Henty George Alfred

In Greek Waters: A Story of the Grecian War of Independence

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PREFACE

My dear Lads,

The struggle known as the Greek War of Independence lasted for six years (1821-27), and had I attempted to give even an outline of the events this would have been a history and not a story. Moreover, six years is altogether beyond the length of time that can be included in a book for boys. For these reasons I have confined the story to the principal incidents of the first two years of the war; those of my readers who may wish to learn the whole history of the struggle I refer to Finlay's well-known *History of Greece*, which I have followed closely in my narration.

As a rule in the stories of wars, especially of wars waged for national independence, the dark side of the struggle is brightened by examples of patriotism and devotion, of heroic bravery, of humanity to the wounded, of disinterestedness and self-sacrifice. The war of Greek independence is an exception. The story is a

dark one with scarcely a gleam of light. Never during modern times has a struggle been disgraced by such deeds of cruelty and massacre as those which prevailed on both sides. Such being the case, I have devoted less space than usual to the historical portion of my tale, and this plays but a subordinate part in the adventures of the *Misericordia* and her crew.

Yours sincerely,

G. A. HENTY.

CHAPTER I
A GREEK STUDENT

THE people of the little fishing village of Seaport were agreed on one subject, however much they might differ on others, namely, that Mr. Beveridge was "a wonderful learned man." In this respect they were proud of him: learned men came to visit him, and his name was widely known as the author of various treatises and books which were precious to deep scholars, and were held in high respect at the universities. Most of the villagers were, however, of opinion that it would have been better for Seaport had Mr. Beveridge been a trifle less learned and a good deal more practical. Naturally he would have been spoken of as the squire, for he was the owner of the whole parish, and his house was one of the finest in the county, which some of his ancestors had represented in parliament; but for all that it would have been ridiculous to call a man squire who had never been seen on horseback, and who, as was popularly believed, could not distinguish a field of potatoes from one of turnips.

It was very seldom that Mr. Beveridge ventured outside the boundary-wall of his grounds, except, indeed, when he posted up to London to investigate some rare manuscript, or to pore over ancient books in the reading-room of the British Museum. He was never seen at the meetings of magistrates, or at social

gatherings of any kind, and when his name was mentioned at these, many shrugged their shoulders and said what a pity it was that one of the finest properties in the county should be in the hands of a man who was, to say the least of it, a little cracked.

Mr. Beveridge's father, when on a tour in the East as a young man, had fallen in love with and, to the intense indignation of his family, married a Greek lady. Upon coming into possession of the property, two years later, John Beveridge settled down with his beautiful wife at the Hall, and lived in perfect happiness with her until her death.

She had had but one child, a boy, the present owner of the Hall, who was twelve years old when she died. Happy as she was with her husband, Mrs. Beveridge had never ceased to regret the sunny skies of her native land. She seldom spoke of it to her husband, who hunted and shot, was a regular attendant at the board of magistrates, and attended personally to the management of his estate. He was a man of little sentiment, and had but a poor opinion of the Greeks in general. But to Herbert she often talked of the days of her childhood, and imbued him with her own passionate love of her native country. This led him at school to devote himself to the study of Greek with such energy and ardour that he came to be considered as a prodigy, and going up to Oxford he neglected all other branches of study, mixed but little with other undergraduates, made no friends, but lived the life of a recluse, and was rewarded by being the only first-class man of his year, the examiners declaring that no such papers had

ever before been sent in.

Unfortunately for Herbert his father died a few months before he took his degree. He had neither understood nor appreciated his son's devotion to study, and when others congratulated him upon the reputation he was already gaining at the university, he used to shrug his shoulders and say, "What is the good of it? He has not got to work for his living. I would rather see him back a horse over a five-barred gate than write Greek like Homer." He had frequently declared that directly Herbert took his degree he would go with him first for a few months up to London, and they would then travel together for a year or two so as to make him, as he said, a bit like other people.

Left to his own devices at the death of his father Herbert Beveridge did not even go home after taking his degree, but, writing to the steward to shut up the house, started a week later for Greece, where he remained for three years, by the end of which time he was as perfectly acquainted with modern as with ancient Greek. Then he returned home, bringing with him two Greek attendants, turned the drawing-room into a library, and devoted himself to his favourite study. Three years later he married, or rather his aunt, Mrs. Fordyce, married him. That lady, who was the wife of a neighbouring squire, came over and, as she said, took him in hand.

"This cannot go on, Herbert," she said; "it is plainly your duty to marry."

"I have never thought of marrying, aunt."

"I daresay not, Herbert, but that is no reason why you shouldn't marry. You don't intend, I suppose, that this place, after being in the hands of our family for hundreds of years, is to be sold to strangers at your death. It is clearly your duty to marry and have children."

"But I don't know anyone to marry."

"I will find you a wife, Herbert. I know half a dozen nice girls, any one of whom would suit you. You want a thoroughly good, sensible wife, and then, perhaps, there would be some chance of your becoming like other people."

"I don't want to become like other people, I only want to be let alone."

"Well, you see that is out of the question, Herbert. You shirk all your duties as a large land-owner; but this duty, at least, you cannot shirk. Let me see, to-day is Monday; on Wednesday our gig shall be over here at half-past twelve, and you shall come over and lunch with me. I will have Miss Hendon there; she is in all respects suitable for you. She is fairly pretty, and very bright and domesticated, with plenty of common sense. She won't have any money; for although her father's estate is a nice one, she has four or five brothers, and I don't suppose Mr. Hendon lays by a penny of his income. However, that matters very little. Now you must rouse yourself for a bit. This is an important business, you know, and has to be done. After it is over you will find it a great comfort, and your wife will take all sorts of little worries off your hand. Of course if you don't like Mary Hendon when

you see her, I will find somebody else."

Herbert Beveridge resigned himself quietly, and became almost passive in this matter of his own marriage. He liked Mary Hendon when he had got over the shyness and discomfort of the first visit, and three months later they were married. He then went back to his library again, and his wife took the management of the estate and house into her capable hands. During her lifetime Herbert Beveridge emerged to a certain extent from his shell. He became really fond of her, and occasionally accompanied her on her drives, went sometimes into society, and was generally considered to be improving fast.

Ten years after marriage she died, and her husband fell back into his old ways. His life, however, was no longer quite solitary, for she had left him a boy eight years of age. He had been christened Horace, which was a sort of compromise. Mr. Beveridge had wished that he should have the name of some Greek worthy – his favourites being either Themistocles or Aristides. His mother had called in Mrs. Fordyce to her assistance, and the two ladies together had succeeded in carrying their point. Mrs. Fordyce had urged that it would be a misfortune for the boy to bear either of these names.

"He will have to go to school, Herbert, of course, and the boys would make his life a burden to him if he had either of the names you mention. I know what boys are; we have plenty of them in our family. If he were Aristides he would get the nickname of Tidy, which would be hideous. The other name is worse still; they

would probably shorten it into Cockles, and I am sure you would not want the boy to be spoken of as Cockles Beveridge."

"I hate common names," Mr. Beveridge said, "such as Jack, Bob, and Bill."

"Well, I think they are quite good enough for ordinary life, Herbert, but if you must have something classical why not take the name of Horace? One of Mary's brothers is Horace, you know, and he would no doubt take it as a compliment if you gave the boy that name."

And so it was fixed for Horace. As soon as the child was old enough to go out without a nurse, Mr. Beveridge appointed one of his Greek servants to accompany him, in order that the child should pick up a knowledge of Greek; while he himself interested himself so far in him as to set aside his books and have him into the library for an hour a day, when he always talked to him in Greek. Thus at his mother's death the boy was able to talk the language as fluently as English. In other respects he showed no signs whatever of taking after his father's tastes. He was a sturdy boy, and evinced even greater antipathy than usual to learning the alphabet, and was never so happy as when he could persuade Marco to take him down to the beach to play with the fisher children. At his mother's death he was carried off by Mrs. Fordyce, and spent the next six months with her and in the houses of his mother's brothers, where there were children about his own age. At the end of that time a sort of family council was held, and Mrs. Fordyce went over to Seaport to see her nephew.

"What were you thinking about doing with the boy, Herbert?"

"The boy?" he asked vaguely, being engaged on a paper throwing new light on the Greek particles when she entered.

"Naturally, Herbert, the boy, your boy; it is high time he went to school."

"I was thinking the other day about getting a tutor for him."

"Getting fiddlesticks!" Mrs. Fordyce said sharply; "the boy wants companionship. What do you suppose he would become, moping about this big house alone? He wants to play, if he is ever to grow up an active healthy man. No harm has been done yet, for dear Mary kept the house bright, and had the sense to let him pass most of his time in the open air, and not to want him always at her apron-string. If when he gets to the age of twenty he develops a taste for Greek – which Heaven forbid! – or for Chinese, or for any other heathen and out-of-the-way study, it will be quite time enough for him to take it up. The Beveridges have always been men of action. It is all very well, Herbert, to have one great scholar in the family; we all admit that it is a great credit to us; but two of them would ruin it. Happily I believe there is no record of a great scholar producing an equally great son. At any rate I do hope the boy will have a fair chance of growing into an active energetic man, and taking his place in the county."

"I have no wish it should be otherwise, aunt," Herbert Beveridge said. "I quite acknowledge that in some respects it would be better if I had not devoted myself so entirely to study, though my work has not been without fruit, I hope, for it is

acknowledged that my book on the use of the digamma threw an entirely new light upon the subject. Still I cannot expect, nor do I wish, that Horace should follow in my footsteps. Indeed, I trust, that when I have finished my work, there will be little for a fresh labourer to glean in that direction. At any rate he is far too young to develop a bent in any direction whatever, and I think therefore that your proposal is a good one."

"Then in that case, Herbert, I think you cannot do better than send him with Horace Hendon's two boys to school. One is about his own age and one is a little older. The elder boy has been there a year, and his father is well satisfied with the school."

"Very well, aunt. If you will ask Horace to make arrangements for the boy to go with his sons I am quite content it should be so."

So Horace Beveridge went, a week later, by coach with his cousins to a school at Exeter, some forty miles from Seaport, and there remained until he was fourteen. He passed his holidays at home, never seeing his father until dinnertime, after which he spent two hours with him, a period of the day to which the boy always looked forward with some dread. Sometimes his father would chat cheerfully to him, always in modern Greek; at others he would sit silent and abstracted, waking up occasionally and making some abrupt remark to the boy, and then again lapsing into silence. When about the house and grounds Marco was his constant companion. The Greek, who was a mere lad when he had come to England, was fond of Horace, and having been a fisherman as a boy, he enjoyed almost as much as his charge did

the boating and fishing expeditions upon which he accompanied him.

At this time Horace had a strong desire to go to sea, but even his Aunt Fordyce, when he broached the subject to her, would give him no hope or encouragement.

"If it had been ten years ago, Horace, it would have been another matter. The sea was a stirring life, then; and even had you only gone into the navy for a few years you would have seen lots of service, and might have distinguished yourself. As to staying in it, it would have been ridiculous for you as an only son. But now nothing could be more wretched than the position of a naval officer. All the world is at peace, and there does not appear to be the slightest chance of war anywhere for many years. Hundreds and hundreds of ships have been paid off and laid up, and there are thousands of officers on half-pay, and without the smallest chance of ever getting employment again. You have arrived too late in the world for sailoring. Besides, I do not think in any case your father would consent to such a thing. I am happy to say that I do not think he has any idea, or even desire, that you should turn out a famous scholar as he is. But to a man like him it would seem terrible that your education should cease altogether at the age at which boys go into the navy, and that you should grow up knowing nothing of what he considers the essentials of a gentleman's education. No, no, Horace, the sea is out of the question. You must go up to Eton, as arranged, at the end of these holidays, and from Eton you must go through one of the

universities. After that you can wander about for a bit and see the world, and you will see as much of it in six months that way as in twice as many years were you in the navy in these times of peace."

Horace looked a little downcast.

"There is another thing, Horace," his aunt said; "it would not be fair for you to go into the navy, even if there was nothing else against it."

"How is that, aunt?"

"Well, Horace, when there are hundreds of officers on half-pay, who can scarcely keep life together on the few pounds a year they get, it would be hard indeed for young fellows with money and influence to step into the places and keep them out."

"Yes, aunt, I did not think of that," Horace said, brightening up. "It certainly would be a beastly shame for a fellow who can do anything with himself to take the place of a man who can do nothing else."

"Besides, Horace," his aunt went on, "if you like the sea so much as you do now when you have done with college, there is no reason why you should not get your father to let you either hire or buy a yacht and go where you like in her, instead of travelling about by land."

"That would be very jolly!" Horace exclaimed. "Yes, that would be really better than going to sea, because one could go where one liked."

And so at the end of the holidays Horace went up to Eton. On

his return home in the summer his father said: "Your aunt was over here the other day, Horace, and she was telling me about that foolish idea you have of going to sea. I was glad to hear that you gave it up at once when she pointed out to you the absurdity of it. Her opinion is that as you are so fond of the water, and as Marco can manage a boat well, it would be a good thing for you to have one of your own, instead of going out always with the fishermen; the idea seemed to me a good one, so I got her to write to some one she knows at Exmouth, and he has spoken to the revenue officer there. They have been bothering me about what size it should be, and as I could not tell them whether it should be ten feet long or fifty, I said the matter must remain till you came home, and then Marco could go over with you to Exmouth and see the officer."

"Oh, thank you very much, father!"

"It is only right that you should be indulged in a matter like this, Horace. I know that you don't care about riding alone, and I am sorry I can't be more of a companion to you, but I have always my hands full of important work, and I know that for a boy of your age it must be very dull here. Choose any boat you like. I have been talking to Marco, and he says that she can be hauled up on the beach and lie there perfectly safe when you are away. Of course if necessary he can have a young fellow or two from the village to help while you are at home. He seems to think that in that way you could have a boat of more comfortable size. I don't know anything about it, so I have left the matter entirely

to him and you. The difference of cost between a small boat and a large one is of no consequence one way or the other."

Accordingly, the next morning Marco and Horace started directly after breakfast in the carriage to catch the coach, which passed along the main road four miles from Seaport, and arrived at Exmouth at two. They had no difficulty in finding the house of Captain Martyn, whose title was an honorary one, he being a lieutenant of many years' service.

"Is Captain Martyn in?" Horace asked the servant who opened the door.

"No, sir; he is away in the cutter." Horace stood aghast. It had never struck him that the officer might not be at home.

"His son is in, Mr. William Martyn, if that will do," the servant said, seeing the boy's look of dismay.

"I don't know," he said; "but at any rate I should like to see him."

"I will tell him, sir, if you will stay here."

A minute later a tall powerfully-built young fellow of two or three-and-twenty came to the door.

"Well, youngster, what is it?" he asked.

"I have come about buying a boat, sir. My name is Beveridge. I believe Captain Martyn was kind enough to say that he would look out for a boat for us."

"Oh, yes, I have heard about it; but whether it was a dinghy or a man-of-war that was wanted we couldn't find out. Do you intend to manage her single-handed?"

"Oh, no, sir! I have done a lot of sailing with the fishermen at Seaport, but I could not manage a boat by myself, not if there was any wind. But Marco was a sailor among the Greek isles before he entered my father's service."

"Want a comfortable craft," the Greek, who had learned to speak a certain amount of English, said. "Can have two or three hands."

"Oh, you want a regular cruiser! Well, you are a lucky young chap, I must say. The idea of a young cub like you having a boat with two or three hands to knock about in! Do you want a captain, because I am to let?"

"No, sir, we don't want a captain, and we don't want a great big craft. Something about the size of a fishing-boat, I should say. Are you a sailor?"

"Yes, worse luck, I am a master's mate, if you know what that is. It means a passed midshipman. I have been a master's mate for four years, and am likely to be one all my life, for I have no more chance of getting a berth than I have of being appointed a post-captain to-morrow. Well, I will put on my cap and go with you. I have been looking about since my father heard about a boat being wanted. The letter said nothing about your age, or what size of boat was wanted; it gave in fact no useful information whatever. It was about as much to the point as if they had said you wanted to have a house and did not say whether it was a two-roomed cottage or a country mansion. But I think I know of a little craft that would about suit you. Does your father sail himself?"

Horace could not help smiling at the idea. "No," he said. "My father cares for nothing but studying Greek. I am at Eton, but it is very slow in the holidays, and as I generally go out with the fishermen the best part of the time I am at home, he thought it would be a good thing for me to have a boat of my own."

William Martyn looked quietly down at the lad, then went in and got his cap, rejoined them, and sauntered down towards the river. He led the way along the wharfs, passed above the town, and then pointed to a boat lying on the mud.

"That is the craft I should choose if I were in your place," he said. "She is as sound as a bell, and I wouldn't mind crossing the Bay of Biscay in her."

"But she is very large," Horace said, looking at her with some doubt in his face.

"She is about fifteen tons burthen," he said, "built of oak, and is only eight years old, though she looks battered about and rusty as she lies there. She was built from his own designs by Captain Burrows, as good a sailor as ever stepped. She is forty feet long and fifteen feet beam. She is fast, and a splendid sea-boat, with four foot draft of water. He died three years after he built her, and she has been lying there ever since. Her gear has been all stowed away in a dry place, and the old sailor in charge of it says it is in perfect order. The old captain used to knock about on board of her with only a man and a boy, and she is as easy to handle as a cock-boat. I was out in her more than once when I was at home on leave, and she is a beauty. Of course you can't

judge of her as she lies there; but she has wonderfully easy lines, and sits the water like a duck. She is a dandy, you see; that is, she carries a small mizzen mast. She was rigged so because a craft like that is a good deal easier to work short-handed than a cutter."

She seemed as she lay there so much larger than anything Horace had had the idea of possessing that he looked doubtfully at Marco.

"I think she will do," the Greek said; "just the sort of boat for us. See her when tide comes up, and can go on board. How much cost?"

"They only want eighty pounds for her," William Martyn said. "They asked a hundred and fifty at first; but everything is so dull, and there have been such a lot of small craft sold off from the dockyards, that she has not found a purchaser. If I had two or three hundred a year of my own there is nothing I should like better than to own that craft and knock about in her. Her only fault is she wants head-room. There is only five foot under her beams, for she has a low freeboard. That prevents her from being sold as a yacht. But as one does not want to walk about much below I don't see that that matters. She has got a roomy cabin and a nice little stateroom for the owner, and a fo'castle big enough for six hands."

"It would be splendid," Horace said. "But do you think, Marco, my father meant me to have such a large boat as this?"

The Greek nodded. "Master said buy a good big safe boat. No use getting a little thing Mr. Horace tire of in a year or two. Can

always get a man or two in the holidays. I think that is just the boat."

