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## CHAPTER LVI.

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## CHAPTER I.

It was on the last day of summer, 1846, that a large vessel of war lay in the stream of Boston Harbor; presently a dirty little steam tug, all bone and muscle, came burroughing alongside. The boatswain and his mates whistled with their silver pipes, like Canary birds, and the cry went forth, to heave up the anchor. Soon the ponderous grappell was loosened from its hold, and our pigmy companion clasping the huge hull in his hempen arms, bore us away towards the ocean; by and by, the unbleached canvas fell in gloomy clouds from the wide-spread spars—the sails swelled to the breeze—friends were tumbling over the side—light jokes were made—hats waved—cheers given, whether from the heart, or not, was a problem, and then there came a short interval in the hoarse roar of steam, as the pigmy's fastenings splashed in the water—then all was silent; and the stately ship, dashing the salt tears from her eyes, turned her prow, in sadness, from her native land.

There were many, no doubt, of those six hundred souls on board, who leaving home with the sweet endearments of domestic life fresh upon them, were looking forward with blanched cheeks and saddened hearts, to years of distant wanderings. And there

were others, too, equally indifferent, and regardless of the future—

“With one foot on land, and one on sea,  
—To one thing constant never,”

who, perhaps, never had a home—tired of the shore—were eager for change or excitement; but I question much, if there was one on board, of all those beating hearts, who did not anticipate a safe and joyful return. Alas! how many of these fragile aspirations were never realized. Numbers found a liquid tomb beneath the dark blue waves, or died a sailor's death in foreign climes, far away from friends and kindred, or returned with broken constitutions, and wasted frames, enfeebled by disease, to linger out a miserable existence on the native land they still loved so well.

A fortnight we sailed moderately and pleasantly in a race with the sun towards the equator. The pole star slowly but surely declined in the north; faces began to assume a more cheerful aspect; we became reconciled to our fate; to banish those hateful things called reminiscences, which, even though pleasant, only make us regret them the more, when gone forever. Thus we entered the tropic, and then lay lunging and plunging in the doldrums—clouds dead and stupid, with the sun making all manner of gay transparencies, at the rising, and most particularly at the setting thereof. Then came another week of *una furiosa calma*—a furious calm, as the Spaniards have it—bobbing about in undulating billows, and the tough canvass beating and chafing in futile anger. It was thus we learned, those of us who had not made the discovery before, what a really animal existence one leads on shipboard; a sort of dozing nonentity, only agreeable to those who have no imaginative organizations desirous of more extended sphere of action

It does passibly well to eat and sleep away life—that is, presuming the dinners be hot and eatable, and nights cool and sleepable—in smooth seas, and under mild suns; but when the winds are piping loud and cold, the vessel diving and leaping at every possible angle of the compass, with the stomachs of the mariners occasionally pitched into their heads, as if they were dromedaries, with several internal receptacles apiece, devised purposely to withstand the thumps and concussions of salt water; when the ship is performing these sub-marine and aerial evolutions I take it, as a reasonable being, there can be found a stray nook or two, on hard ground, far more comfortable and habitable. And by way of parenthesis, I beg leave to recommend to any and all unfortunate persons given to aquatic recreation, and troubled with the disease whilom called sea-sickness, to divest the mind and body of care and clothing, tumble into a swinging cot, and on the verge of starvation sip sparingly of weak brandy and water, nibble a biscuit, and a well-roasted potato. I made this important discovery after being a sufferer ten years, and pledge a reputation upon the strength of that martyrdom, of its infallible virtues.

Indeed, there are but two kinds of sailing at all bearable. I allude, of course, to those who take to it *con amore*, and are not compelled to crowd all dimity to weather a lee shore and the almshouse; one where the glorious trade wind fills the bellying canvas, and the vessel slips quietly and swiftly along with the gentlest possible careening; without hauling and pulling of cordage, nor heavy seas, nor heavy rains, but the light, fleecy clouds flying gracefully overhead, the waves blue and yielding, the watch dozing lazily in the shade, and the decks clean and tidy—it is a pretty sight, to see a noble ship properly manœuvred, come

swiftly up to the wind, the sails laid rapidly aback, with lower canvas brailed up in graceful festoons, and the buoyant hull rising and falling on the gentle swell, like the courtesies of Cerito or Ellsler in Sir Roger de Coverley, with all the drapery of dimity fluttering around them. Then, again, in that blue sea of seas, the Mediterranean, where more than half the year one may sail over level water, with none of the ocean swell, with delightful breezes only strong enough to fan the light and lofty sails to sleep, the shores of Italy or Spain lifting their green-clad hills along the beam, or the ever varying islands of the Grecian Archipelago coming and going, as you dart rapidly through their straits. Ah! in those times, and in those seas, ships are possibly endurable, but of all monotonies, that of shipboard is the dullest, most wearisome and detestable.

