co., I s'pose—alone 'em?"

"No," said Mrs. Gurnett, "he belongs to a big house, and his name don't appear. I think he's a Co. himself, instead of having to be—for the same up is Rutherby & Co."

"The devil!"

Jeremiah Basalt let fall the glass he was about to raise to his lips, and it was smashed to atoms upon the white hearth stone. Then he started to his feet for the outer door opened quickly, and a well-known voice said at the back.

"Is Mr. Basalt here?"

FIFTH CABLE LENGTH.

HOW THE WIDOW WAS IN TROUBLE.

Mrs. Gurnett was sitting quite alone, with her eyes still red, and at times swimming with moisture, though no tears now escaped to roll down her cheeks. She had resumed her knitting—she had to be so, she had taken it up—and had drawn more and more gray worsted from her great ball of wool in her pocket; but the work did not progress. She had drawn the leg out to see how it was to be, and had unravelled the stitches, and made up her mind to increase them in the coming rows; and had unstitched the stockings, and thrown with her knitting-needle, as if it was some one else—and she was sorry for it, too; but still the work did not progress. She had to lay it down too frequently to wipe away the tears that blinded her, in the weather, and to give change to Tom the potboy, who was hastily sent from the bar of the Cover of the Merry May, sitting in the tap-room enjoying themselves; and again she sighed heavily, for she was thinking of opened there came the sound of a joyful voice singing a snatch of a sea-song, and the tears gathered again as she heard,

"And three times round went our gallant ship,
And then to port she turned;
Then the door closed, and Mrs. Gurnett sighed again. It was Jeremiah Basalt, who was hastily stamping the snow off his pumps, and the same voice trolled out, in a mellow, half-sentimental tones of the old tune,

"And she sank to the bottom of the sea, the sea, the sea,
And she sank to the bottom of the sea."

Then she turned round to the door, whence came rolling through the house, lustily sung by a strong voice,

"While the raging sea did rear, and the stormy wind blew,
And we lay aloft, our boys was up, up, up aloft;
And the Sailor's Delight lying aloft, below, below, below."

For Mrs. Gurnett heard not the rattling of pots and glasses upon the table, nor the stamping of feet upon the floor; for she had commenced sobbing in a convulsive fit of old age, upon whose top were three goodly and jovial Jeremiah Basalts, with pots and glasses, ladles, spoons, and sugar stirrers. But resting upon the foot of the reversed glasses were two hands.

She took out one, the thinker of the two, and it opened unkindly at some distance from place; and then, taking out a pair of spectacles, Mrs. Gurnett did not put them on, but held them before her eyes, and read over and over again the letter.

"Dear Mrs. Gurnett—I write to you, because I know, your sweet one, you will sympathize with me, and give me your advice, and comfort me, if you can. Papa has forbidden me to see my Jeremiah Basalt filled his pipe slowly, and stooped to the fire for a coal to light them, although there were splints in a holder upon the shelf above the fire-place, picked a glowing cinder from between the bottom bars with his sea-booted fingers, and lit his pipe with it, puffed the pipe bowl, and then sat rocking all for a few minutes before he spoke—Mrs. Garnett now ceasing her eyes and smoothing her hair.

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"Don't, Mr. Basalt," she said, with a sob, "the customers might see you."

"Blame the customers!" said Basalt, sturdily; "what is it to them if I like to speak out my mind like a man? Look here, my lass, I'm rough, I'm a sea-dog; and I ain't known you fifteen year gone this Christmas without knowing as I'd got a heart in my bosom. "That's a good woman, Jerry,' I've said to myself hundreds o' times, 'and if ever you marries, marry she, if she'll have you.' And I ain't going to be such a brute to a woman as to ask her to have me, and then keep going away to sea. There, swab up those tears, my lass," he continued, for the great drops were chasing one another down Mrs. Gurnett's cheeks.

"No," I says, 'I ain't going to be such a brute to a woman as I know as to be all way a-leaving her; and ain't going to be such a brute to myself—as is a man for whom I have a power—as to have to be leaving her.' No. My pinion is that when girls trustwell like, it wouldn't be wrong, ought's to be parting the strands. 'No,' I says, 'tain't time yet, but there's the port yon hope to reach, Jerry,' and to reach that port I've got sight undred and twenty-seven year strissen and exposure sewed up, and it's all safe in a pair of stout stockings as you knitted for me, my lass; one yet inside the other so as to be strong. And I says to myself, I says, 'There, Jerry Basalt, there's your Cap's as loves true, and there's you as loves true; and to have and to hold, as the saying is, and be married to, and to enjoy that there pair of stockings in Robert Garnett's lap, and says you to her, says you, 'My lass, you says, I bring this here, not as a gage to cause a bell a spun yarn about nothing, but just as an apistol 'longshore-going wearings should say to Jerry, Basalt wanted to marry you for the sake of the snug business and the few pounds as yoh mariner-God rest him!—left you when he give in the number of his mess; and then you says, says you,—"

"Oh, Mr. Basalt, Mr. Basalt!" cried the hostess, clapping her apron to her eyes, and sobbing pretty, as she rocked herself to and fro, "then I won't never—never be; for Miss May's promised to be married to some body else."

"Stow that!" cried the old fellow, excitedly, as he started from his chair, and then stood looking down at the weeping woman. "Don't come no woman's games with a poor fellow as is as innocent as a baby if all shippers has—Merritt & Co., I s'pose—alone 'em!"

"Oh, Mr. Basalt, I wouldn't deceive you for the world," said Mrs. Garnett, turning up her wet eyes to look full in his.

"That you wouldn't," he cried, taking her hand in both his, and saving it up and down. "You're down right right sewy, and there ain't a rock or a shoal in you from top to bottom. I'll sway; but I'm back aboard, my lass, as teacher John Anderson's sake as I am for my own. A year there a-minute, and let one give a look—and—and—"

He walked to the red curtained window and stood looking out for a moment; then he turned in little stormy sight; but really into the dark, empty parlour of "The Jolly Sailors." Then he came back to speak seriously, as he stood with one hand resting on the table.

"She's given me up, Jerry," said Cap. John Anderson, "and I don't blame her. I'm not worthy of such a lady as she is."

"Good Lord!" ejaculated Basalt, leaning against the mantle-piece, and looking at the speaker, as if he was mad, but still attempting to read it.

"I thought I'd see you, and tell you; for I may not see much more of you, old fellow, before I start."

"Now, I just look here, my lad. You've sobbed a day to me, so I say—my mind—you are my captain. I'm on duty to-night as a Bluff hand; so, if you want to make me unbeknesh just say the word, and I'll go to a port again till they've done."

"Well, Basalt," said John Anderson, smiling, "I've got in disgrace with Mr. Halley, and am no longer in his service."

"It's a bad job, and I'm sorry to get up so fine a ship; but there she is—and some one else will command her. As for me, I wanted to be of again somewhere at once, and—"

"Why, we've only just got back."

"True," said Anderson; "but all the same I can't stop; as I've lost no time, but made an engagement with another firm, and am off next week."

"Why, Jerry?"

"Chink."

"All right! It's all the same to me."

"What do you mean?"

"Why, what I say—it's all the same to me."

"But you have received no dismissal, Basalt."

"Oh yes. Took it myself."

"What do you mean?"

"What do I mean? Why, after sailing together all these years, do you think when I'm going to let you adrift like a hulcher I'm going to let you adrift like a hulcher I'm going to let you adrift like a hulcher