"Tide has nearly reached her," William Martyn said. "We shall be able to get off to her in an hour. We will go and overhaul the gear now. I will get the key of the cabins."

It took them a good hour to get out the sails and inspect them, and examine the ropes and gear. All were pronounced in good order.

"The sails are as good for all practical purposes as the day they were turned out," Martyn said. "They may not be quite as white as the fresh-water sailors about here think necessary for their pleasure craft, but they are sound and strong, and were well scrubbed before they were put away. And you may be sure Burrows used none but the best rope money could buy. Now we will go on board. She will look a different craft when her decks are holy-stoned, and she gets two or three coats of paint," the young officer went on as they stepped on board. "A landsman can never judge of a boat when she is dismantled, and he can't judge much at any time. He thinks more of paint and polish than he does of a ship's lines."

But Horace had seen enough of boats to be able to appreciate to some extent the easy lines of her bow and her fine run, and the Greek was delighted with her. Below she was in good order, except that she wanted a coat of paint. The cabins were of course entirely dismantled, but Horace was surprised at their roominess, accustomed as he was to the close little fo'castles of the fishing-

boats.

"She was fitted up in a regular man-of-war fashion," Martyn said. "This was just a captain's cabin on board a frigate, but on a small scale, and so was the state-room. We did not see the furniture, but it is all upstairs in an attic of the cottage we went to."

"How long would it take to get her ready?" Horace asked.

"About ten days. Most of her ballast is out of her, but the rest ought to come out so as to give her a regular clean down, and a coat of whitewash below, before it is all put in again. If you like, young 'un, I will look after that. I have got nothing to do, and it will be an amusement to me. I am looking for a berth at present in a merchantman, but there are such a number of men out of harness that it isn't easy to get a job. Look here, if you really want to learn some day to be fit to take charge of this craft yourself, you could not do better than persuade your father to let you come over here and see her fitted up, then you will know where every rope goes, and learn more than you would sitting about on deck in the course of a year. There will be no difficulty in getting a couple of rooms ready for you and your man in the town."

"Can we get home to-night, sir?"

"Yes, the coach goes through here at six o'clock."

"My father will write to-morrow, at least I expect he will," Horace said. "It isn't very easy to get him to do things, but I expect I shall manage."

"He will write," Marco said confidently; and as the boy knew

that the Greek had far more opportunities of getting at his father than he had, he felt sure that he would manage it.

"We are very much obliged to you, Mr. Martyn," he said.

"All right, young sir. If your father decides to take the boat get him to write to me; or if he is bad at writing, write to me yourself after settling it with him, and I will put on men and see that she is ready for sea in a fortnight."

"Do you feel sure father will let me have the boat, Marco?" Horace said as soon as they were alone.

"It is done," the Greek said with a wave of his hand. "He said to me, 'Go and buy a proper boat, see that everything is right about it, but don't worry me.' So when I say, 'I have bought the boat; it is just the thing we want; it will cost a hundred pounds by the time it is ready for sea,' he will say he is glad to hear it, and there will be an end of it. Mr. Beveridge never troubles."

"And will you tell him that it would be a good thing for me to go over and see her fitted up?"

"I will tell him. He will be glad to know that you have got something to do."

It was half-past ten o'clock when they got home. The other Greek opened the door.

"Is the master in bed yet, Zaimes?"

"He went upstairs ten minutes ago. I think he had forgotten all about Horace not being at home. He did not mention his name to me."

"What a nuisance!" Horace said. "Now I shall have to wait

till morning before I know about it, and I am so anxious to hear what he says."

"It will be all the pleasanter when you hear," Zaimes said quietly.

The two men were brothers, Zaimes being ten years senior. He was Mr. Beveridge's valet, his brother being a sort of general assistant, waiting at meals except when Horace was at home, when he was considered specially told off to him. They lived apart from the other servants, having a room of their own where they cooked their meals in their own fashion. Both were extremely attached to their master, and would have given their lives for him.

"Marco will tell me all about it, and I will talk to the master while I am dressing him. You are making Marco again a boy like yourself, Horace. He is as eager about this boat as you are"; and he smiled indulgently at his brother, whom he still regarded as a boy, although he was now nearly forty.

"That will be the best plan, Zaimes. I shall be glad for him to know all about it before breakfast time, for I am sure I should not like to tell him that we had fixed on a boat like that."

Horace was a long time before he got to sleep. He had never dreamt of anything bigger than an open boat, and the thought of having a craft that he could sail anywhere along the coast, and even sleep on board, seemed almost too good to be true. He woke an hour before his time, dressed hastily, went out into the garden, and stood there looking over the sea. The fishing-

boats were going out, and he pictured to himself the boat he had seen, gliding along among them, bigger and ever so much handsomer than any of them; and how he would be able to take out his cousins, and perhaps some day have a school friend to spend the holidays with him and cruise about. So deep was he in his thoughts that he was surprised when he heard the bell ring for breakfast.

"Now, then," he said to himself as he walked back to the house, "I shall know. Of course it will be a horrible disappointment if he says no, but I sha'n't show it, because it is too much to expect him to do this. I should never have dreamt of such a thing if it had not been for Marco. Well, here goes"; and he walked into the parlour.

"Good morning, father!"

"Good morning, Horace. I am glad to hear that Marco has found just the boat that he thinks will suit the place. He tells me you want to go over and see her fitted out. I think that that will be a very good plan. When you do a thing, Horace, do it well if it is worth doing at all. Marco will go back with you by the coach this morning."

"Oh, thank you, father; it is awfully kind of you!"

"I wish you to enjoy yourself," his father said; "it is no more than the price of another horse. It is a fine sport and a healthy one, and I don't know that it is more dangerous than galloping about the country on horseback. I have told Marco to make all arrangements, and not to worry me about things. At the

beginning of each holiday he will say how much he will require for provisions on board, and the payment of the wages of a man and a boy. I shall give him a cheque, and there will be an end of it as far as I am concerned. I shall be much more at my ease knowing that you are enjoying yourself on board than wondering what you will do to amuse yourself from day to day."

Thinking that all that was necessary had been said, Mr. Beveridge then opened a Greek book that lay as usual beside his plate, and speedily became absorbed in it. When he himself had finished, Horace slipped away. He knew that his father would be at least two hours over the meal, which he only turned to when Zaimes made a movement to attract his attention, everything being kept down by the fire, which was lit specially for that purpose, even in summer.

"It is all settled, Marco; think of that! Won't it be glorious?"

"It will be very good, Horace. I shall like it almost as much as you will. I love the sea, even this gray ugly sea of yours, which is so different from the blue of the Ægean. I too mope a little sometimes when you are not at home, for though I have the kindest and best of masters, one longs sometimes for change. I told you your father would agree. It is just what I told him we should want. An open boat is no use except when the weather is fine, and then one must always keep close to port in case the wind should drop, and when it comes calm you have to break your back with rowing. Oh, we will have fine sails together, and as you grow older we can go farther away, for she should be safe

anywhere. When you become a man I daresay he will get for you something bigger, and then perhaps we can sail together to Greece, and perhaps the master will go with you, for he loves Greece as much as we do."

There was a fortnight of hard work. William Martyn was in command, and kept Horace at work as if he had been a young midshipman under his orders; while Marco turned his hand to everything, singing snatches of sailor songs he had sung as he fished when a boy, chattering in Greek to Horace, and in broken English to the two men.

"You are going to be skipper, I hear," William Martyn said to him one day.

"Going to skip!" Marco repeated vaguely. "I know not what you mean."

"Going to be captain – padrone."

Marco shook his head. "No, sir. Can sail open boat good, but not fit to take charge of boat like this. Going to have man at Seaport, a good fisherman. He sailed a long time in big ships. Man-of-war's man. When war over, came back to fish. I shall look after young master, cook food for him, pull at rope, steer sometimes; but other man be captain and sail boat."

William Martyn nodded. "Quite right, Marco; these fishermen know the coast, and the weather, and the ports and creeks to run into. It is all very well in fine weather, but when you get a blow, a craft like this wants a man who can handle her well."

Horace's pride in the craft increased every day. As she lay

weather-beaten and dismantled on the mud she had seemed to him larger but not superior in appearance to the fishing craft of Seaport, which were most of them boats of ten or twelve tons; but each day her appearance changed, and at the end of ten days – with all her rigging in place, her masts and spars scraped, her deck fairly white, and her sides glossy with black paint – she seemed to him a thing of perfect beauty. It was just the fortnight when the paint and varnish of the cabins were dry, the furniture in its place, and everything ready for sea. Horace's delight culminated when the anchor was got up, sail set on her, and William Martyn took the helm, as with a light wind she ran down through the craft in the harbour for a trial trip.

"She is a wonderfully handy little craft," the mate said approvingly, as she began to rise and fall on the swell outside; "the old captain knew what he was doing when he laid down her lines. She is like a duck on the water. I have been out in her when big ships were putting their noses into it, and she never shipped a pailful of water. I can tell you you are in luck, youngster. How are you going to take her round?"

"I was going to write to-night for Tom Burdett – that is the man Marco spoke about – to come over by coach."

"I will tell you what I will do, youngster; I will take her over for you. I shall enjoy the trip. If you like we will start to-morrow morning."

"I should like that immensely," Horace said; "we shall astonish them when we sail into the port."

“Very well, then, that is agreed; you had better get some stores on board; I mean provisions. Of course if the weather holds like this we should be there in the evening; but it is a good rule at sea never to trust the weather. Always have enough grub and water for a week on board; then, if you happen to be blown off shore, or anything of that sort, it is of no consequence.”

CHAPTER II
A YACHT

MARCO, who acted as banker and appeared to Horace to be provided with an unlimited amount of money, was busy all the evening getting crockery, cooking-utensils, knives and forks, table-cloths, towels, and other necessaries.

"Why, it is like fitting out a house, Marco."

"Well, it is a little floating house," the Greek said; "it is much better to have your own things, and not to have to borrow from the house every time. Now we will get some provisions, two or three bottles of rum for bad weather, or when we have visitors on board, and then we shall be complete. Mr. Martyn said he would see to the water. Now, we will go to bed soon, for we are to be down at the wharf at six o'clock; and if we are not there in time you may be sure that you will get a rating."

"There is no fear of my being late, Marco. I don't think I shall sleep all night."

"Ah! we shall see. You have been on your feet since seven this morning. I shall have to pull you by your ear to wake you in the morning."

This, however, was not necessary. The boy was fast asleep in five minutes after he had laid his head on the pillow; he woke soon after daylight, dropped off to sleep several times, but turned

out at five, opened the door of the Greek's room, and shouted:

"Now, then, Marco, time to get up: if you do not, it is I who will do the ear-pulling."

They were down at the wharf at a quarter to six. As the clock struck the hour William Martyn came down.

"Good-morning, youngster! you are before your time, I see. You wouldn't be so ready to turn out after you had had a year or two on board ship. Well, it looks as if we are going to have a grand day. There is a nice little breeze, and I fancy it will freshen a good bit later on. Now, then, tumble into the dinghy, I will take the sculls; the tide is running out strong, and you might run her into the yacht and damage the paint; that would be a nice beginning."

As soon as they were on board, the mate said:

"Now, off with those shoes, youngster. You can go barefoot if you like, or you can put on those slippers you bought; we have got the deck fairly white, and we must not spoil it. You should make that a rule: everyone who comes on board takes off his boots at once."

The Greek made the dinghy fast, and then took off his shoes and stockings. Horace put on the slippers, and the mate a pair of light shoes he had brought on board with him.

"Now, then, off with the sail-covers; fold them up and put them down under the seat of the cockpit. Knot up the tyers loosely together, and put them there also. Never begin to hoist your sails till you have got the covers and tyers snugly packed

away. Now, Marco, get number two jib out of the sail-locker. I don't think we shall want number one to-day. Now, hook on the halliards. No; don't hoist yet, run it out first by the outhaul to the end of the bowsprit. We won't hoist it till we have got the mainmast and mizzen up. Now, Marco, you take the peak halliards, and I will take the main. Now, then, up she goes; ease off the sheet a bit. Horace, we must top the boom a bit; that is high enough. Marco, make fast; now up with the mizzen; that is right. Now, Horace, before you do anything else always look round, see that everything is right, the halliards properly coiled up and turned over so as to run freely, in case you want to lower or reef sail, the sheets ready to slacken out, the foresail and jib sheets brought aft on their proper sides. There is nothing in our way now; but when there are craft in the way, you want to have everything in perfect order, and ready to draw the moment the anchor is off the ground. Otherwise you might run foul of something before you got fairly off, and nothing can look more lubberly than that. Now you take the helm, and Marco and I will get up the anchor. The wind is nearly dead down the river; don't touch the tiller till I tell you."

Horace stood by the helm till the mate said:

"The chain is nearly up and down; now put the tiller gently to starboard."

As he spoke he ran up the jib, and as the boat's head payed off, fastened the sheet to windward.

"Now, Marco, round with the windlass; that is right, the

anchor is clear now; up with it."

As he spoke he ran up the foresail. "Slack off the main sheets, lad, handsomely; that is right, let them go free; slack off the mizzen sheets."

The wind had caught the jib now, and, aided by the tide, brought the boat's head sharply round. The jib and foresheets were hauled to leeward, and in less than a minute from the time the anchor had left the ground the boat was running down the river with her sheets well off before the wind.

"Helm a-port a little, Horace, so as to give us plenty of room in passing that brig at anchor. That is enough. Steady! Now keep as you are. Marco, I will help you get the anchor on board, and then we will get up the topsail and set it."

In ten minutes the anchor was stowed, topsail set, and the ropes coiled down. Then a small triangular blue flag with the word "Surf" was run up to the masthead.

"Properly speaking, Horace, flags are not shown till eight o'clock in the morning; but we will make an exception this time. Gently with the tiller, lad; you are not steering a fishing-boat now; a touch is sufficient for this craft. Keep your eye on the flag, and see that it flies out straight ahead. That is the easiest thing to steer by when you are dead before the wind. There is more care required for that than for steering close-hauled, for a moment's carelessness might bring the sail across with a jerk that would pretty well take the mast out of her. It is easy enough now in smooth water; but with a following sea it needs a careful

helmsman to keep a craft from yawing about."

Marco had disappeared down the forecastle hatch as soon as he had finished coiling down the topsail halliard, and a wreath of smoke now came up through the stove-pipe.

"That is good," the mate said. "We shall have breakfast before long."

They ran three miles straight out, so as to get well clear of the land; then the sheets were hauled in, and the *Surf's* head pointed east, and lying down to her gunwale she sped along parallel with the shore.

"We are going along a good seven knots through the water," the mate said. "She has got just as much sail as she wants, though she would stand a good deal more wind, if there were any occasion to press her; but as a rule, Horace, always err on the right side; there is never any good in carrying too much sail. You can always make more sail if the wind drops, while if it rises it is not always easy to get it in. Give me the helm. Now go down to Marco and tell him to come up a few minutes before breakfast is ready. We will get the topsail off her before we sit down, and eat our breakfast comfortably. There is no fun in having your plate in your lap."

By half-past seven the topsail was stowed and breakfast on the table. Marco took the helm, while the mate and Horace went down to breakfast. Horace thought that it was the most delightful meal he had ever taken; and the mate said:

"That Greek of yours is a first-rate cook, Horace. An admiral

could not want to sit down to a better breakfast than this. There is not much here to remind me of a midshipman's mess. You would have had very different food from this, youngster, if you had had your wish and gone to sea. That father of yours must be a trump; I drink his health in coffee. If he ever gets a bigger craft, and wants a captain, I am his man if he will send your Greek on board as cook. Does he care for the sea himself?"

"I think he used to like it. I have heard him talk about sailing among the Greek islands; but as long as I have known him he has never been away from home except for short runs up to London. He is always in his library."

"Fancy a man who could afford to keep a big craft and sail about as he likes wasting his life over musty old books. It is a rum taste, youngster. I think I would rather row in a galley."

"There are no such things as galleys now, are there?"

"Oh, yes, there are in Italy; they have them still rowed by convicts, and I fancy the Spanish gun-boats are rowed by prisoners too. It is worse than a dog's life, but for all that I would rather do it than be shut up all my life in a library. You seem to talk Greek well, youngster."

"Yes; Marco has always been with me since I was a child, and we have another Greek servant, his brother; and father generally talks Greek to me. His mother was a Greek lady, and that is what made him so fond of it at first. They say he is the best Greek scholar in England."

"I suppose it differs a lot from the Greek you learn at school?"

"Yes, a lot. Still, of course, my knowing it helps me tremendously with my old Greek. I get on first-rate at that, but I am very bad at everything else."

"Well, now we will go up and give Marco a spell," the mate said. Marco was relieved and went below. Horace took the helm; the mate lit a pipe and seated himself on the weather bulwark. "We shall be at Seaport before eleven if we go on like this," he said.

"Oh, do let us take a run out to sea, Mr. Martyn; it is no use our going in until four or five o'clock."

"Just as you like, lad; I am in no hurry, and it is really a glorious day for a sail. Put up the helm, I will see to the sheets."

As they got farther from the protection of the land the sea got up a bit, but the *Surf* went over it lightly, and except that an occasional splash of spray flew over her bow, her decks were perfectly dry.

"Have you heard of a ship yet, Mr. Martyn?"

"Yes, I heard only yesterday of a berth as first-mate in a craft at Plymouth. The first-mate got hurt coming down channel, and a friend of my father's, learning there was a vacancy, spoke to the owners. She belongs there, and I am to join the day after to-morrow. She is bound up the Mediterranean. I shall be very glad to be off; I have had a dull time of it for the last four months except for this little job."

"I am afraid you won't get any vehicle to take you back to-night," Horace said.

"No, I didn't expect that; the coach in the morning will do very well. I have nothing to do but just to pack my kit, and shall go on by coach next morning. I was thinking of sleeping on board here, if you have no objection."

"I am sure my father will be very glad to see you up at the house," Horace said eagerly.

"Thank you, lad, but I shall be much more comfortable on board. Marco said he would get dinner at two, and there is sure to be plenty for me to make a cold supper of, and as there is rum in the locker I shall be as happy as a king. I can smoke my pipe as I like. If I were to go up with you I should be uncomfortable, for I have nothing but my sea-going togs. I should put your father out of his way, and he would put me out of mine. So I think, on all accounts, I had much better remain in good quarters now I have got them. How far is it to the place where I catch the coach?"

"About four miles. We will send the carriage to take you there."

"Thank you, I would much rather walk. I have nothing to carry but myself, and a four miles' walk across the hills will be just the thing for me."

At four o'clock the *Surf* entered the little harbour of Seaport; Horace was delighted with the surprise of the fishermen at the arrival of the pretty craft.

"You are sure you won't change your mind and come up with me to the house?"