Week after week passed away, one day like another, nothing to chronicle save the birth of a sailor's pet in the shape of a tiny goat—taking a shark—the usual pious Sunday homily, and on a certain occasion one Jem Brooks, whose residence, in company with other cherubs, was somewhere aloft in the main-top, whilst in the act of dropping a boat into the ocean, some mishap attended the descent, and he dropped overboard himself, thereby cracking the small bone of his leg, with a few other trifling abrasions of skin and flesh. Iron life buoys that no one as yet ever did comprehend the mechanism of, always fizzing off the port-fires in broad day, and enshrouding themselves in utter darkness at night when only needed, were instantly sent after the aforesaid Jem Brooks, who imbued with the wit and tenacity of his species in extremis, seized one of them, and in a short space returned pleasantly on board.

This was all that served to enliven our stupid existence.

The winds coquetted with all the perverseness of a spoiled beauty, at times blowing provokingly steady, then we went reeling over the seas, with piercingly blue skies above us, and all reconcileable elements to our journeyings, excepting the breeze ever blowing so pertinaciously in the wrong direction; at others we managed to cheat Eolus out of a puff, and steal a march upon him, right into his breezy eyes, but then again he gave a wink, distended his huge cheeks, and blew us far away to leeward. It was truly trying to the nerves to be crying patience continually, when there was no appeal—we could not exclaim with Dryden:

“The passage yet was good; the wind 'tis true  
Was somewhat high, but that was nothing new,  
No more than usual equinoxes blew.”

There was naught new nor usual about it, wind and weather were a mass of inconsistency; a few more revolutions of the sun, and we should have found ourselves stranded in the Dahomey territory, or other equally delightful regions, bordering on the Bight of Benin, in Africa; even the good old captain of marines began to look worried and anxious, paid nightly visits to the sailing master, and with the most earnest and imploring tone, would ask—“Well, Master! how *does* she head?” as if he reposed full trust in his sagacity, and for God's sake to ease his mind, and let him hear the worst at once. Surgeons, pursers and secretaries, went off their feed, and from being rather over sanguine at times, burst forth with lamentable wailings in the poignancy of their despair. The captain of the ship, too, reviled creation generally, and was rather snappish with officers of the watches; hinting that the yards were not trimmed, ship steered properly, and other legal animadversions. Then the lieutenants, kind souls, abused the master, taxing him with manifold crimes and delinquencies for

bringing adverse breezes, did those sagacious creatures, and at other times becoming jooose, would advise him to kick the chronometers several times around the mast to accelerate or diminish their rates, and talked loudly of requesting the Commodore to follow the first bark we might encounter, to the end that we should get safely into port—in fact, we were all, morally speaking, in a state of gangrene; morbid, morose and our circumstances getting more desperate hourly; but the longest night, except in the winter season off Cape Horn, has its dawning: the wind veered fair, whitening the ruffled water to windward, the noble frigate recovered her long lost energy, and with white sails swelling from trucks to the sea, shook the sparkling brine from her mane, and left a foaming wake behind; the thick, mucky, sticky atmosphere that clung to us upon entering the tropic, was quickly displaced, by refreshing and grateful breezes.

We crossed the dividing line of the sphere, rushing and splashing down the slope on the other side, carrying the whole ocean before us: myriads of flying fish flashed their silver-tinted wings as they broke cover, and flew upward at our approach. Porpoises and dolphins would dash around the bows, try our speed, and then disappear, perhaps, with a confused eye, or bruised snout from a sparring match with the cutwater; on we bounded with the cracking trade wind, tugging the straining canvas towards Brazil.

The mess was large, and composed of strange materials—men of gravity and men of merriment, some who relate professional anecdotes and talk knowingly of ships, and sails and blocks, and nautical trash generally, others, would be literary characters, who pour over encyclopedias, gazetteers and dictionaries, ever ready to pounce upon an indiscreet person, and bring him to book in old

dates or events; then there is the mess grumbler, the mess orator, a lawgiver and politician, and always an individual, without whom no mess is properly organized, who volunteers to lick the American consul in whatsoever haven the ship may be, for any fancied grievance, but particularly if he happen to be poor, and not disposed to give a series of grand dinners upon his meagre fare of office.