"Quite certain, thank you, lad. Marco has put out everything

I can possibly require. He offered to come down to get breakfast for me, but I prefer to manage that for myself, then I can have it at any time I fancy. I will lock up the cabin before I land. He will be there to take the key."

"I shall come down with him, of course, Mr. Martyn. I can't tell you how much I am obliged to you for what you have done for me, and I hope that some day we may have another sail together."

"If I am at home any time when you may happen to put in at Exmouth I shall be glad to take a cruise with you, Horace."

As the lad and Marco went up the hill to the house, Horace, to his surprise, met his father coming down with Zaimes.

"Well, Horace, so you have brought your yacht home. Zaimes routed me out from my work to come and look at her, and she really looks a very pretty little vessel."

"She is not little at all, father."

"Perhaps not in comparison, Horace; but did you and Marco bring her back by yourselves?"

"No, father; William Martyn, the officer who has seen to her fitting up, and who recommended her, you know, said he would come with us. So, of course, he has been in command, and Marco and I have been the crew. He has been teaching me lots of things, just the same, he says, as if I had been a newly joined midshipman."

"But where is he now, Horace?"

"He is on board. He is going home by the coach to-morrow. I said that I was sure you would be glad if he would come up to

the house; but he said he should feel more comfortable on board. Were you coming down to look at her, father?"

"Yes, Horace, I was. It is quite a wonderful event my being outside the grounds, isn't it?"

"It is indeed, father. I am so glad you are coming down. I am sure you will like her, and then, perhaps, you will come sailing sometimes; I do think, father, that you would enjoy such a sail as we had to-day, it was splendid."

"Well, we will see about it, Horace. Now I have once come out I may do so again; I am not sure that a good blow might not clear my brain sometimes."

There was quite an excitement in the village when Mr. Beveridge was seen coming down. Occasionally during his wife's lifetime he had come down with her to look into questions of repairs or erection of new cottages in lieu of old ones, but since that time he had never entered the village. Personally his tenants did not suffer from the cessation of his visits, for his steward had the strictest injunctions to deal in all respects liberally with them, to execute all necessary repairs, to accede to any reasonable request; while in case of illness or misfortune, such as the loss of a boat or nets, the rent was always remitted. That Mr. Beveridge was to a certain extent mad to shut himself up as he did the villagers firmly believed, but they admitted that no better landlord was to be found in all that part of the country.

Mrs. Beveridge had been greatly liked, and the people were pleased at Horace being down so much among them; but it was

rather a sore subject that their landlord himself held so entirely aloof from them. Men touched their hats, the women curtsied as he came down the street, looking almost with pity at the man who, in their opinion, so terribly wasted his life and cut himself off from the enjoyments of his position.

Mr. Beveridge returned their salutes kindly. He was scarce conscious of the time that had passed since he was last in the village; the years had gone by altogether unmarked save by the growth of Horace, and by the completion of so many works.

"I suppose you know most of their names, Horace?"

"All of them, I think, father."

"That is right, boy. A landlord ought to know all his tenants. I wish I could find time to go about among them a little more, but I think they have everything they want as far as I can do for them; still, I ought to come. In your mother's time I did come sometimes. I must try to do it in future. Zaimes, you must see that I do this once a fortnight. I authorize you to bring me my hat and coat after lunch and say to me firmly, 'This is your afternoon for going out.'"

"Very well, sir," the Greek said. "I will tell you; and I hope you will not say, as you always do to me when I beg you to go out: 'I must put it off for another day, Zaimes, I have some work that must be done.'"

"I will try not to, Zaimes, I will indeed. I think this is a duty. You remind me of that, will you?"

By this time they had reached the little port, where a number

of the fishermen were still lounging discussing the *Surf*, which was lying the picture of neatness and good order among the fishing-boats, with every rope in its place, the sails in their snow-white covers, and presenting the strongest contrast to the craft around her.

"She is really a very pretty little yacht," Mr. Beveridge said with more animation than Horace ever remembered to have heard him speak with. "She does great credit to your choice, Marco, and I should think she is a good sea-boat. Why, Zaimes, this almost seems to take one back to the old time. She is about the size of the felucca we used to cruise about in; it is a long time back, nearly eighteen years, and yet it seems but yesterday."

"There is no reason why you should not sail again, master; even I long to have my foot on the planks. One never loses one's love of the sea."

"I am getting to be an old man now, Zaimes."

"No one would say so but yourself, master; you are but forty-three. Sometimes, after being shut up for days, you look old – who would not when the sun never shines on them – but now you look young, much younger than you are."

A stranger indeed would have had difficulty in guessing Mr. Beveridge's age. His forehead was broad, his skin delicate and almost colourless, his light-brown hair was already of a silvery shade, his face clean shaven, his hands white and thin. His eyes were generally soft and dreamy, but at the present moment they were bright and alert. His figure was scarcely that of a student,

for the frame was large, and there was at present none of the stoop habitual to those who spend their lives over books; and now that he was roused, he carried himself exceptionally upright, and a close observer might have taken him for a vigorous man who had but lately recovered from an attack of severe illness.

"We shall see, Zaimes, we shall see," he said; "let us go on board. You had better hail her, Horace."

"*Surf* ahoy!" Horace shouted, imitating as well as he could William Martyn's usual hail. A minute later the mate's head appeared above the companion. "My father is coming on board, Mr. Martyn. Will you please bring the dinghy ashore." The mate hauled up the dinghy, got into it, and in a few strokes was alongside the quay.

Mr. Beveridge descended the steps first. "I am glad to meet you, Mr. Martyn, and to thank you for the kindness you have shown my son in finding this craft for him and seeing to its being fitted out."

"It has been an amusement, sir," the mate said. "I was knocking about Exmouth with nothing to do, and it was pleasant to be at work on something."

"Get in, Horace," Mr. Beveridge said, "the dinghy won't carry us all. You can bring it back again for the others."

The party stayed for half an hour on board. Mr. Beveridge was warm in his approval of the arrangements.

"This is a snug cabin indeed," he said. "I had no idea that such a small craft could have had such good accommodation. One

could wish for nothing better except for a little more head-room, but after all that is of no great consequence, one does not want to walk about below. It is a place to eat and to sleep in, or, if it is wet, to read in. I really wonder I never thought of having a sailing-boat before. I shall certainly take a sail with you sometimes, Horace."

"I am very glad of that, father, it would be very jolly having you out. I don't see much of you, you know, and I do think it would do you good."

William Martyn was not allowed to carry out his intention of staying on board, nor did he resist very earnestly Mr. Beveridge's pressing invitation. His host differed widely from his preconceived notions of him, and he saw that he need not be afraid of ceremony.

"You can smoke your pipe, you know, in the library after dinner, Mr. Martyn. I have no objection whatever to smoke; indeed, I used to smoke myself when I was in Greece as a young man – everyone did so there, and I got to like it, though I gave it up afterwards. Why did I give it up, Zaimes?"

"I think you gave it up, master, because you always let your cigar out after smoking two or three whiffs, and never thought of it again for the rest of the day."

"Perhaps that was it; at any rate your smoking will in no way incommode me, so I will take no denial."

Accordingly the cabins were locked up, and William Martyn went up with the others to the house and there spent a very pleasant evening. He had in the course of his service sailed for

some time in Greek waters, and there was consequently much to talk about which interested both himself and his host.

"I love Greece," Mr. Beveridge said. "Had it not been that she lies dead under the tyranny of the Turks I doubt if I should not have settled there altogether."

"I think you would have got tired of it, sir," the mate said. "There is nothing to be said against the country or the islands, except that there are precious few good harbours among them; but I can't say I took to the people."

"They have their faults," Mr. Beveridge admitted, "but I think they are the faults of their position more than of their natural character. Slaves are seldom trustworthy, and I own that they are not as a rule to be relied upon. Having no honourable career open to them, the upper classes think of nothing but money; they are selfish, greedy, and corrupt; but I believe in the bulk of the people."

As William Martyn had no belief whatever in any section of the Greeks he held his tongue.

"Greece will rise one of these days," Mr. Beveridge went on, "and when she does she will astonish Europe. The old spirit still lives among the descendants of Leonidas and Miltiades."

"I should be sorry to be one of the Turks who fell into their hands," William Martyn said gravely as he thought of the many instances in his own experiences of the murders of sailors on leave ashore.

"It is probable that there will be sad scenes of bloodshed," Mr.

Beveridge agreed; "that is only to be expected when you have a race of men of a naturally impetuous and passionate character enslaved by a people alien in race and in religion. Yes, I fear it will be so at the commencement, but that will be all altered when they become disciplined soldiers. Do you not think so?" he asked, as the sailor remained silent.

"I have great doubts whether they will ever submit to discipline," he said bluntly. "Their idea of fighting for centuries has been simply to shoot down an enemy from behind the shelter of rocks. I would as lief undertake to discipline an army of Malays, who, in a good many respects, especially in the handiness with which they use their knives, are a good deal like the Greeks."

"There is one broad distinction," Mr. Beveridge said: "the Malays have no past, the Greeks have never lost the remembrance of their ancient glory. They have a high standard to act up to; they reverence the names of the great men of old as if they had died but yesterday. With them it would be a resurrection, accomplished, no doubt, after vast pains and many troubles, the more so since the Greeks are a composite people among whom the descendants of the veritable Greek of old are in a great minority. The majority are of Albanian and Suliot blood, races which even the Romans found untamable. When the struggle begins I fear that this section of the race will display the savagery of their nature; but the fighting over, the intellectual portion will, I doubt not, regain their proper ascendency, and Greece will become the Greece of old."

William Martyn was wise enough not to pursue the subject. He had a deep scar from the shoulder to the elbow of his right arm, and another on the left shoulder, both reminiscences of an attack that had been made upon him by half a dozen ruffians one night in the streets of Athens, and in his private opinion the entire extirpation of the Greek race would be no loss to the world in general.

"I am very sorry you have to leave to-morrow morning," Mr. Beveridge said presently. "I should have been very glad if you could have stayed with us for a few days. It is some years since I had a visitor here, and I can assure you that I am surprised at the pleasure it gives me. However, I hope that whenever you happen to be at Exmouth you will run over and see us, and if at any time I can be of the slightest service to you I shall be really pleased."

The next morning William Martyn, still refusing the offer of a conveyance, walked across the hills to meet the coach, and as soon as he had started Horace went down to the yacht. Marco had gone down into the village early, had seen Tom Burdett, and in his master's name arranged for him to take charge of the *Surf*, and to engage a lad to sail with him. When Horace reached the wharf Tom was already on board with his nephew, Dick, a lad of seventeen or eighteen, who at once brought the dinghy ashore at Horace's hail.

"Well, Dick, so you are going with us?"

"Ay, Master Horace, I am shipped as crew. She be a beauty. That cabin is a wonderful lot better than the fo'castle of a fishing-

lugger. She is something like a craft to go a sailing in."

"Good morning, Tom Burdett," Horace said as the boat came alongside the yacht; "or I ought to say Captain Burdett."

"No, no," the sailor laughed; "I have been too long aboard big craft to go a captaining. I don't so much mind being called a skipper, cos a master of any sort of craft may be called skipper; but I ain't going to be called captain. Now, Dick, run that flag up to the mast-head. That is yachting fashion, you know, Master Horace, to run the burgee up when the owner comes on board. We ain't got a burgee, seeing as we don't belong to a yacht-club; but the flag with the name does service for it at present."

"But I am not the owner, Tom, that is nonsense. My father got it to please me, and very good of him it was; but it is nonsense to call the boat mine."

"Them's the orders I got from your Greek chap down below, Mr. Horace. Says he, 'Master says as how Mr. Horace is to be regarded as owner of this 'ere craft whenever he is aboard;' so there you are, you see. There ain't nothing to be said against that."

"Well, it is very jolly, isn't it, Tom?"

"It suits me first-rate, sir. I feel for all the world as if we had just captured a little prize, and they had put a young midshipmite in command and sent me along with him just to keep him straight; that is how I feel about it."

"What sort of weather do you think we are going to have to-day, Tom?"

"I think the wind is going to shift, sir, and perhaps there will

be more of it. It has gone round four points to the east since I turned out before sunrise."

"And where do you think we had better go to-day, Tom?"

"Well, as the wind is now it would be first-rate for a run to Dartmouth."

"Yes, but we should have a dead-beat back, Tom; we should never get back before dark."

"No sir, but that Greek chap tells me as your father said as how there were no occasion to be back to-night, if so be as you liked to make a cruise of it."

"Did he say that? That is capital. Then let us go to Dartmouth; to-morrow we can start as early as we like so as to get back here."

"I don't reckon we shall have to beat back. According to my notion the wind will be somewhere round to the south by to-morrow morning; that will suit us nicely. Now then, sir, we will see about getting sail on her."

As soon as they began to throw the sail-covers off, Marco came on deck and lent a hand, and in the course of three minutes the sails were up, the mooring slipped, and the *Surf* was gliding past the end of the jetty.

"That was done in pretty good style, sir," Tom Burdett said as he took up his station by the side of Horace, who was at the tiller. "I reckon when we have had a week's practice together we shall get up sail as smartly as a man-of-war captain would want to see. I do like to see things done smart if it is only on a little craft like this, and with three of us we ought to get all her lower sail on her

in no time. That Greek chap knows what he is about. Of course he has often been out with you in the fishing-boats, but there has never been any call for him to lend a hand there, and I was quite surprised just now when he turned to at it. I only reckoned on Dick and myself, and put the Greek down as steward and cook."

"He used to work in a fishing-boat when he was a boy, Tom."

"Ah, that accounts for it! They are smart sailors, some of them Greeks, in their own craft, though I never reckoned they were any good in a square-rigged ship; but in those feluccas of theirs they ain't easy to be beaten in anything like fine weather. But they ain't dependable, none of those Mediterranean chaps are, whether they are Greeks or Italians or Spaniards, when it comes on to blow really hard, and there is land under your lee, and no port to run to. When it comes to a squeak like that they lose their nerve and begin to pray to the saints, and wring their hands, and jabber like a lot of children. They don't seem to have no sort of backbone about them. But in fine weather I allow they handle their craft as well as they could be handled. Mind your helm, sir; you must always keep your attention to that, no matter what is being said."

"Are you going to get up the topsail, Tom?"

"Not at present, sir; with this wind there will be more sea on as we get further out, and I don't know the craft yet; I want to see what her ways are afore we try her. She looks to me as if she would be stiff under canvas; but running as we are we can't judge much about that, and you have always got to be careful with these

light-draft craft. When we get to know her we shall be able to calculate what she will carry in all weathers; but there is no hurry about that. I have seen spars carried away afore now, from young commanders cracking on sail on craft they knew nothing about. This boat can run, there is no mistake about that. Look at that fishing-boat ahead of us; that is Jasper Hill's *Kitty*; she went out ten minutes afore you came down. We are overhauling her hand over hand, and she is reckoned one of the fastest craft in Seaport. But then, this craft is bound to run fast with her fine lines and shallow draft; we must wait to see how she will do when there is lots of wind."

In a couple of hours Horace was glad to hand over the tiller to the skipper as the sea had got up a good deal, and the *Surf* yawed so much before the following waves that it needed more skill than he possessed to keep her straight.

"Fetch the compass up, Dick," the skipper said; "we are dropping the land fast. Now get the mizzen off her, she will steer easier without it, and it isn't doing her much good. Do you begin to feel queer at all, Mr. Horace?"

"Not a bit," the boy laughed. "Why, you don't suppose, after rolling about in those fishing-boats when they are hanging to their nets, that one would feel this easy motion."

"No; you would think not, but it don't always follow. I have seen a man, who had been accustomed to knock about all his life in small craft, as sick as a dog on board a frigate, and I have seen the first lieutenant of a man-of-war knocked right over while

lying off a bar on boat service. One gets accustomed to one sort of motion, and when you get another quite different it seems to take your innards all aback."

The run to Dartmouth was quickly made, and to Horace's delight they passed several large ships on their way.

"Yes, she is going well," Tom Burdett said when he expressed his satisfaction; "but if the wind was to get up a bit more it would be just the other way. We have got quite as much as we want, while they could stand a good bit more. A small craft will generally hold her own in a light wind, because why, she carries more sail in proportion to her tonnage. When the big ship has got as much as she can do with, the little one has to reef down and half her sails are taken off her. Another thing is, the waves knock the way out of a small craft, while the weight of a big one takes her through them without feeling it. Still I don't say the boat ain't doing well, for she is first-rate, and we shall make a very quick passage to port."

Running up the pretty river, they rounded to, head to wind, dropped the anchor a short distance from a ship of war, and lowered and stowed their sails smartly. Then Horace went below to dinner. It had been ready for some little time, but he had not liked leaving the deck, for rolling, as she sometimes did, it would have been impossible to eat comfortably. As soon as he dined, the others took their meal in the fo'castle, Marco having insisted on waiting on him while at his dinner. When they had finished, Marco and Dick rowed Horace ashore. The lad took the boat

back to the yacht, while the other two strolled about the town for a couple of hours, and then went off again.

The next day the *Surf* fully satisfied her skipper as to her weatherly qualities. The wind was, as he had predicted, nearly south-east, and there was a good deal of sea on. Before getting up anchor, the topmast was lowered, two reefs put in the mainsail and one in the mizzen, and a small jib substituted for that carried on the previous day. Showers of spray fell on the deck as they put out from the mouth of the river; but once fairly away she took the waves easily, and though sometimes a few buckets of water tumbled over her bows and swashed along the lee channels, nothing like a green sea came on board. Tom Burdett was delighted with her.

"She is a beauty and no mistake," he said enthusiastically. "There is many a big ship will be making bad weather of it today; she goes over it like a duck. After this, Mr. Horace, I sha'n't mind what weather I am out in her. I would not have believed a craft her size would have behaved so well in a tumble like this. You see this is more trying for her than a big sea would be. She would take it easier if the waves were longer, and she had more time to take them one after the other. That is why you hear of boats living in a sea that has beaten the life out of a ship. A long craft does not feel a short choppy sea that a small one would be putting her head into every wave: but in a long sea the little one has the advantage. What do you think of her, sir?"

"She seems to me to heel over a long way, Tom."

"Yes, she is well over; but you see, even in the puffs she doesn't go any further. Every vessel has got what you may call her bearing. It mayn't take much to get her over to that; but when she is there it takes a wonderful lot to bring her any further. You see there is a lot of sail we could take off her yet, if the wind were to freshen. We could get in another reef in the main-sail, and stow her mizzen and foresail altogether. She would stand pretty nigh a hurricane with that canvas."

It was four o'clock in the afternoon before the *Surf* entered the harbour. Horace was drenched with spray, and felt almost worn out after the struggle with the wind and waves; when he landed his knees were strangely weak, but he felt an immense satisfaction with the trip, and believed implicitly Tom Burdett's assertion that the yacht could stand any weather.

CHAPTER III
THE WRECK

THOSE were glorious holidays for Horace Beveridge. He was seldom at home; sometimes two of his cousins, the Hendons, accompanied him in his trips, and they were away for three or four days at a time. Three times Mr. Beveridge with Zaimes went out for a day's sail, and Horace was pleased to see that his father really enjoyed it, talking but little, but sitting among some cushions Zaimes arranged for him astern, and basking in the bright sun and fresh air. That he did enjoy it was evident from the fact that, instead of having the yacht laid up at the end of the holidays, Mr. Beveridge decided to keep her afloat, and retained Tom Burdett's services permanently.

"Do you think, Tom, we shall get any sailing in the winter holidays?"

"We are sure to, sir, if your father has not laid her up by that time. There are plenty of days on this coast when the sailing is as pleasant in winter as it is in summer. The harbour is a safe one though it is so small, and I don't see any reason why she shouldn't be kept afloat. Of course we shall have to put a stove in the cabin to make it snug; but with that, a good thick pea-jacket, warm gloves, and high boots, you would be as right as a nail."

And so at Christmas and through the next summer holidays

Horace enjoyed almost constant sailing. He was now thoroughly at home in the boat, could steer without the supervision of the skipper, and was as handy with the ropes as Dick himself.

"This is the best job I ever fell into, Mr. Horace," Tom Burdett said at the end of the second summer. "Your father pays liberal; and as for grub, when that Greek is on board a post-captain could not want better. It is wonderful how that chap does cook, and he seems downright to like it. Then you see I have got a first-rate crew. Dick is as good as a man now; I will say for the Greek, he is a good sailor as well as a good cook; and then you see you have got a deal bigger and stronger than you were a year ago, and are just as handy either at the tiller or the sheets as a man would be, so we are regular strong-handed, and that makes a wonderful difference in the comfort on a craft."

That summer they sailed up to Portsmouth, and cruised for a week inside the Isle of Wight, and as Horace had one of his school-fellows spending the holidays with him, he enjoyed himself to the fullest of his capacity. During the holidays Horace did not see much of his father, who, quite content that the boy was enjoying himself, and gaining health and strength, went on in his own way, and only once went out with him during his stay at home, although, as Marco told him, he generally went out once a week at other times.

The first morning after his return, at the following Christmas, Horace did not as usual get up as soon as it was light. The rattle of the window and the howl of the wind outside sufficed to tell

him that there would be no sailing that day. Being in no hurry to move, he sat over breakfast longer than usual, talking to Zaimes of what had happened at home and in the village since he last went away. His father was absent, having gone up to town a week before, and Horace had, on his arrival, found a letter from him, saying that he was sorry not to be there for his return, but that he found he could not get through the work on which he was engaged for another two days; he should, however, be down at any rate by Christmas-eve.

After breakfast Horace went out and looked over the sea. The wind was almost dead on shore, blowing in such violent gusts that he could scarce keep his feet. The sky was a dull lead colour, the low clouds hurrying past overhead. The sea was covered with white breakers, and the roar of the surf, as it broke on the shore, could be heard even above the noise of the wind. Putting on his pea-jacket and high boots, he went down to the port. As it had been specially constructed as a shelter against south-westerly winds, with the western pier overlapping the other, the sea did not make a direct sweep into it; but the craft inside were all rolling heavily in the swell.

"How are you, Tom? It is a wild day, isn't it?"

"Don't want to see a worse, sir. Glad to see you back again, Mr. Horace. Quite well, I hope?"

"First-rate, Tom. It is a nuisance this gale the first day of coming home. I have been looking forward to a sail. I am afraid there is no chance of one to-day?"

"Well, sir, I should say they would take us and send us all to the loonatic asylum at Exeter if they saw us getting ready to go out. Just look at the sea coming over the west pier. It has carried away a bit of that stone wall at the end."

"Yes. I didn't really think of going out, Tom, though I suppose if we had been caught out in it we should have managed somehow."

"We should have done our best, in course," the sailor said, "and I have that belief in the boat that I think she might weather it; but I would not take six months' pay to be out a quarter of an hour."

"What would you do, Tom, if you were caught in a gale like this?"

"If there weren't land under our lee I should lay to, sir, under the storm-jib and a try-sail. Maybe I would unship the main-sail with the boom and gaff, get the top-mast on deck and lash that to them; then make a bridle with a strong rope, launch it overboard, lower all sail, and ride to that; that would keep us nearer head on to the sea than we could lie under any sail. That is what they call a floating anchor. I never heard of a ship being hove-to that way; but I was out on boat service in the Indian Ocean when we were caught in a heavy blow, and the lieutenant who was in charge made us lash the mast and sails and oars together and heave them overboard, and we rode to them right through the gale. We had to bale a bit occasionally, but there was never any danger, and I don't think we should have lived through it any other way. I made

a note of it at the time, and if ever I am caught in the same way again that is what I shall do, and what would be good for a boat would be good for a craft like the *Surf*."

This conversation was carried on with some difficulty, although they were standing under the lee of the wall of a cottage.

"She rolls about heavily, Tom."

"She does that, sir. It is lucky we have got our moorings in the middle of the harbour, and none of the fishing-boats are near enough to interfere with her. You see most of them have got their sails and nets rolled up as fenders, but in spite of that they have been ripping and tearing each other shocking. There will be jobs for the carpenter for some time to come. Five or six of them have torn away their bulwarks already."

After waiting down by the port for an hour Horace returned to the house. When luncheon was over he was just about to start again for the port, when Marco said to him:

"Dick has just been in, sir. There is going to be a wreck. There are a lot of fishermen gathered on the cliff half a mile away to the right. They say there is a ship that will come ashore somewhere along there."

"Come on, then, Marco. Did you hear whether they thought that anything could be done?"

"I did not hear anything about it. I don't think they know where she will go ashore yet."

In a few minutes they reached the group of fishermen standing on the cliff. It was a headland beyond which the land fell away,

forming a bay some three miles across. A large barque was to be seen some two miles off shore. She was wallowing heavily in the seas, and each wave seemed to smother her in spray. Tom Burdett was among the group, and Horace went up to him at once.

"What's to prevent her from beating off, Tom? She ought to be able to work out without difficulty."

"So she would at ordinary times," the skipper said; "but she is evidently a heavy sailer and deep laden. She could do it now if they could put more sail on her, but I expect her canvas is all old. You see her topsails are all in ribbons. Each of them seas heaves her bodily to leeward. She is a doomed ship, sir, there ain't no sort of doubt about that; the question is, Where is she coming ashore?"

"Will it make much difference, Tom?"

"Well, it might make a difference if her master knew the coast. The best thing he could do would be to get her round and run straight in for this point. The water is deeper here than it is in the bay, and she would get nearer ashore before she struck, and we might save a few of them if they lashed themselves to spars and her coops and such like. Deep as she is she would strike half a mile out if she went straight up the bay. The tide is nearly dead low, and in that case not a man will get ashore through that line of breakers. Then, again, she might strike near Ram's Head over there, which is like enough if she holds on as she is doing at present. The Head runs a long way out under water, and it is shallower half a mile out than it is nearer the point. There is a

clump of rocks there."

"I don't remember anything about them, Tom, and we have sailed along there a score of times."

"No, sir, we don't take no account of them in small craft, and there is a fathom and a half of water over them even in spring-tides. Springs are on now, and there ain't much above nine foot just now; and that craft draws two fathom and a half or thereabouts, over twelve foot anyhow. But it don't make much difference; wherever she strikes she will go to pieces in this sea in a few minutes."

"Surely there is something to be done, Tom?"

"Some of us are just going down to get ropes and go along the shore, Mr. Horace; but Lor' bless you, one just does it for the sake of doing something. One knows well enough that it ain't likely we shall get a chance of saving a soul."

"But couldn't some of the boats go out, Tom? There would be plenty of water for them where she strikes."

"The fishermen have been talking about it, sir; but they are all of one opinion; the sea is altogether too heavy for them."

"But the *Surf* could go, couldn't she, Tom? You have always said she could stand any sea."

"Any reasonable sort of sea, Mr. Horace, but this is a downright onreasonable sort of sea for a craft of her size, and it is a deal worse near shore where the water begins to shallow than it would be out in the channel."

But though Tom Burdett spoke strongly, Horace noticed that

his tone was not so decided as when he said that the fishing-boats could not go out.

"Look here, Tom," he said, "I suppose there must be thirty hands on board that ship. We can't see them drowned without making a try to save them. We have got the best boat here on the coast. We have been out in some bad weather in her, and she has always behaved splendidly. I vote we try. She can fetch out between the piers all right from where she is moored; and if, when we get fairly out, we find it is altogether too much for her, we could put back again."

Tom made no answer. He was standing looking at the ship. He had been already turning it over in his mind whether it would not be possible for the *Surf* to put out. He had himself an immense faith in her sea-going qualities, and believed that she might be able to stand even this sea.

"But you wouldn't be thinking of going in her, Mr. Horace?" he said doubtfully at last.

"Of course I should," the lad said indignantly. "You don't suppose that I would let the *Surf* go out if I were afraid to go in her myself."

"Your father would never agree to that if he were at home, sir."

"Yes, he would," Horace said. "I am sure my father would say that if the *Surf* went out I ought to go in her, and that it would be cowardly to let other people do what one is afraid to do one's self. Besides, I can swim better than either you or Dick, and should have more chance of getting ashore if she went down; but I don't

think she would go down. I am nearly sixteen now; and as my father isn't here I shall have my own way. If you say that you think there is no chance of the *Surf* getting out to her there is an end of it; but if you say that you think she could live through it, we will go."

"I think she might do it, Mr. Horace; I have been a saying so to the others. They all say that it would be just madness, but then they don't know the craft as I do."

"Well, look here, Tom, I will put it this way: if the storm had been yesterday, and my father and I had both been away, wouldn't you have taken her out?"

"Well, sir, I should; I can't say the contrary. I have always said that the boat could go anywhere, and I believe she could, and I ain't going to back down now from my opinion; but I say as it ain't right for you to go."

"That is my business," Horace said. "Marco, I am going out in the *Surf* to try to save some of the men on board that ship. Are you disposed to come too?"

"I will go if you go," the Greek said slowly; "but I don't know what your father would say."

"He would say, if there was a chance of saving life it ought to be tried, Marco. Of course there is some danger in it, but Tom thinks she can do it, and so do I. We can't stand here and see thirty men drowned without making an effort to save them. I have quite made up my mind to go."

"Very well, sir, then I will go."

Horace went back to Tom Burdett, who was talking with Dick apart from the rest.

"We will take a couple of extra hands if we can get them," the skipper said. "We shall want to be strong-handed."

He went to the group of fishermen and said:

"We are going out in the *Surf* to see if we can lend a hand to bring some of those poor fellows ashore. Young Mr. Beveridge is coming, but we want a couple more hands. Who will go with us?"

There was silence for a minute, and then a young fisherman said:

"I will go, Tom. My brother Nat is big enough to take my place in the boat if I don't come back again. I am willing to try it with you, though I doubt if the yacht will get twice her own length beyond the pier."

"And I will go with you, Tom," an older man said. "If my son Dick is going, I don't see why I should hang back."

"That will do, then, that makes up our crew. Now we had best be starting at once. That barque will be ashore in another hour, and she will go to pieces pretty near as soon as she strikes. So if we are going to do anything, there ain't no time to be lost. The rest of you had better go along with stout ropes as you was talking of just now; that will give us a bit of a chance if things go wrong."

The six hurried along the cliff and then down to the port, followed by the whole of the fishermen. A couple of trips with the dinghy took them on board.

"Now, then," Tom Burdett said to Dick's father, "we will get

the fore-sail out and rig it as a try-sail. Dick, you cut the lashings and get the main-sail off the hoops. We will leave it and the spars here; do you lend him a hand, Jack Thompson."

In five minutes the main-sail with its boom and gaff was taken off the mast and tied together. A rope was attached to them and the end flung ashore, where they were at once hauled in by the fishermen, who crowded the wharf, every soul in the village having come down at the news that the *Surf* was going out. By this time holes had been made along the leach of the sail, and by these it was lashed to the mast-hoops. The top-mast was sent down to the deck, launched overboard, and hauled ashore; the mizzen was closely reefed, but not hoisted.

"We will see how she does without it," Tom said; "she may like it and she may not. Now, up with the try-sail and jib, and stand by to cast off the moorings as she gets weigh on her; I will take the tiller. Marco, do you and Mr. Horace stand by the mizzen-halliards ready to hoist if I tell you."

As the *Surf* began to move through the water a loud cheer broke from the crowd on shore, followed by a dead silence. She moved but slowly as she was under the lee of the west pier.

"Ben, do you and the other two kick out the lower plank of the bulwark," Tom Burdett said; "we shall want to get rid of the water as fast as it comes on board."

The three men with their heavy sea-boots knocked out the plank with a few kicks.

"Now, the one on the other side," Tom said; and this was done

just as they reached the entrance between the piers. She was gathering way fast now.

"Ease off that jib-sheet, Dick," the skipper cried. "Stand by to haul it in as soon as the wind catches the try-sail."

Tom put down the helm as he reached the end of the pier, but a great wave caught her head and swept her half round. A moment later the wind in its full force struck the try-sail and she heeled far over with the blow.

"Up with the mizzen!" Tom shouted. "Give her more sheet, Dick!" As the mizzen drew, its action and that of the helm told, and the *Surf* swept up into the wind. "Haul in the jib-sheet, Dick. That is enough; make it fast. Ease off the mizzen-sheet a little, Marco! That will do. Now lash yourselves with lines to the bulwark."

For the first minute or two it seemed to Horace that the *Surf*, good boat as she was, could not live through those tremendous waves, each of which seemed as if it must overwhelm her; but although the water poured in torrents across her deck it went off as quickly through the hole in the lee bulwark, and but little came over her bow.

"She will do, sir!" Tom, close to whom he had lashed himself, shouted. "It will be better when we get a bit farther out. She is a beauty, she is, and she answers to her helm well."

Gradually the *Surf* drew out from the shore.

"Are you going to come about, Tom?"

"Not yet, sir; we must get more sea-room before we try. Like

enough she may miss stays in this sea. If she does we must wear her round."

"Now we will try," he said five minutes later. "Get those lashings off. Mr. Horace, you will have to go up to the other side when she is round. Get ready to go about!" he shouted. "I will put the helm down at the first lull. Now!"

The *Surf* came round like a top, and had gathered way on the other tack before the next big wave struck her.

"Well done!" Tom Burdett shouted joyously, and the others echoed the shout. In ten minutes they were far enough out to get a sight of the ship as they rose on the waves.

"Just as I thought," Ben muttered; "he thinks he will weather Ram's Head, and he will go ashore somewhere on that reef of rocks to a certainty."

In another five minutes the course was again changed, and the *Surf* bore directly for the barque. In spite of the small sail she carried the water was two feet up the lee planks of her deck, and she was deluged every time by the seas, which struck her now almost abeam. But everything was battened down, and they heeded the water but little.

"What do you think of her now?" Tom shouted to his brother-in-law. "Didn't I tell you she would stand a sea when your fishing-boats dare not show their noses out of the port?"

"She is a good 'un and no mistake, Tom. I did not think a craft her size could have lived in such a sea as this. You may brag about her as you like in future, and there ain't a man in Seaport as will

contradict you."

They were going through the water four feet to the barque's one, and they were but a quarter of a mile astern of her when Horace exclaimed, "She has struck!" and at the same moment her main and foremast went over the side.

"She is just about on the shallowest point of the reef," Ben Harper said. "Now, how are you going to manage this job, Tom?"

"There is only one way to do it," the skipper said. "There is water enough for us. Tide has flowed an hour and a half, and there must be two fathoms where she is lying. We must run up under her lee close enough to chuck a rope on board. Get a light rope bent on to the hawser. They must pull that on board, and we will hang to it as near as we dare."

"You must go near her stern, Tom, or we shall get stove in with the masts and spars."

"Yes, it is lucky the mizzen is standing, else we could not have gone alongside till they got rid of them all, and they would never do that afore she broke up."

Horace, as he watched the ship, expected to see her go to pieces every moment. Each wave struck her with tremendous force, sending cataracts of water over her weather gunwale and across her deck. Many of the seas broke before they reached her, and the line of the reef could be traced far beyond her by the white and broken water.

"Now, then," the skipper shouted, "I shall keep the *Surf* about twice her own length from the wreck, and then put the helm hard

down and shoot right up to her."

"That will be the safest plan, Tom. There are two men with ropes standing ready in the mizzen-shrouds."

"I shall bring her in a little beyond that, Ben, if the wreck of the mainmast isn't in the way; the mizzen may come out of her any moment, and if it fell on our decks it would be good-bye to us all."

A cheer broke from the men huddled up under shelter of the weather bulwark as the little craft swept past her stern.

"Mind the wreck!" a voice shouted.

Tom held up his hand, and a moment later put the helm down hard. The *Surf* swept round towards the ship, and her way carried her on until the end of the bowsprit was but five or six yards distant. Then Tom shouted:

"Now is your time, Dick;" and the rope was thrown right across the barque, where it was grasped by half a dozen hands.

"Haul in till you get the hawser," Dick shouted; "then make it fast." At the same moment two ropes from the ship were thrown, and caught by Marco and Ben. Tom left the tiller now and lowered the try-sail. By the time the hawser was fast on board, the *Surf* had drifted twice her own length from the ship. "That will do, Ben; make the hawser fast there." Two strong hawsers were hauled in from the ship and also made fast.

"Now you can come as soon as you like," Tom shouted. As the hawsers were fastened to the weather-side of the vessel, which was now heeled far over, it was a sharp incline down to the deck

of the *Surf*, and the crew, throwing their arms and legs round the hawsers, slid down without difficulty, the pressure of the wind on the yacht keeping the ropes perfectly taut. As the men came within reach, Tom Burdett and Ben seized them by the collars and hauled them on board.

"Any woman on board?" he asked the first.

"No, we have no passengers."

"That is a comfort. How many of a crew?"

"There were thirty-three all told, but four were killed by the falling mast, and three were washed overboard before we struck, so there are twenty-six now."

In five minutes from the ropes being thrown the captain, who was last man, was on board the yacht. The *Surf's* own hawser had been thrown off by him before he left, drawn in, and coiled down, and as soon as he was safe on board the other two hawsers were thrown off.

"Haul the jib a-weather, Dick," Tom Burdett shouted as he took the helm again. "Slack the mizzen-sheet off altogether, Marco; up with the try-sail again."