All these individual peculiarities we had sufficient leisure to indulge in, and although I have asserted that ship-board is the most horrible monotony in life, and hold to mine oath, yet Apollo tuned his lyre, and old Homer took siesta, thus by example, if anything can relieve this dulness, it is in the very contrast, where the mercury of one's blood is driven high up by cheering prospects of favoring gales, and anticipations of a speedy arrival, after a tedious passage.

Our amiability returned with our appetites—alas! too keenly for the doomed carcass of a solitary pig, grunting in blissful ignorance of his fate, in a spacious pen on the gun deck. Juicy and succulent vegetables had long since vacated the mess table, and the talents of our *cordon-bleu*, Messieurs Hypolite de Bontems, and François, were constantly phrenzied with excitement, composing palatable dishes, from the privacy of tins of potted meats, and hidden delicacies of the store rooms. We all became sociable, quizzed one another good humoredly—some declared they had been dreadfully spooney with some fair girls before leaving home, but were better now, and thought the marine air wholesome for those complaints. Others, again, still remained faithful, compared their watches with the chronometers, to determine the exact difference of time on certain periods designated beforehand, with may be a choice collection of stars of the first magnitude, to gaze at by night. Nevertheless, there was a radi

cal change for the better ; we became more companionable, hobbled across the table, after dinner, heard with calm delight orchestral music from the flutes and fiddles of papa Gheeks and family—an old gentleman from *faderland*, whom the sailors, in their ignorance of German, had baptized “Peter the Greeks,” a soubriquet by which he universally went—and one of our mess had the humanity to inquire if the small French horn, or octave flute, had tumbled down the hatchway, and whether he broke his neck or was merely asphyxie. We even ceased grumbling at the servants, and to a man all agreed that the passage had been of unexampled pleasantness.

Nothing checked our headlong speed, and the fiftieth day from Boston saw us close to the high, desolate mountains of cape Frio, within plain view of the little rocky nook where the English frigate Thetis made a futile attempt to batter the island over, but went down in the struggle. 'Tis said the gun room mess were entertaining the captain at dinner, who somewhat oblivious to everything, save being homeward bound to merry England with a ship laden with treasure, disregarded the sailing master's wishes to alter the course, and the consequence was, after night set in, the frigate struck, going eight knots—providentially the crew were saved. The long Atlantic swell was rolling heavily against the bluff promontories, and the surf lashing far up the black heights, giving many of us a nervous disinclination to making a night expedition among the rocks, going to sleep with a dirty shirt and mouthful of sand, without even the consolation of being afterwards laid out in clean linen, to make luncheon for vultures ; but since it takes a complication of these diversions to compose a veritable sea life, we banished perspective danger, and indulged in speculations upon the pleasures of port.

## CHAPTER II.

“The far ships lifting their sails of white  
Like joyful hands ; come up with scatter'd light,  
Come gleaming up, true to the wished for day,  
And chase the whistling brine, and swirl into the bay.”

REMIND. OF LEIGH HUNT.

THE approach to Rio Janeiro, so far as God's fair handiwork is considered, presents a bold, natural, and striking grandeur, and is, perhaps, unsurpassed by that of any other land on earth. The mountains spring abruptly from the sea, in massive, well-defined outline, assuming at different points the most fanciful and grotesque shapes. Those to the southward make in goodly proportion the figure of a man reclining on his back, even to feet and eyes, while further inland are seen the narrow tube-like cones of the Organ Mountains, shooting high up into the sky, and then lower down, and around, are strewn lesser hills, sweeping and undulating from vale to vale, in an endless succession of picturesque beauty.

Passing the strait that opens into the bay, which appears narrower than it really is, from the steep sides of adjacent heights, the river expands, and stretching away on either shore, lie graceful curves and indentations, whose snowy beaches are fringed with pretty dwellings, half hidden beneath the richest tropical foliage. To the left stands the city, built amidst a number of elevations, but like Lisbon, it has neither spire nor dome to relieve the eye along the horizon. Yet this drawback is in a measure lost sight

of in contemplating the frowning peak of La Gambia, which seems to hang over, and shade the town itself; but take all in all there are few lovelier scenes the eye can gaze upon, than Rio.

Just ten years had passed since I sailed from this noble bay, and although I had been the wide world over, in stirring scenes, quite sufficient as I indeed supposed to drive all recollections of it out of my head, into dim obscurity and forgetfulness, yet as we approached the harbor, every point and islet, fort, tower, reef, grove, and hamlet, started vividly before me, as all appeared when I was a boy, and the long years between dwindled away into minutes, and I fancied it but yesterday since we had parted.