For a short distance the yacht drifted astern, and then, as the pressure of the jib began to make itself felt, her head gradually payed off. "Haul in the try-sail and jib-sheets. Let go the weather-sheet, Dick, and haul in the other. That is it, now she begins to move again."

"You are only just in time," the captain said to Tom; "she was just beginning to part in the middle when I left. You have saved

all our lives, and I thank you heartily."

"This is the owner of the yacht, sir," Tom said, motioning to Horace. "It is his doing that we came out."

"Oh, that is all nonsense, Tom! You would have come just the same if I hadn't been there."

"Well, sir, it has been a gallant rescue," the captain said. "I could hardly believe my eyes when I saw your sail coming after us, and I expected every moment to see it disappear."

"Now, captain," Tom said, "make all your men sit down as close as they can pack under the weather bulwark; we ain't in yet."

It was an anxious time as they struggled through the heavy sea on the way back, but the *Surf* stood it bravely, and the weight to windward enabled her to stand up more stiffly to her canvas. When they were abreast of the port half the men went over to the other side, the helm was put up, and she rushed towards the shore dead before the wind. The extra weight on deck told on her now, and it needed the most careful steering on Tom's part to keep her straight before the waves, several of which broke over her taffrail and swept along the deck, one of them bursting out her bulwarks at the bow.

"Get ready to haul in the sheets smartly," Tom shouted as they neared the pier.

He kept her course close to the pier-head, and as the *Surf* came abreast of it jammed down the tiller, while Ben and Dick hauled in the mizzen-sheet. A moment later she was shooting

along under the shelter of the wall, while a loud shout of welcome rose above the howling of the wind from those on shore.

"Now, sir, I will see about getting her moored," Tom said, "if you will run down and get some rum bottles out of the locker; I am pretty well frozen and these poor fellows must be nigh perished, but it would never have done to open the hatchway in that sea."

"Come down, men," Horace cried, as he dived below. "We had no time to light the fire before starting, but a glass of spirits will do you good all round."

Two or three of the fishermen rowed out as soon as the yacht was moored, and in a few minutes all were ashore.

"Now you had better run up to the house and change, Mr. Horace," Tom Burdett said. "We will look after the men here and get them some dry things, and put them up amongst us. We have done a big thing, sir, and the *Surf* has been tried as I hope she will never be tried again as long as we have anything to do with her."

"All right, Tom! Will you come up with me, captain? There is no one at home but myself, and we will manage to rig you up somehow."

The captain, however, declined the invitation, saying that he would rather see after his men and put up himself at the public-house on the beach.

"I will come up later, sir, when I have seen everything all snug here."

Horace had some difficulty in making his way up through the

crowd, for both men and women wished to shake hands with him. At last he got through, and, followed by Marco, ran up through the village to the house. Zaimes had been among the crowd assembled to see the *Surf* re-enter the port; and when Horace changed his things and came down stairs he found a bowl of hot soup ready for him.

"You have given me a nice fright, Mr. Horace," the Greek said as he entered the room. "I have been scolding Marco, I can tell you."

"It was not his fault, Zaimes. I made up my mind to go, and told him so, and he had the choice whether he would go or stay behind, and he went."

"Of course he went," Zaimes said; "but he ought to have come and told me. Then I should have gone too. How could I have met your father, do you think, if you had been drowned?"

"Well, you would not have been to blame, Zaimes, as you knew nothing about it until after we had started."

"No, you had been gone half an hour before someone from the village came up and told them in the kitchen. Then one of the servants brought me the news, and I ran down like a madman, without even stopping to get a hat. Then I found that most of the men had gone up to the cliff to keep you in sight, and I went up there and waited with them until you were nearly back again. Once or twice, as you were running in to the pier, I thought the yacht was gone."

"That was the worst bit, Zaimes. The sea came tumbling over

her stern, and I was washed off my feet two or three times. I almost thought that she was going down head-foremost. Well, I am glad I was at home this morning. I would not have missed it for anything."

"No, it is a good thing, now it is done, and something to be proud of. I am told very few of the fishermen thought that you would ever come back again."

"They didn't know the boat as we did, Zaimes. I felt sure she would go through anything; and, besides, Tom kicked out the lower plank of the bulwarks on each side, so as to help her to free herself from water as it came on board, and flush-decked as she is, there was nothing to carry away; but she hasn't taken a cupful of water down below."

In the evening the captain of the barque came up, and Horace learned from him that she was on her way from New Orleans laden with cotton.

"The ship and cargo are insured," the captain said; "and, as far as that goes, it is a good thing she is knocked into match-wood. She was a dull sailer at the best of times, and when laden you could not get her to lay anywhere near the wind. She would have done better than she did, though, hadn't her rudder got damaged somehow in the night. She ought to have clawed off the shore easy enough; but, as you saw, she sagged to leeward a foot for every foot she went for'ard. I was part-owner in her, and I am not sorry she has gone. We tried to sell her last year, but they have been selling so many ships out of the navy that we could

not get anything of a price for her; but as she was well insured, I shall get a handier craft next time. I was well off shore when the storm began to get heavy last night, and felt no anxiety about our position till the rudder went wrong. But when I saw the coast this morning, I felt sure that unless there was a change in the weather nothing could save her. Well, if it hadn't been for the loss of those seven hands, I should, thanks to you, have nothing to complain of."

Fires had been lit on the shore as night came on; but except fragments of the wreck and a number of bales of cotton nothing was recovered. In the morning the captain and crew left Seaport, two hands remaining behind to look after the cotton and recover as much as they could. Two days later Mr. Beveridge returned home.

"I saw in the paper before I left town, Horace, an account of your going out to the wreck and saving the lives of those, on board. I am very glad I was not here, my lad. I don't think I should have let you go; but as I knew nothing about it until it was all over, I had no anxiety about it, and felt quite proud of you when I read the account. The money was well laid out on that yacht, my boy. I don't say that I didn't think so before, but I certainly think so now. However, directly I read it I wrote to the Lifeboat Society and told them that I would pay for a boat to be placed here. Then there will be no occasion to tempt Providence the next time a vessel comes ashore on this part of the coast. You succeeded once, Horace, but you might not succeed another

time; and knowing what a sea sets in here in a south-westerly gale, I quite tremble now at the thought of your being out in it in that little craft."

The news that Mr. Beveridge had ordered a lifeboat for the port gave great satisfaction among the fishermen, not so much perhaps because it would enable them to go out to wrecks, as because any of their own craft approaching the harbour in bad weather, and needing assistance, could then receive it.

Horace became very popular in Seaport after the rescue, and was spoken of affectionately as the young squire, although they were unable to associate the term with his father; but the latter's interest in the sea, and his occasionally going out in the yacht, seemed to have brought him nearer to the fishing people. There had before been absolutely nothing in common between them and the studious recluse, and even the Greeks, who had before been held in marked disfavour in the village as outlandish followers, were now regarded with different eyes when it was learned that Marco had been a fisherman too in his time, and his share in the adventure of the *Surf* dissipated the last shadow of prejudice against them.

The weather continued more or less broken through the whole of the holidays, and Horace had but little sailing. He spent a good deal of his time over at his cousins', rode occasionally after the hounds with them, and did some shooting. A week after coming home his father had again gone up to town, and remained there until after Horace had returned to Eton. He was,

the lad observed, more abstracted even than usual, but was at the same time restless and unsettled. He looked eagerly for the post, and received and despatched a large number of letters. Horace supposed that he must be engaged in some very sharp and interesting controversy as to a disputed reading, or the meaning of some obscure passage, until the evening before he went away his father said:

"I suppose, Horace, you are following with interest the course of events in Thessaly?"

"Well, father, we see the papers of course. There seems to be a row going on there; they are always fighting about something. From what I could understand of it, Ali Pasha of Janina has revolted against the Sultan, and the Turks are besieging him. What sort of a chap is he? He is an Albanian, isn't he?"

"Yes, with all the virtues and vices of his race – ambitious, avaricious, revengeful, and cruel, but brave and astute. He has been the instrument of the Porte in breaking down the last remnants of independence in the wide districts he rules. As you know, very many of the Christian and Mussulman villages possessed armed guards called armatoli, who are responsible not only for the safety of the village, but for the security of the roads; the defence of the passes was committed to them, and they were able to keep the numerous bands of brigands within moderate bounds. This organization Ali Pasha set himself to work to weaken as soon as he came into power. He played off one party against the other – the Mussulmans against the Christians,

the brigands against the armatoli, one powerful chief against another. He crushed the Suliots, who possessed a greater amount of independence, perhaps, than any of the other tribes, and who, it must be owned, were a scourge to all their neighbours. He took away all real power from the armatoli, crippled the Mussulman communities as well as weakened the Christian villages; inspired terror in the whole population by the massacre of such as resisted his will, and those whom he could not crush by force he removed by poison; finally, he became so strong that it was evident his design was to become altogether independent of the Sultan. But he miscalculated his power, his armies fled almost without striking a blow; his sons, who commanded them, are either fugitives or prisoners; and now we hear that he is besieged in his fortress, which is capable of withstanding a very long siege."

"He must be a thorough old scoundrel, I should say, father."

"Yes," Mr. Beveridge assented somewhat unwillingly. "No doubt he is a bad man, Horace; but he might have been – he may even yet be, useful to Greece. When it first became evident that matters would come to a struggle between him and the Porte he issued proclamations calling upon the Christians to assist him and make common cause against the Turks, and specially invited Greece to declare her independence of Turkey, and to join him."

"But I should say, father, the Albanians would be even worse masters than the Turks."

"No doubt, Horace, no doubt. The Turks, I may own, have not on the whole been hard masters to the Christians. They are much

harder upon the Mussulman population than upon the Christian, as the latter can complain to the Russians, who, as their co-religionists, claim to exercise a special protection over them. But, indeed, all the Christian powers give protection, more or less, to the Christian Greeks, who, especially in the Morea, have something approaching municipal institutions, and are governed largely by men chosen by themselves. Therefore the pashas take good care not to bring trouble on themselves or the Porte by interfering with them so long as they pay their taxes, which are by no means excessive; while the Mussulman part of the population, having no protectors, are exposed to all sorts of exactions, which are limited only by the fear of driving them into insurrection. Still this rebellion of Ali Pasha has naturally excited hopes in the minds of the Greeks and their friends that some results may arise from it, and no better opportunity is likely to occur for them to make an effort to shake off the yoke of the Turks. You may imagine, Horace, how exciting all this is to one who, like myself, is the son of a Greek mother, and to whom, therefore, the glorious traditions of Greece are the story of his own people. As yet my hopes are faint, but there is a greater prospect now than there has been for the last two hundred years, and I would give all I am worth in the world to live to see Greece recover her independence."

CHAPTER IV
A STARTLING PROPOSAL

AFTER Horace returned to Eton, remembering the intense interest of his father in the affairs of Greece, he read up as far as he could everything relating to late events there. That he should obtain a really fair view of the situation was impossible. The Greeks had countrymen in every commercial city in the world; they were active and intelligent, and passionately desirous of interesting Europe in their cause. Upon the other hand the Turks were voiceless. Hence Europe only heard the Greek version of the state of affairs; their wrongs were exaggerated and events distorted with an utter disregard for truth, while no whisper of the other side of the question was ever heard.

At that time the term Greek was applied to persons of Greek religion rather than of Greek nationality. The population of European Turkey, of pure Greek blood, was extremely small, while those who held the Greek form of religion were very numerous, and the influence possessed by them was even greater. The Christians were in point of intelligence, activity, and wealth superior to the Turks. They were subservient and cringing when it suited their purpose, and were as a rule utterly unscrupulous. The consequence was that they worked their way into posts of responsibility and emolument in great numbers, being selected

by the Porte in preference to the duller and less pushing Turks. In some portions of European Turkey they were all-powerful: in the Transylvanian provinces of Moldavia and Wallachia every post was held by Greeks, and there were but a few small and scattered Turkish garrisons. Yet here the population were incomparably more cruelly fleeced and ground down by their Greek masters than were the Christians in the more Turkish provinces.

In Servia and parts of Bulgaria the numbers were more even, but here also the Greeks held most of the responsible posts. In Greece proper the Christians vastly predominated, while in Northern Thessaly the numbers of the Christians and Mussulmans were about the same.

The Greek metropolitan of Constantinople and his council exercised a large authority by means of the bishops and priests over the whole Christian population, while for some time a secret society named the Philike Hetaireia had been at work preparing them for a rising. It was started originally among the Greeks at Odessa, and was secretly patronized by Russia, which then, as since, had designs upon Constantinople.

The first outbreak had occurred in March, 1821, when Prince Alexander Hypsilantes, who had been an officer in the Russian service, crossed the Pruth, and was joined by the Greek officials and tax-gatherers of the Transylvanian provinces. He was a vain, empty-headed, and utterly incompetent adventurer. A small band of youths belonging to good families enrolled themselves under the title of the Sacred Band, and the army also joined

him, but beyond the cold-blooded massacre of a considerable number of Turks and their families he did absolutely nothing. The main body of the population, who bitterly hated their Greek oppressors, remained quiescent. Russia, seeing his utter incapacity, repudiated him, and after keeping alive the hopes of his followers by lying proclamations Hypsilantes secured his own safety by flight across the Austrian frontier when the Turkish army approached. The five hundred young men of the Sacred Battalion fought nobly and were killed almost to a man; but with the exception of a band of officers who refused to surrender, and shut themselves up in Skulani and in the monastery of Seko and there defended themselves bravely until the last, no resistance was offered to the Turks, and the insurrection was stamped out by the beginning of June. But in the meantime Greece proper was rising, and though the news came but slowly Horace saw that his father's hopes were likely to be gratified, and that the Greeks would probably strike a blow at least for national independence, and he more than shared the general excitement that the news caused among educated men throughout Europe.

The summer holidays passed uneventfully. Horace took long cruises in the *Surf*. He saw but little of his father, who was constantly absent in London. August came, and Horace returned from his last trip and was feeling rather depressed at the thought of going back to school in two days' time. He met Zaimes as he entered the house.

"Is my father back from town, Zaimes?"

"Yes, Mr. Horace, and he told me to tell you as soon as you returned that he wished you to go to him at once in the library."

It was so unlike his father to want to see him particularly about anything, that Horace went in in some wonder as to what could be the matter. Mr. Beveridge was walking up and down the room.

"Is your mind very much set on going back to Eton, Horace?" he asked abruptly.

"I don't know, father," Horace said, taken somewhat aback at the question. "Well, I would very much rather go back, father, than be doing nothing here. I am very fond of sailing as an amusement, but one would not want to be at it always. Of course if there is anything really to do it would be different."

"Well, I think there is something else to do, Horace. You know my feeling with regard to this insurrection in Greece."

"Yes, father," Horace, who was indeed rather tired of the subject, replied.

"Well, you see, my boy, they have now resisted the Turks for some five months and have gained rather than lost ground. That seems to show decisively that this is no mere hasty rising, but that the people are in earnest in the determination to win their liberty. Now that I am thoroughly convinced of this my course is clear, and I have determined upon going out to give such assistance as I can."

Horace was astounded. "Going out to fight, father?"

"Yes, if necessary to fight, but I can be of more use than in merely fighting. I have never, since I came into the property some

twenty-four years ago, spent anything like a third of my income. Indeed, since my return from Greece my expenses here have been but a few hundreds a year. I have always hoped that I should have the opportunity of devoting the savings to help Greece to regain her independence. That moment has come. At first I feared that the movement would speedily die out; but the letters that I receive show that it is increasing daily, and indeed that the Greeks have placed themselves beyond the hope of forgiveness by, I am sorry to say, the massacre of large numbers of Turks. It is, of course, to be regretted that so glorious a cause should have been sullied by such conduct; but one cannot be surprised. Slaves are always cruel, and after the wrongs they have suffered, it could hardly be expected that they would forego their revenge when the opportunity at last came. However, the important point of the matter is, that there can be no drawing back now.

"For better or for worse the revolution has begun. Now, Horace, you are but sixteen, but you are a sensible lad, and I have stood so much apart from other men from my boyhood that I am what you might call unpractical; while I take it that you from your temperament, and from being at a great public school, are eminently practical, therefore, I shall be glad to hear your opinion as to how this thing had best be set about. I take it, of course, that you are as interested in the struggle as I am."

"Well, not so interested perhaps, father. I feel, of course, that it is a horrible thing that a people like the Greeks, to whom we all owe so much, should be kept in slavery by the Turks, who have

never done any good to mankind that I know of, and I should certainly be glad to do everything in my power to help; but of course it all comes so suddenly upon me that just at present I don't see what had best be done."

"I heard from my friends in London that many young men are already starting to assist the Greeks. What they will need most is not men, but arms and money, so at least my Greek friends write me."

"Well, father," Horace said bluntly; "I should say you had much better give them arms than money. I have been reading the thing up as much as I could since it began, and as far as I can see the upper class Greeks, the men who, I suppose, will be the leaders, are a pretty bad lot – quite as bad, I should say, as the Turkish pashas."

"Yes, I quite agree with you there, Horace. You see in a country that is enslaved, political and other careers are closed, and the young men devote themselves to making money. You see that in the history of the Jews. All through the middle ages they were everywhere persecuted, every avenue to honourable employment was closed to them, consequently they devoted themselves to making money, and have been the bankers of kings for hundreds of years. No doubt it is the same thing with the Greeks; but the mass of the people are uncorrupted, and with the deeds of their great forefathers always before them they will, I am sure, show themselves worthy of their name."

"No doubt, father; I think so too."

"You don't mind my spending this money on the Cause, Horace," his father asked anxiously, "because, though it is my savings, it would in the natural course of things come to you some day."

"Not at all, father; it is, as you say, your savings, and having at heart, as you have, the independence of Greece, I think it cannot be better laid out than assisting it. But I should certainly like it to be laid out for that, and not to go into the pockets of a lot of fellows who think more of feathering their own nests than of the freedom of Greece. So I should say the best thing would be to send out a cargo of arms and ammunition, as a beginning; other cargoes can go out as they are required. And you might, of course, take a certain amount of money to distribute yourself as you see it is required. I hope you mean to take me with you."

"I think so, Horace. You are young to do any fighting at present, but you will be a great support and comfort to me."

Horace could scarcely resist a smile, for he thought that if there was any fighting to be done he would be of considerably more use than his father.

"Well, I suppose the next thing, Horace, will be to go up to town to inquire about arms. My Greek friends there will advise me as to their purchase, and so on."

"Yes, father," Horace said a little doubtfully; "but as it is late now I think, if you don't mind, I will get some supper and turn in. I will think it over. I think we had better talk it over quietly and quite make up our minds what is best to be done before we

set about anything; a few hours won't make any difference."

"Quite so, Horace; it is no use our beginning by making mistakes. It is a great comfort to me, my boy, to have you with me. At any rate I will write to-night to your headmaster and say that circumstances will prevent your return to Eton this term."

Horace went into the next room, had some supper, and then went thoughtfully up to bed. The idea of going out to fight for the independence of Greece was one which at any other time he would have regarded with enthusiasm, but under the present circumstances he felt depressed rather than excited. He admired his father for his great learning, and loved him for the kindness of his intentions towards him; but he had during the last two or three years been more and more impressed with the fact that in everything unconnected with his favourite subject his father was, as he said himself, utterly unpractical. He left the management of his estate to the steward, the management of the house to Zaimes, both happily, as it chanced, honest and capable men; but had they been rogues they could have victimized him to any extent. That his father, who lived in his library and who was absorbed in the past, should plunge into the turmoil of an insurrection was an almost bewildering idea. He would be plundered right and left, and would believe every story told him; while as for his fighting, the thing seemed absolutely absurd. Horace felt that the whole responsibility would be on his shoulders, and this seemed altogether too much for him. Then the admission of his father that abominable massacres had been perpetrated by the Greeks

shook his enthusiasm in the Cause.

"I should be glad to see them free and independent, and all that," he said, "but I don't want to be fighting side by side with murderers. Among such fellows as these, my father, who is a great deal more Greek than any Greek of the present day, I should say, would be made utterly miserable. He admits that the upper class are untrustworthy and avaricious. Now he says that the lower class have massacred people in cold blood. It does not affect him much in the distance, but if he were in the middle of it all it would be such a shock to him that I believe it would kill him. Besides, fancy his going long marches in the mountains, sleeping in the wet, and all that sort of thing, when he has never walked half a mile as far back as I can remember."

He lay tossing about for a couple of hours, and then sat suddenly up in bed. "That's it," he exclaimed, "that is a splendid idea. What a fool I was not to think of it before! If William Martyn is but at home that would be the thing above all."

Then he lay down, thought the matter over for another half-hour, and then went quietly off to sleep.

"Well, Horace, have you been turning the matter over in your mind?" his father asked as soon as they sat down to breakfast.

"I have, father, and I have hit upon a plan that seems to me the very best thing possible in all ways."

"What is it, Horace?"

"Well, father, it seems to me that if we take out war material to Athens it will very likely get into wrong hands altogether, and

when arms are really wanted by the people of the mountains, and I expect that it is they who will do the fighting and not the people of the towns, there won't be any to give them. The next thing is, if we go to Athens, and people know that you are a rich Englishman, you will get surrounded by sharks, and before you have time to know who is to be trusted, or anything about it, all your money will be gone. Then I am sure that you could not in that way take any active part in helping to free Greece, you never could stand marches in the mountains and sleeping in the open air, bad food, and all that sort of thing, after living the quiet indoor life you have for so many years. I know you would stick to it, father, as long as you could, but it seems to me you would be sure to get knocked up."

"Yes, I ought to have prepared for this, Horace. It would have been better for me to have taken regular exercise every day, even if I did get through a little less work. Still I am stronger than you think. I am only forty-four, and a man at forty-four ought to be able to do nearly as much as he ever could do."

"Yes, father, if he had lived an active life and exercised his muscles. I have no doubt you are just as strong in many things as other men; I never remember your being ill for a day; but I am sure you are not fit for knocking about among the mountains. What I have been thinking of is this. If you approve of it I will go over to Exmouth this morning and see if William Martyn is there. He is likely to be at home if his vessel is in port. If he is not, I will get his father to recommend some one. There must be

lots of young lieutenants on half-pay who would jump at the idea. First I should engage with Martyn if he is there, or go to the man whom his father recommended to me at Plymouth, and get him to buy for you a fast schooner or brig – one that had either been an English privateer or a captured Frenchman would be about the thing – arrange with him to be the captain and engage officers and crew, and get him to arm her with as many guns as she will carry. He would be able probably to put us into the best way of buying muskets. As such immense numbers of soldiers have been paid off, no doubt there have been great sales of muskets by government, and we might get them at a quarter the price we should have to pay for new ones. Of course we should take in ammunition in large quantities. All these mountaineers have no doubt got guns, and ammunition will be the thing most wanted of all. We could also pick up some cannon. No doubt they are to be bought for scrap iron. The Greeks will want them to arm their ships and batteries. In that way you see, father, you would have everything under your own hands. Nobody would know how many muskets you have got on board, and you could serve them out when or how they were required.

"The same with money. We could cruise about and pop into quiet places, and send arms and ammunition up into the hills. Of course directly you got out there you would put the ship under the Greek flag, and by harassing the Turks at sea we might do a hundred times more good than we could by land. There would be no fatigue and no discomfort. You would always be comfortable

on board, and could take Zaimes and Marco with you. We would take Tom Burdett as boatswain. He was boatswain in the navy, you know. If he goes I daresay Dick will also go with us."

"That is an excellent plan, Horace. It seems to meet all the difficulties, and I was really feeling uncomfortable at the thought of being mixed up in all the confusion and excitement there will, no doubt, be at Athens. It is a most happy idea. We will not lose a moment about it. I like that young fellow Martyn, and I hope you will be able to get hold of him. Let him name his own terms. I have not the least idea whether the captain of a vessel of that sort is paid five pounds a week or twenty-five. Of course it will be dangerous service, and should be liberally paid for. Well, you had better pack up your bag directly we have finished breakfast. You may be away for a week or ten days."

"I can't start to-day, father, surely."

"No! why not, Horace?"

"Because, you know, you arranged we should both go over to dine at aunt's."

"Of course, Horace; I quite forgot that. It is very annoying, but I suppose it can't be helped."

Horace laughed. "A day won't make much difference, father. I am sure aunt would be very vexed if we did not turn up. Do you mean to tell her anything about it?"

Mr. Beveridge was silent for a minute. "I don't think there is any occasion; do you, Horace?" he said doubtfully. "She might raise objections, you know; though that, of course, would make

no difference; arguments are always to be avoided, and your aunt was always a very positive woman."

"I think it is just as well to say nothing about it," Horace said with a slight smile, for he felt sure that his aunt would oppose the project tooth and nail if she were aware of it, and that she would be backed by the whole strength of his mother's family. He did not say this, but went on, "It is a nuisance being asked a tremendous lot of questions about things, especially when you don't know much about them yourself. No, I think, father, we had better keep it quite quiet. It will be time enough to write a line to aunt and tell her that we are off, the last thing before we get up anchor."

"I agree with you, Horace, so we will say nothing about this trip of ours. Well, as it seems you can't go to-day, you had better make your arrangements to catch the coach to-morrow morning. I will sign a dozen blank cheques, which you can fill up as required. Of course whoever accepts the post of captain will know all that will be wanted for the ship, and if he doesn't know himself about the arms and ammunition he may be able to introduce you to some officer who does. Will you take Marco with you?"

"No, I don't think so, father. I don't see that he would be any use, and having a man going about with you looks as if one was being taken care of."

Horace caught the coach and alighted at Exmouth, and hurried to the revenue officer's house.

"Is Mr. William Martyn in?" he asked the servant who opened the door.

"He is not in just at present, sir; I think he went down to the river."

"How long has he been home?" Horace asked, delighted at the news.

"He only got in last week, sir; his ship got wrecked, and Mr. William turned up without any clothes, or anything except just what he stood up in."

"Hurrah!" Horace exclaimed, to the astonishment of the woman, and then without another word ran down to the wharfs. He soon saw the figure he was in search of talking to two or three old sailors.

"Hullo, youngster!" Martyn said in surprise, as Horace came up, "where have you sprung from?"

"Off the top of the coach."

"I suppose so. I have been having a bit of bad luck and lost my ship. We were wrecked off St. Catharine's Point, at the back of the Isle of Wight, and there were only seven of us saved among a crew of thirty-five all told."

"Yes, I heard from your servant you had been wrecked," Horace said. "She didn't say that any lives had been lost; but I must have astonished her, now I think of it, for I said 'Hurrah!' when she told me."

"What did you say hurrah for?" the mate asked gruffly.

"Because I wanted to find you here, and was so pleased that

you were not going to sail away again directly."

"No," Will Martyn said gloomily, "it is bad enough to have lost one's kit and everything, and now I shall have to look about for another berth, for I think the vessel was only partly insured, and as the owners only have one or two ships I expect it will hit them rather hard, and that they won't have another craft ready for some time, so it will be no use my waiting for that."

The sailors had moved away when Horace came up, so that he was able at once to open the subject of his visit to the mate.

"Well, that was just what I was hoping when I heard that you were wrecked, Will, for I had come over on purpose to see if you were disengaged and disposed to take a new berth."

"What! is your father going in for a big yacht instead of the *Surf*, Horace?"

"Well, not exactly, but something of that sort. You know I told you how enthusiastic he was about Greece and everything connected with it. Of course he is tremendously excited about this rising out there, and he is going to send out a lot of arms and ammunition. So we have talked it over and agreed that the best thing to do would be to buy a fast schooner or brig, fit her up as a privateer, fill her with arms and ammunition, and go out, hoist the Greek flag, and do what we can to help them against the Turks. Of course we thought at once of you to carry out the thing, and to act as captain. What do you say to it?"

"The very thing I should like, Horace; nothing could suit me better. Mind I am not giving any opinion as to whether it is a

wise thing on the part of your father; that is his business. But as far as I am concerned I am your man."

"My father said you were to name your own terms. He didn't know anything about what the pay should be, but he particularly said that as it would be a service of danger it ought to be paid for liberally."

"Of course there will be danger," the mate said, "but that adds to the pleasure of it. If I were a married man of course I should have to look at it in a different light; but as I ain't, and have no idea of getting spliced, the danger does not trouble me. I have been getting eight pounds a month as third mate, and I should have got ten next voyage, as I was going second. As I shall be skipper on board this craft of yours, suppose we say twelve pounds a month."

"My father expected to pay more than that a good deal," Horace said; "and as everything will depend upon you it would not be at all fair to pay the same sort of pay as if you were merely sailing in a merchant's ship. However, he will write to you about it. There will be a tremendous lot to do before we start, and we want to be off as soon as possible. There is a ship to buy and fit out, and officers to get, and a crew. Then we want to find out where we can buy muskets. It seemed to me that as government must have been selling great quantities, we should be able to get them pretty cheap."

"I could find out all about that at the port where we fit out," Will Martyn said. "As for cannon, they can be had almost for

taking away. There are thousands and thousands of them to be had at every port. Five years ago every vessel went to sea armed. Now even the biggest craft only carry a gun or two for firing signals with, unless, of course, they are going to sail in Eastern waters. Well, this is a big job – a different sort of order altogether to buying the *Surf* for you. I hope it will turn out as well."

"Of course Plymouth will be the best port to go to."

"I don't know. During the war certainly either that or Portsmouth would have been the best. Vessels were constantly coming in with prizes; but now, I should say either London or Liverpool would be the best for picking up the sort of craft we want. Still, as Plymouth is so much the nearest here, I should say we had best try there first. Then if we can't find what we want we will take a passage by coaster to Portsmouth, if the wind is favourable; if not, go by coach. But how are you off for money, because I am at dead low-water? I have got a few pounds owing to me, but I can't handle that till I get to London."

"I have twenty pounds," Horace said. "We didn't think, when I started, of going farther than Plymouth; but I have some blank cheques for paying for things."

"Twenty pounds ought to be ample; but if we find at Plymouth we want more I can easily get one cashed for you. I know plenty of people there."

"Well, when can you start, Will? My father is anxious not to lose a moment."

"I can start in ten minutes if my father is at home. I should

want to have just a short chat with him; but I can do that while they are getting the chaise ready. Our best plan would be to drive to Exeter and take the evening coach going through there. There is one comes through about six o'clock. I have come down by it several times. It will take us into Plymouth by twelve o'clock; so we should gain nothing if we started earlier."

"Well, I will go to the inn," Horace said.

"No; that you won't, Horace. You come round with me. I expect dinner is ready by this time. We generally dine at one. My father went out in the cutter to look after a wreck four or five miles along the coast, and he said he did not expect to be back till between two and three; so we settled to dine at three. There is the cutter coming up the river now."

"But you would rather be with your father alone," Horace said.

"Not a bit of it. I have got nothing private to say to him, except to get him to let me draw twenty pounds from his agent to get a fresh rig-out with. He would like to see you again, especially as I am going to sail with you, and he maybe able to put us up to a few wrinkles as to getting our powder on board, and so on. Of course I have been accustomed to seeing it got in from government powder hulks. We will just walk up to the house now if you don't mind, to tell the girl to put an extra knife and fork on the table, then we will go down and meet my father when he lands."

The servant looked with such strong disapprobation upon Horace when she opened the door that he burst into a fit of

laughter. “You are thinking about my saying hurrah when I heard Mr. Martyn was wrecked?” he said. “Well, I did not exactly mean that, only I was very glad, because I thought if he had not been wrecked he could not have shipped just at present, and I wanted him very badly.”

“Yes, I am off again, Hesba,” the mate said. “Going right away this afternoon. That is a bit of luck, isn’t it? I have just come back to tell you to put another knife and fork upon the table, as Mr. Beveridge is going to dine with us; and if you have time to kill a fatted calf, or anything of that sort, do so.”

“Lor’, Mr. William, you know very well there ain’t no fatted calf, and if there was it would take ever so long to kill it and get some meat cooked, if it was only cutlets.”

“Well,” Martyn laughed, “never mind the calf, Hesba; but if dinner is short run straight down to the butcher’s and get a good big tender steak, and look sharp about it, for my father will be here in a quarter of an hour.”

As Horace had seen Captain Martyn (as he was by courtesy called, being in command of a revenue cutter, although only in fact a lieutenant) several times while fitting out the *Surf* the officer knew him as he saw him standing at the top of the stairs with his son.

“Well, Master Beveridge,” he said as he climbed up the stairs, “I haven’t seen you since you sailed away in that little craft. I hear you did a brave deed in her, going out in that gale to rescue the crew of the *Caledon*. It is lucky you caught Will in.” He was by

this time ashore and shaking hands heartily with Horace.

"He has come to take me away, father," Will said. "Mr. Beveridge is going to get a fast craft to carry out arms and ammunition to the Greeks, and he has offered me the command."

"I should not mind going myself, Will. I am sorry you are off so soon; but you are likely to see some stirring scenes over there. When are you going?"

"We are going to start directly we have had some dinner, father. We will order a chaise as we go along. We intend to catch the six-o'clock coach at Exeter, so as to get to Plymouth to-night. I am going to see if we can pick up a likely craft there. If not, I shall try Portsmouth and Southampton, and if they won't do, London."

"Well, that is sharp work, Will. But you have no kit to pack, so there is no difficulty about it. However, there is no time to be lost."

At a quarter to four the post-chaise was at the door, and Will Martyn and Horace started. The horses were good, and they were in plenty of time for the coach, and arrived duly in Plymouth. As soon as they had breakfasted next morning they started out and went first to the shipping office of a firm known to Will Martyn, and there got a list of ships lying for sale in the port.

"What sort of craft are you looking for, Martyn?" the shipping agent said. "We have a dozen at least on our own books, and you may as well give us a turn before you look at any others."

"I want a schooner or a brig – I don't much care which it is

– of about a couple of hundred tons. She must be very fast and weatherly; the sort of craft that was used as a privateer in the war; or as a slaver; or something of that kind."

"I have only one craft that answers to that description," the agent said; "but I should say that she was what you want. She was sent home from the west coast of Africa six months ago, as a prize. Of course she was sold, and was bought by a man I know. After he had got her he found she had not enough carrying power for his business. She never was built for cargo, and would be an expensive vessel to work, for she has a large sail spread, and would want so strong a crew to work her that she would never pay. He bought her cheap for that reason, and will be glad to get the price he gave for her, or if the point were pressed even to make some loss to get her off his hands. They call her a hundred and fifty, and she looks a big vessel for that size. But if she had eighty tons in her hold it would be as much as she could carry with comfort."

"That sounds promising," Martyn said. "At any rate we will begin by having a look at her. Where is she lying?"

"About three miles up the river. Tide is making; so we could run up there in a sailing boat in half an hour. I will go with you myself. There is a care-taker on board. Are you buying her for yourself, Martyn?"

The mate laughed.

"As I have not captured an heiress I am not likely to become a ship owner. No; Mr. Beveridge's father is fond of the sea, and

has commissioned me to buy a comfortable craft that shall be at once fast and seaworthy, and I am going to command her."

"Well, I don't think you would find anything that would suit your purpose better than the *Creole*. She would make a splendid yacht for a gentleman who had a fancy for long cruises."

"What is her age?" the mate asked.

"Well, of course we can't tell exactly; but the dockyard people thought she couldn't be above four or five years old. That is what they put her down as when they sold her. At any rate she is sound, and in as good condition as if she had just come off the stocks. She had been hulled in two or three places in the fight when she was captured, but she was made all right in the dockyard before she was put up for sale. All her gear, sails, and so on are in excellent condition."

"Where are they?"

"They are on board. As we had a care-taker it was cheaper to leave them there and have good fires going occasionally to keep them dry than it would have been to stow them away on shore."

There was a brisk breeze blowing, and in less than the half hour mentioned by the agent he said: "That's her lying over on the farther side."

"She looks like a slaver all over," Martyn said as he stood up to examine the long low craft. "I suppose they caught her coming out of a river, for she would show her heels, I should guess, to any cruiser that was ever built, at any rate in light winds. If she is as good as she looks she is just the thing for us."

When they reached the vessel they rowed round her before going on board.

"She is like a big *Surf*," Will said to Horace; "finer in her lines, and lighter. She ought to sail like a witch. I see she carried four guns on each side."

"Yes, and a long pivot-gun. They are down in the hold now. She was sold just as she stood; but I suppose they will be of no use to you."

"Some of them may be," Martyn said carelessly. "If we go cruising up the Mediterranean it is just as well to have a gun or two on board. Now let us look at her accommodation.

"Yes, she is a very roomy craft on deck," he went on as he stepped on board. "She has a wonderful lot of beam, much more than she looks to have when you see her on the water, owing to her lines being so fine."

"She has lots of head-room here," Horace said as they went below. "I thought that slavers had very low decks."

"So they have," the mate said. "I expect when she took a cargo on board they rigged up a deck of planks here so as to have two tiers for the slaves; that would give them about three foot three to each tier."

They spent over two hours on board. Will Martyn examined everything most carefully, prodding the planks and timbers with his knife, going down into the hold and prying into the state of the timbers there, getting into the boat, to examine the stern-post and rudder, and afterwards overhauling a good deal of the gear.

The inspection was in all respects satisfactory.

"She will do if the price will do," he said. "How much do they want for her?"

"He paid fifteen hundred at the dockyard sale," the agent said; "that is ten pound a ton, with all her gear, fittings, and so on, thrown in. As you see, there is the cabin furniture, and so on, all complete, except the paint. There needn't be a penny laid out on her."

"Well, how much will he take off?" Martyn said. "Fifteen hundred was anyone's price, and as she don't suit him, she won't suit many people. If he is likely to have her on his hands any time, eating her head off and losing value, he ought to be glad to take anything near what he gave for her. Well, frankly, how much will he take off? Business is business. I have admitted the boat will suit me; now what is the limit you are authorized to take?"

"He will take two hundred less. It is a ridiculously low price."

"Of course it is," Will agreed. "But shipping at present is a drug in the market, and this ship is practically fit for nothing but a yacht or the Levant trade. I expect I could get her a couple of hundred pounds cheaper if I held off. What do you think, Horace?"

"I don't think it would be fair to knock down the price lower than that," Horace said.

"It is fair to get a thing as cheap as you can. If you try to get it for less than he will sell it for you don't get it, that is all. He is not obliged to sell, and you are not obliged to buy. Still, the price is

a very reasonable one, and we will take her at that. You have full authority to sell, I suppose, without reference to your principal?"

"Yes."

"Very well, then, we will go to your office. Mr. Beveridge will give you a cheque for thirteen hundred pounds, and you shall hand over possession."

"Good. It is eleven o'clock now, Johnson," he said to the care-taker. "Here is your money up to to-night, but from twelve o'clock to-day Mr. Martyn takes possession as agent for the owners, so you will take your orders from him."

"You can go on as usual," Will said. "We will pay you from twelve o'clock, so you will make a half-day's pay by the change."

CHAPTER V
FITTING OUT

"THE cheque for the payment of the *Creole* was filled up and handed over, the agent giving a formal receipt and possession of the vessel, and undertaking to sign the necessary papers as soon as they could be drawn out.

"You are evidently lucky about ships," William Martyn said as he left the agent's office with Horace. "You have got a little wonder in the *Surf*, and there is no doubt about the *Creole* being a bargain. When the war was going on she would have been snapped up at double the price, and would have been cheap at that. Now the first thing to do is to get first and second mates. Directly I have got them I can put a gang of riggers on board. I will go to the Naval Club, and see the list of the officers on board the ships here. I am pretty sure to know some of them, and shall find out from them whether there are any of my old messmates down here. If they don't know of any, we might hear of men to suit at the Club. There are always plenty of men here and at Portsmouth waiting about on the chance of meeting some officer they have served under and getting him to put in a word for them at the Admiralty."

"I will walk down with you to the Club, but I won't go in with you; one is only in the way when people who know each other

are talking. And besides, Martyn, don't you think before you do anything you ought to see about your clothes?"

"Of course I ought; I never gave the matter a thought before. But I certainly could not put my foot on the quarter-deck of one of His Majesty's ships in this turn-out. No. The first thing to do is to drop into my father's agent to draw some money. Then I will go into a slop-shop and get a suit. I know a place where they keep really decent togs. A man often has to join in a hurry, and wants a fit-out at half an hour's notice. Then I can order the rest of the things at the tailor's I used to get my clothes from. 'Pon my word, now you speak of it, I am ashamed to be going out in these things. They were an old suit that I put on when bad weather set in, and they have shrunk so that the sleeves don't come half-way down to the wrists, and the trousers are up to the ankles. As a master's mate it didn't matter so very much, for masters' mates are very often out at elbows, but as commander of the *Creole* it is a different thing altogether."

Martyn was lucky in picking up the undress uniform of a lieutenant that just fitted him.

"I can let you have it at that price, because I got it a bargain," the man said. "The owner came in here a few weeks ago with a man beside him. He had just come down to join his ship, which was to sail in a few hours, and as he stepped off the coach was served with a writ by a Jew he had borrowed money of two or three years before. It was only a few pounds, but to make up the sum he had to sell some of his things, and this suit was among

them."

"And nicely you ground him down in the price, I have no doubt," Martyn growled. "However, I have got the benefit of it. Now, Horace, I can show at the Club. Just take your knife out and cut this strap off the shoulder. I can't go about as a full-fledged lieutenant, though I have passed."

They were walking up the main street when a voice exclaimed:

"Hullo, Martyn! is that you?" and a young officer shook him warmly by the hand.

"Why, Dacent, this is luck. I am glad to see you indeed. It is three years since we ran against each other last; five since we served together in the *Nonpareil*. What are you doing?"

"I am third in the flagship here. What are you doing? I met O'Connor the other day; he told me he had run across you at Malta, and that you had gone into the merchant service like so many other of our old friends."

"That was so, Dacent. It was of no use kicking my heels on shore when I hadn't the ghost of a chance of getting appointed to a ship. So I had to swallow my pride and ship in a merchantman. We were wrecked at the back of the Wight in the storm last week, and I have had the luck to get a fresh appointment, and that is what I am here for. I was just on my way to the Club to see if I could find any of my old chums. You are just the fellow to help me. But first let me introduce Mr. Beveridge. He is the son of my owner. Half an hour ago he completed the purchase of the craft that I am to command. She is a beauty. I don't know whether you

know her. She is called the *Creole*, a schooner of a hundred and fifty tons. She is lying up the river."

"I know her well enough," Dacent said, as he shook hands with Horace. "She was brought in here the week after I joined. I thought she was as pretty a looking craft as I ever set eyes on. I congratulate you, old fellow. There are not many things that you won't be able to show your heels to. But what line is she going to be in? She would make a fine craft for the Levant trade."

"That is just where we are going, Dacent, but not to trade. I will tell you what we are going to do, but it must be kept dark. I don't know whether they might not look upon it as a breach of the neutrality laws. Mr. Beveridge is an enthusiast for the cause of Greece, and we are going to take out a cargo of guns and ammunition, and then we shall hoist the Greek flag, and do a little fighting on our own account with the Turks as a Greek privateer."

"By Jove, I envy you, Martyn. That is a thousand times better than sticking in Plymouth Sound with nothing to do but to see the men holy-stone the deck, and fetching and carrying messages. Now, what is it I can do for you?"

"Well, in the first place, I want a couple of officers; for choice, I would have one who has passed, and could take the command in case anything happened to me. I don't care whether the second is a mate or a midshipman who has pretty nearly served his time."

"I know just the man for you, for your first. There is Miller – you remember him?"

"Of course; I was with him in the *Minerva* frigate in the West

Indies. He was a capital fellow. Is he to be had?"

"Yes; I saw him only yesterday. He has been two years out of a berth, and no chance of getting a ship, and he was looking out for a berth on board a merchantman, but he had not heard of one when I saw him. He gave me his address; here it is – the Anchor Inn; it is a little place not far from the dock gates. I expect Jim has no money to spare. His father is a clergyman near Falmouth. I asked him why he didn't look for a ship there. He laughed, and said he didn't mind shipping into the merchant service anywhere else; but he shouldn't like to do it so near home, after swaggering about there in the king's uniform."

"I will go down at once. It is just one o'clock, and we are likely to catch him in."

"Well, will you and your friend dine with me at the Club at six o'clock, Martyn? We can chat there better than we can on board, and we have lots to tell each other since we last parted."

The invitation was accepted, and then Martyn and Horace set off to find the Anchor.

"There is one thing I have not asked you," the former said, as they went along. "How about prize-money, because you know that makes a good deal of difference. I don't suppose there will be much to be got, because there are not many craft flying the Turkish flag, and the seas will be swarming with Greek craft who are half-pirates even in time of peace. Still we may capture a Turkish man-of-war brig or something of that sort, and she may have treasure on board such as pay for the troops. I suppose we

should share according to the ordinary privateer scale."

"Certainly," Horace said. "My father has no idea of making money by the thing, and I can certainly promise that he will agree to the usual scale whatever it is."

"That is right. I thought that it would be so, and, indeed, although officers might go without, you would hardly get men to risk their lives unless there was a chance of prize-money."

"It would not be fair to ask them to do so," Horace said. "Of course that would be understood. All these sort of arrangements are in your hands. My father particularly said so; he really knows nothing about these matters. You must make all these arrangements just as if you were the owner, and please arrange what you consider liberal terms to everyone. My father has made up his mind to spend a certain sum of money which he has long laid by for the purpose, and I am sure we are more likely to succeed in helping the Greeks if everyone on board is quite contented and happy. Oh, there is the Inn; I won't go in with you. You had much better talk it over with him by yourself."

Ten minutes later Martyn came out with a short square-built young fellow of about his own age, with a good-humoured merry face, which was at present beaming with satisfaction.

"That is all settled," Martyn said. "Mr. Beveridge, let me introduce to you Mr. James Miller, first lieutenant of your father's schooner, the *Creole*."

"It is a perfect godsend," Miller said, as he shook hands with Horace. "I began to despair of getting a ship here, and I am

precious glad now I didn't, for I should have been mad if I had met Martyn, and found I had missed this chance. It will be glorious fun, and it looked as if one were never going to have a chance of that sort of thing again."

"And he knows of a young fellow who will suit us for our second," Martyn said, "Jack Tarleton. He was with us in the *Minerva*. I remember him only as a jolly little mid. I had just passed then, and he was the youngest; but he lives close to Miller, and he says he has grown up into a fine young fellow. He is about nineteen now. He has not passed yet, for he was laid on the shelf four months before his time was up, and not having passed, of course he is even worse off than either of us. Not that it matters so much to him, for his father has an estate; but as Jack is the second son, and loves his profession, he is so anxious to be afloat again that he told Miller the other day he would ship before the mast if he could not get a berth before long. Miller will write to him this afternoon, and he will be here to-morrow night or next morning. I have asked him to come round and have lunch with us at the Falcon. Mr. Beveridge and his father sail with us, Miller, in the double capacity, as I understand, of owners and fighting men."

Horace laughed. "In the first place, I am not going to be called Mr. Beveridge or Mr. Anything," he said. "I shall be regarded as a sort of third officer, and do my work regularly while we are at sea. I know a little about sailing already," he said to Miller, "so I sha'n't be quite a green hand."

"No, indeed," Martyn said. "Horace, if I am to call him so, has got a fifteen-ton yacht I picked up for him, and a first-rate little craft she is. He went out in a big gale last winter, and rescued the crew of a wreck, the *Celadon*."

"I saw it in the paper," Miller said warmly, "and thought what a plucky thing it was. That is capital. Then you will be like one of ourselves. Well, what are you going to do first, Martyn?"

"First we are going to lunch. Then you will write your letter to Tarleton and post it. After that we will charter a boat and go up and look at the *Creole* again. You haven't seen her yet, and we haven't seen her since the purchase was concluded, and a craft always looks different when you know she is yours. After making an overhaul we will go ashore to the nearest yard and arrange for her to be docked, and her bottom cleaned and scrubbed; I expect it wants it pretty badly. That will be enough for to-day. As soon as she is in the water again we will set a gang of riggers at work. I shall take charge of that part of the business, and I will leave it to you to hunt up a crew. We have got a boatswain. At least I have no doubt we have."

"How many men are you going to take, Martyn?"

"She mounts four guns each side and a long Tom – I don't know what the metal is yet – and she is heavily sparred. Of course she hasn't got her topmasts in place, but her masts are very long, and I have no doubt she shows a good spread of sail; those craft always do. We shall want a strong crew, for, if we fight at all, it will be against craft a good deal bigger than ourselves. There is

any amount of room on the main deck, where they carried the slaves. Of course we needn't settle at present, but I should say we ought to carry from forty to fifty men."

"I think we ought certainly to have a strong crew," Horace said, "so as to be able to land a strong party if we wanted to; the extra expense would be of no consequence."

"We must pick our men, Miller – smart active fellows, and, of course, men-of-war's for choice. If we can't get enough here, we will sail her round to Portsmouth and fill up there. There ought to be plenty of prime seamen to be had. They would jump at the chance of sailing in such a craft as ours."

Miller was delighted with the ship, and they now especially examined the cabin arrangements. The saloon ran across the stern of the ship. It was handsomely fitted up in mahogany. Leading off this, on the port side, was a large cabin that had evidently been the captain's. This, of course, would be Mr. Beveridge's. On the starboard side were three cabins. Next to these was the steward's pantry and cabin; and facing this, on the port side, two other state-rooms.

"It could not have been better if it had been built for us," Miller said. "There are three cabins on the starboard side. Horace will take one of the three, I suppose, and that will leave a spare cabin in case we take a passenger we are likely to want."

"What are you thinking of, Miller?"

"I was thinking that as we are going to fight, it is not by any means impossible that some of us or the men may be wounded."

"I should certainly say it was quite possible," Martyn laughed.

"Well, you see as long as it is only a clip from a cutlass or a flesh wound through the arm, I fancy we might patch it up between us with a bit of plaster and a bandage; but if it comes to an amputation or getting a bullet out of the body, or anything of that sort, who is going to do it?"

"By Jove! you are right, Miller. I had not thought of that. I am afraid we shall have to take a surgeon with us. It would never do to go into action in the Levant, where there is no chance of finding an English doctor, without having at least a surgeon's-mate on board."

"Of course not," Horace agreed; "that is an absolute necessity. Will you see about it at once, please."

"There is no difficulty in getting surgeons," Martyn said. "Of course young fellows who have just done walking hospitals are as plentiful as peas; but we had better get hold of a man who has been knocking about for a few years in the navy, and who has had some experience in gunshot wounds. There must be plenty of good men about, for they have suffered just as we have by the reduction. I will speak to Dacent about it this evening, and get him to ask one of the naval surgeons here if he knows a man. One or other of them is almost sure to do so. Well, the spare cabin will be for him. So now we are fixed completely."

"We shall have to take off a little bit from the main deck, because my father's two Greeks will certainly come with us. Only one can sleep in the steward's cabin, so we shall want a small

cabin for the other and a place for cooking. They are first-rate cooks, both of them; and I expect they will undertake the cooking altogether for us."

"That can very easily be managed," Martyn said. "We can knock a door through this bulkhead, and run another bulkhead up across the deck, seven or eight feet farther forward. I have not forgotten that Greek's cooking; and if we live on board this craft as you did on the *Surf*, I can tell you, Miller, we needn't envy an admiral."

"Well, I like a good dinner, I must own, Martyn, though I can do with salt-horse if necessary."

"But are you sure, Horace," Martyn said, "that your father wouldn't prefer having the cabin astern all to yourselves? When we are about it we could put the bulkhead farther forward, and make a ward-room for us."

"No, I am sure he would not wish that," Horace said. "I will write to him when we get ashore and ask him; but I am sure he would find it more pleasant our being all together, and it would be much better for him than being by himself. My father is a great scholar," he explained to Miller, "and is always poring over books. I am sure it will do him a lot of good getting away from them altogether and being with people. Besides, that private cabin of his is a good size, and there will be plenty of room for him to have a table and an easy-chair in it whenever he is disposed to shut himself up. However, I will hear what he says."

After leaving the ship a visit was paid to one of the

shipbuilding yards, and arrangements made for the *Creole* to be brought into dock at high-tide. On getting back to the inn Horace wrote to his father on the various questions that had arisen, and then to Marco, telling him to come over by coach, and to bring Tom Burdett with him. They then went to dine at the club with Dacent, who entered with great zest into their arrangements.

"I can't tell you what is your best way of setting about getting the arms; but I should say go to Durncombe's. They are by far the largest ship-chandlers here, and I should say that they could supply anything from an anchor to a tallow-dip. They must have fitted out innumerable privateers, and bought up the stores of as many prizes. They may not be able to supply you with as many small-arms as you want; but if you give them an order for a thousand cannon, I have not a doubt they could execute it in twenty-four hours, and that at the price of old iron. As to the muskets, they could no doubt collect a big lot here, and get more still from Portsmouth. Those of course would be principally ship's muskets, no longer wanted or taken from prizes. I don't suppose they would get enough, and of course you would want them in fair condition; but they would put advertisements for them in the Birmingham papers, or, likely enough, would know firms in Birmingham who had bought up muskets sold out of the army."

"What do they buy them for?" Horace asked.

"Oh, they contract for the supply of those South American States, for trade in Africa and the East, or for the supply of the

armies of native princes in India. I think, if I were you, I would not go to him direct, but would get the agent you got the *Creole* from to undertake it, and get the terms settled. He would get them a good bit cheaper than you could."

"No doubt he would," Martyn agreed, "especially if we agreed to pay him so much for getting it, instead of so much commission. When a man gets a commission he has no interest in keeping the price down; just the contrary. I will ask him casually, to begin with, what is the cost of muskets in fair condition, and at what price we could pick up guns – say six, eight, and twelve pounders – complete, with carriages."

"I don't know about the carriages, Martyn; but I know the guns fetch less by a good bit than their weight of old iron. They cost more to break up, in fact, than they are worth; and they are using them for posts, and things of that sort, for the sake of getting rid of them. I should say that you could get a couple of hundred guns of those sizes to-morrow for a pound apiece, and I believe that you might almost get them for the trouble of carting away, for they are simply so much lumber. Powder is a glut in the market too. I should say hundreds of tons have been emptied into the sea in this port alone, for when the merchant skippers found they no longer required to carry it, it was cheaper for them to throw it overboard than to get rid of it in any other way."

When they returned to the Falcon that evening they found Miller had shifted his quarters there from the little inn in which he had been staying, and two days later Jack Tarleton also arrived

there. He was a good-looking young fellow, nearly six feet in height, slight at present, but likely to fill out, with a somewhat quiet manner, but, as Horace soon found, a quick appreciation of the humorous side of things and a good deal of quiet fun. On the same day Marco arrived with Tom Burdett, who was delighted when Horace disclosed the project to him.

"I should think I would like to go, Mr. Horace. Why, bless you, I have been feeling almost as if I was rusting out at Seaport, except when you were at home. Why, it will be like giving one a fresh lease of life to get at one's own work again."

He was at once installed on board the *Creole*, which on that day had been let out of the dock again with her copper scrubbed until it shone like gold. Miller had as yet had no time to see about the men, and Tom at once undertook this part of the business.

"I know every tavern down by the waterside and the places where men are likely to be found. I will soon pick you up some prime hands. If I can't get enough of them here, I will take a run to Bristol. There is a big trade there, and there will be plenty of men-of-war's-men to be had for the asking for such a job as this."

"How about Seaport, Tom?" Horace asked.

"Well, we will take Dick; but there are not many I would care about having from there. They are good enough in their fishing-boats, but I would rather have men who are accustomed to bigger craft. Besides, though fishermen are good sailors in some ways, they are not accustomed to discipline, and are always slovenly in their way of doing things. Besides, if I persuaded young fellows

to come from there, and any of them got killed, their fathers and mothers would look black at me when I got back. No, I don't think I will have anyone but Dick."

By this time a letter had come from Mr. Beveridge in answer to Horace's letter.

"I quite agree with you," he said, "that the officers should be paid fairly. I see that, as you say, it is not a thing that you could very well arrange with them. Will you tell Mr. Martyn, from me, that the terms I propose are twenty guineas a month for him, eighteen for the second officer, and fifteen for the third; and that, in case of any of them losing a limb or being disabled, I shall settle upon them a pension the same as that to which they would have been entitled at their rank in the navy in the same case. The ship appears to me to be wonderfully cheap. I knew nothing about it, but quite expected that it would cost three times as much. Certainly I should not wish for them to have a separate cabin. It will be much more pleasant for me, if not disagreeable to them, for us to live together. As for what you say about prize-money, tell Mr. Martyn to arrange as he proposes, according to the ordinary usage in privateers. It is a matter to which I have given no thought, but he shall give me the particulars when we meet. As you know, I have no intention of making profit out of the enterprise."

Two days later Martyn told Horace that Dacent had introduced him to one of the surgeons, who knew a young doctor who would, he thought, suit. "His name is Macfarlane; he is, of

course, a Scotchman – most of the naval doctors are either Irish or Scotch. He sailed with him as surgeon's-mate in a large frigate, where they had a good deal of experience in wounds, and he has a high idea of his skill. He is a very quiet sort of fellow, but a pleasant messmate. He has been full surgeon for some time now. His ship was paid off a fortnight ago, and the man who told me of him had a letter from him a few days since, saying that, as he had no interest he thought that he had but little chance of getting afloat again, and asking him to let him know if he heard of any opening, either ashore or in an Indiaman. He thought he would suit us very well, so I said that I would speak to you about it."

"I should think that will be just the thing, Martyn."

"Very well, then, I will see the surgeon to-morrow, and get him to write and offer him the berth at the regular naval rate of pay. Of course we sha'n't want him to join till we are ready to sail."

Some days later a reply was received, accepting the berth.

For the next fortnight work proceeded rapidly. Stores of all kinds for the voyage were brought on board and stowed away. Sixty cannon were stowed down in the hold, with thirty carriages for them, the latter taking up too much room to be carried for the whole of the guns. Eight twelve-pounders, in place of the eight-pounders before carried by her, and a long eighteen-pounder were placed in the hold in readiness to mount on deck when they reached the Levant. The riggers and painters had finished their work, the decks had been planed and holy-stoned until they were

spotlessly white, and the tall spars and gear were all in their place. The guns had cost only about as much as Miller had said, and they could have obtained any number at the same price. The agent had made a contract with the ship's chandlers for five thousand muskets complete with bayonets, in good order, and delivered on board, at ten shillings each. Some five hundred of these had been collected, and – after passing muster, by an armourer sergeant Martyn engaged for the purpose – put on board. The rest were to be sent by canal from Birmingham to Liverpool, and thence shipped round to Plymouth. Five tons of gunpowder in barrels, twenty tons of shot for the cannon, and two hundred thousand rounds of ammunition for the muskets were also arranged for. These were to be shipped at the last moment from magazines at the mouth of the Sound.

Below, everything had been done to make the cabins as comfortable as possible, and Dacent declared that she was altogether too neat and comfortable for anything but an admiral's yacht. Tom Burdett had picked up at Plymouth twenty-five smart sailors, all of whom had served in king's ships; and then, going to Bristol, had brought as many more from there. Uniforms, closely resembling those of men-of-war sailors, had been served out to them, but instead of the straw hat they wore red woollen caps. The officers had only to exchange their navy buttons for others with an anchor to be complete; Horace had donned similar attire.

It was just three weeks after Horace left home that he wrote to his father saying that all was now in readiness, and that they

could sail within an hour of his arrival. They were at once going out to take their powder on board, and would remain at anchor off the magazines, and that he himself should be at the Falcon when it was time for the first coach to arrive after the receipt of his letter, and should remain there until his father came. Mr. Macfarlane, the surgeon, arrived by the coach that evening, and was put down at the Falcon. Martyn and Horace went out when they heard the coach stop.

"That is the doctor, for a guinea," Martyn said, as a tall bony man climbed down from the roof, and began very carefully to look after his luggage.

"I think you must be Doctor Macfarlane?" he said, going up to him. "My name is Martyn."

"I am very glad to see you, Captain Martyn," the doctor said; "I take it as a sign that I shall have a pleasant time that my commander should meet me as I get off the coach."

"I am captain only by courtesy, and shall hardly consider that I have got my brevet rank till we hoist the flag to-morrow. This is Mr. Beveridge, the owner's son, he will sail with us as third officer. I have ordered a room for you, doctor. Boots will carry your things up."

"Thank you; I will see to them myself, and join you in the coffee-room. I am not fond of trusting to other folk;" and he followed the servant upstairs with his baggage.

Martyn laughed as he went into the coffee-room with Horace. "Cautious you see, Horace, and right enough to be so; I think we

shall like him. There is a pleasant tone in his voice, and I have no doubt he will turn out a good fellow, though, perhaps, rather a character."

The doctor soon came down.

"Eh, man," he said, "but it is weary work sitting with your legs doubled up all those hours on a coach. Four-and-twenty hours it is since I got up at Salisbury. And so, Mr. Beveridge, we are going out to fight for the Greeks. I misdoubt, sir, if they will do much fighting for themselves. I was three years east of Malta. There is good in them, we may take it that there is good in them, but it is very difficult to get at; at least that was my experience."

"They have not had much chance, I think, doctor, so far."

"And how large is your ship, Captain Martyn?" the doctor said, changing the subject suddenly.

"They call her a hundred and fifty, but she has a light draft of water and would not carry that, yet she has excellent accommodation below, as you will say when you see her to-morrow."

The conversation then turned on naval matters, and the stations and ships that both Martyn and the doctor knew; and when they separated for the evening Martyn and Horace agreed that the doctor was likely to be a pleasant acquisition to their party.

Marco had been intrusted with the entire charge of laying in stores for the cabin, and these had arrived in such profusion that Will Martyn had demanded whether he was victualling the ship

with cabin stores for a voyage round the world.

It had been given out that the ship was bound for Lisbon, but the news of her destination had gradually leaked out, although pains had been taken to get the military stores on board as quietly as possible. Sympathy with Greece was general, however, and although the young officers were quietly joked by their naval acquaintances as to their cargo for Portugal, no official inquiries were made on the subject.

"I sha'n't be sorry, Horace," Will Martyn said, as they were rowed off in the gig for the last time before getting up anchor, "when we get some of our heavy stuff out of her. One way or another she will have a hundred and twenty tons of stuff on board when we have taken in our powder, and though I don't at all say that she will be overladen she will be a foot too low in the water to please me, and she wouldn't be able to do her best if she were chased in her present trim."

"The little difference in speed won't matter much on our way out," Horace said.

"No, not as to time, of course, a day more or less is no matter; still, one always likes to get all one can out of one's ship, Horace, and it is a triumph to slip past other craft. If you have a slow craft you don't mind whether other things leave you behind in an hour or two hours; you jog along and you don't worry about it; you are like a man driving a heavy cart. But when you are in a crack schooner you are like a man on the road with a fast horse and a light gig, you expect to go past other things, and you like

to do it in good style."

"Well, nothing will beat her in looks, I think, Will."

"No, that is quite certain. She is a picture."

Everything was done on board the *Creole* in man-of-war fashion. Tarleton stood at the top of the ladder to receive the captain as he came on board. He touched his cap to Martyn, who touched his in return.

"Everything ready for getting under weigh, Mr. Tarleton?"

"Everything quite ready, sir."

"Then shorten the chain a bit; man the capstan."

Jack Tarleton gave the order. Tom Burdett's boatswain's whistle rang out loudly; the capstan-bars were already fixed, and a dozen men ran merrily round with it till the whistle sounded again.

"The anchor is short, sir," Tarleton sang out to Martyn.

"Very well, leave her so, Mr. Tarleton. Will you make sail, Mr. Miller?"

The orders were given, the mainsail, foresail, and fore-staysail hoisted, and the jibs run out on the bowsprit. As soon as the halliards were belayed and coiled down, the capstan-bars were manned again, and the anchor weighed. The tide had just turned to run out, there was a gentle breeze blowing, and as the two jibs were run up the *Creole* began to steal through the water.

"Port your helm!" Martyn said to the man at the wheel; "let her come round easy. Slack off the main-sheet; that will do now. Get her topsails on her, Mr. Miller."

Horace looked up with a feeling of pride and delight at the cloud of white sail and at the smart active crew, all in duck trousers, blue shirts, and red caps. Once out of the river the sheets were hauled in, the yards of the fore-topsail were braced as much fore and aft as they would stand, and the *Creole* turned her head seaward, looking, as Martyn said, almost into the wind's eye. The red ensign was flying from the peak of the mainsail, and from the mast-head a long pennant bearing her name.

"She is slipping through the water rarely, Miller," Will Martyn said, as he looked over the side.

"Yes, she is going six knots through it, and that, considering how close-hauled she is and that the wind is light, is wonderful."

"She would go a good knot faster," Martyn said, "if she had fifty tons of that stuff out of her. Those slavers know how to build, and no mistake, and I don't think they ever turned out a better craft than this."

It was not until late in the afternoon that the *Creole* dropped anchor off the magazine, where she was to take in her powder, as Martyn ran her out twenty miles to sea and back again to stretch her ropes and, as he said, let things shape down a bit. When the trip was over there was not a man on board but was in the state of the highest satisfaction with the craft. Both close-hauled on the way out and free on her return they had passed several vessels almost as if these had been standing still, going three feet to their two; and although there was but little sea on, there was enough to satisfy them that she had no lack of buoyancy, even in her

present trim.

As soon as the anchor was down and the sails stowed Marco announced that dinner was ready, for all had been too much interested in the behaviour of the schooner to think of going down for lunch. It was the first meal that they had taken on board beyond a crust of bread and cheese in the middle of the day, and as they sat down, Will Martyn taking the head of the table, Horace, as his father's representative, facing him, and the others at the sides, Miller said with a laugh, as he looked at the appointments, all of which had been sent over from the house two days before by Zaimes: "This is rather a contrast, Martyn, to the cockpit of a man-of-war."

"Rather. I never did dine with an admiral, but this is the sort of thing that I have always fancied it would be if it had entered into the head of one to invite me. What do you think, Tarleton?"

"I feel shy at present, sir, and as if I oughtn't to speak till spoken to."

"You will be spoken to pretty sharply if you say 'sir' down below. On deck, as we agreed, we would have things in man-of-war fashion; but we are not going to have anything of that sort when we are below together."

The dinner was an excellent one, and though the expectations of Miller and Tarleton had been raised by Martyn's encomiums of the Greek's cooking they were far surpassed by the reality. "It is a dinner fit for a king," Martyn said when the cloth was cleared away and a decanter of port placed on the table.

"There is one misfortune in it. If this sort of thing is going to last we shall never be fit for service in an ordinary craft again, we shall become Sybarites. Is this the sort of dinner you always have at home, Horace?"

"About the same, I think," Horace laughed. "My father takes no exercise and has not much appetite, and I think he likes nice things; and it is one of the Greek's great aims in life to tempt him to eat. We always have a very good cook, but Zaimes insists on having a few little things of his own cooking on the table, and as he is generally at war with the cook, and they leave in consequence about every three or four months, he often has the dinner altogether in his hands till a fresh one arrives, and I am amused sometimes to see how Zaimes fidgets when my father, which is often the case, is so occupied with his own thoughts that he eats mechanically and does not notice what is before him. Zaimes stands it for a minute or two and then asks some question or makes some observation that calls my father's attention back to what he is doing. They have both been with him for two-and-twenty years and are devoted to him. They are hardly like English servants, and talk to him in a way English servants would not think of doing. They are always perfectly respectful, you know, but they regard themselves, as he regards them, as friends as well as servants."

"Well, gentlemen, we will drink the usual toast, 'The King, God bless him;' that is duty. Now fill up again, here is 'Success to the *Creole*.'" When the toast was drank Martyn went on:

"How did your father pick them up, Horace?"

"It was just after he went out to Greece, which was directly after he left college. He was at Samos, and got leave from the Turkish governor to visit the prison. In one of the cells were Zaimes and Marco, who was then a boy about sixteen. They were condemned to death; they had been smuggling, and a Turkish boat had overhauled them. They had resisted. Four of the men with them had been killed in the fight, and several of the Turks. These two had been both severely wounded and made prisoners. My father was new to that sort of thing then. After he had been a year or two in Greece he knew that it would take a king's fortune to buy out all the prisoners in the Turkish jails, but being only out there a month or two he was touched at the sight of the two prisoners. They were both very handsome, though, of course, pale and pulled down by their wounds and imprisonment, and Zaimes, who was the spokesman, had that courteous gentle manner that my father says all the Greeks have when they are not excited."

"At any rate he was very much interested and went off to the governor again, and the Turk was glad enough for a bribe of a hundred pounds to give him an order for the release of the two prisoners, on condition that they were to be let out after dark and at once put on board a craft that was sailing at daybreak next morning. My father went with them, and after that they absolutely refused to leave him, and travelled with him in Greece for some time and fought very pluckily when some Klepts once

tried to carry him away into the mountains. Then he bought a small craft and established his head-quarters at Mitylene, and for a year lived there and cruised about the islands. When he came home he offered the felucca to them, but they refused to take it, and begged so hard for him to take them home with him that he agreed to do so, and they have proved invaluable to him ever since."

"Your father is lucky in having got hold of two such men," Martyn said. "I believe the lower order of Greeks are fine fellows in their way. They are quarrelsome and passionate, no doubt, and apt to whip out their knives at the smallest provocation, and there is no trade they take so kindly to as that of a bandit; otherwise I believe they are honest hardworking fellows. But as for the upper class of Greeks, the less I have to do with them the better. When they get a chance they grind down their countrymen a deal worse than the Turks do. They are slippery customers and no mistake. I would rather take a Turk's simple word than a solemn oath from a Greek."

"No; veracity is hardly one of their conspicuous virtues," the doctor put in quietly. "I take it that the ancients were so accustomed to swear by their gods, even after they had ceased to believe in them, that they came to consider that an oath by them was not binding, and so got into the way of lying generally, and their descendants have never amended their ways in that particular since. On more than one occasion, when there was trouble between our sailors and the Greeks, I attended their

courts, and for good downright hard swearing I never heard them approached. I don't wonder that the Turks refuse to allow Christians to give evidence in their courts. We shall see when we get out, but I have grave doubts whether there has been any revolution at all, and whether it is not a got-up thing altogether, just to see what the rest of the world says to it."

The others laughed.

"There is one thing, doctor," Miller said; "we have heard from Europeans who are out there of what has been done, it does not come from the Greeks only."

"That is a confirmation, certainly, but it is well known that travellers' tales must always be received with caution. It has been so since the days of Herodotus. When a man gets away from his own country he is apt to get a certain looseness of the tongue. We will wait until we get out there before we form any strong opinion about it."

By this time they had finished their coffee, and Martyn, rising, said: "Mr. Tarleton, I shall be glad if you will go along the main-deck and see that the men are making themselves comfortable; to-morrow we will divide them into watches and tell them off to their stations and get things into working order."

Accordingly, in the morning the crew were divided into two watches, and the boat's crews told off, and then the work of getting the powder and small ammunition on board began; the latter did not take long, as it was already in a flat into which it had been discharged three days before from the coaster that

had brought it from Liverpool. The flat had therefore only to be towed alongside and the cases swung on board and lowered into a portion of the hold that had been divided off from the rest by thick bulkheads to form a magazine. The ammunition and powder were all on board and stowed away, the ship was washed down, and the men piped to dinner by eight bells. The officers went down and divided the men into messes, examined the food, and saw that everything was comfortable.

"More room here than there was on board the *Surf*, Dick," Horace said as he stopped a moment on his rounds to speak to the young sailor.

"Yes, sir, one can stand upright here. But the *Surf* was a good boat too."

After dinner the men were told off to their various duties and divided into crews for the guns, when these should be in place. The first lieutenant (for it was agreed that they should be called lieutenants and not mates) and Horace took the starboard watch, Tarleton and the boatswain the port watch. The men were formed up, inspected, and put through cutlass drill for an hour, after which the watches by turns were exercised in setting sail, reefing, lowering, and furling, so that each man should know his place and duty. Then they were dismissed.

"They will be a first-rate crew when they have worked together for a few days," Martyn said. "I could not wish for a smarter set of men. If we meet anything about our own size I shall have no fear of giving a good account of her. I have no

opinion whatever of the Turks as sailors; they are good soldiers, and have always proved themselves so, but more lubberly sailors never went to sea."

"Well, we are not likely to meet anything else," Horace said.

"I don't know, lad. The Greeks at the best of times are pirates at heart, and just at present they are not at all likely to be particular who they lay hands on. I saw in the paper only yesterday, they had attacked and plundered an Austrian craft, and it is probable that they may have done the same to a dozen others, only as a rule they scuttle any ship they may seize and nothing is ever known about her. Ships can't be too careful when they are in Greek waters, and a vessel wrecked on any of the islands is looked upon as a lawful prize. There is no fear of our being taken by surprise by the Turks, but I shall take precious good care that we are never caught napping when we are anchored anywhere in the Greek Archipelago. After dinner, Horace, I will go ashore with you in the gig. I don't think it likely your father will be down by the night coach, as he would only get your letter this morning, but he may come; at any rate you have got to wait now at the Falcon till he turns up."

CHAPTER VI
UNDER WEIGH

AFTER seeing to a few matters that had been left till the last moment, Will Martyn returned on board again. Horace dined at the club, of which he had been made an honorary member, and then went back to the Falcon. To his surprise Zaimes was standing at the door.

"Why, Zaimes, how on earth did you get here? Why, the coach does not get in till twelve o'clock."

"No, Mr. Horace, but we had everything ready to start this morning. Of course your letter did not come in time for us to get over to the early coach, but we were expecting it after what you wrote yesterday, and your father had concluded that it would be much more comfortable to post. He does not like being crowded, and it was doubtful whether there would be room for the two of us; and there was the luggage, so we had arranged for a post-chaise to come for us anyhow, and we started half an hour after your letter came in, and have posted comfortably. Your father is in the coffee-room. He would not have a private room, as he did not know whether you would be taking him on board this evening."

Mr. Beveridge was sitting at a table by himself, and had just finished his dinner when Horace came in. He looked up more

briskly than usual.

"I am sorry I was not here to meet you, father," Horace said; "but I did not think you could be here until the night coach."

"No; I did not expect to find you here, Horace, so it was no disappointment. Well, you look bronzed and well, my boy, you and your friends seem to have done wonders in getting everything done so soon. I am quite anxious to see the ship. Are we to go on board this evening?"

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