I greeted Lord Hood's nose like an old acquaintance, as it reposed in gigantic outline, towering above the surrounding mountains; the small island near the shore with the white tower that was then just begun; the Sugar Loaf with its smooth surface of rocks, and on the other side the Slaver's Bay—palmettos swinging their finger-like branches to and fro; and beyond, the fortress of Santa Cruz, with the sickly yellow diamond of Brazil, waving above; indeed, when the long speaking trumpet was shoved through an embrasure, I knew the old soldier's melancholy howl by intuition. At last the harbor's mouth was passed, we rolled up our sails and sank peacefully to rest on the quiet bosom of the bay.

A mob of us tumbled into the boats; the ashen sails, plied by sinewy arms, soon bumped us against what was once to me the Palace Stairs, but either the water had receded, or land encroached upon the bay, for where the waves once washed the sea wall, and where many a time I have sat kicking my heels in the surf, sucking oranges the while, is now forty feet from the beach,

and the wall itself stands in the silliest manner imaginable, quite in the middle of the square. To the left is a tall modern range of warehouses and the hotel Pharou. Swarms of cigar-smoking bipeds were lounging edgeways from the cafés and billiard rooms. I recognized many old familiar faces of the boatmen, and among other rare birds, the overgrown eunich organist, who used to be the wonder of my boyhood—there he stood as of yore, exercising his curiosity in scrutinizing the new comers.

The tenth of a century makes vast strides towards changing the appearance of things in these electrical times, and although I discovered no difference in beauties of dale, hill or mountain, for the Organos still shot their needle-like peaks as high up into heaven, the weather was quite as calm and hot in the mornings, and as breezy in the afternoons, the same bells were heard ringing the most confused of chimes, squares were as crowded, streets no wider, and negroes as numerous and spicy as ever; yet what I mean is, the animus of the town itself had been transmogrified. The beautiful bay was traversed by hateful little beetles of steamers, drawing long lines of sooty black smoke through the pure air, instead of multitudes of picturesque lateen craft, with the musical chants and cadences of the negro oarsmen, skimming and singing over the water. Then, too, streets were filled with omnibii, cabs, gigs, gondolas, and all other conceivable inventions for locomotion, serving to make one uncomfortable from the very strivings to avoid it: I forgive the entire African races for whistling the latest polkas, or rather *sistling* through their closed teeth, for holding to the ancient custom of affectionately interlacing little fingers, as they come dancing, chattering and jabbering along the streets. Fleas, too, were as lively and vigorous as ever, and I thought I recognised one centenarian, who hopped on me with an ardor truly

delightful, upon stepping on shore at the palace stairs. The shopping Rua Ouvidor was still the same incongruous assortment of French and German shops, with here and there an unobtrusive counter, behind which some Levite displayed ebony trays of twinkling brilliants, enough to make the mouth water, eyes wink, and pocket bleed, should a purchase be thought of. Black nurses still held their juvenile charges out from the lattice-work doors and windows, with little bare legs dangling outside, to favor any chance pedestrian with an eleemosynary kick, should he come within reach. Then the same interminable lines of slaves, each a bag of coffee on his head, preceded by a leading chorister, with small rattle, by way of accompaniment to the harsh chorus, as they pass swiftly on with a sharp jerking trot to the shipping or warehouses of the port. All this was still the same to me, but in general it was not my Rio, not the spot where my first and boyish impressions were formed, of the voluptuous, luxurious life under tropical suns. The march of invention is rapidly reducing everything to a standard of its own, and I could only sigh over the innovations constituting refinement in civilization, where it seems so little needed.

A very great improvement, in all praise be it said, had taken place in the order and cleanliness of the city—we were not accosted once by mendicants, when formerly they were as thick as lazzaroni in Naples. The police was large, remarkably well organized, and the riots and assassinations of former days were unheard of. The cafés and hotels have kept pace with the times, where one may satisfy his gourmanderie with a certain show of epicurianism, provided his palate be not too delicate for many kinds of fishes and vegetables, with mayhap, at rare intervals, a

taste of monkey or paroquet. Yankee ice is very generally used, and a philanthropic person had hung out a banner with "Mint Juleps" inscribed thereon, but the thirst for these cold institutions is not so much felt as in some parts of the United States; for here the weather, though hot and enervating, has not the oppressiveness and lassitude of our summers, and besides, fluids are made sufficiently cool and cooling, through the medium of unglazed water jars, swung gently in the breeze.

We saw one deformed African attached to a small tray and sign, on which was legibly painted "ginger-beer," evidently meaning ginger pop. We execrated that monster on the spot, and said to ourselves, what is the necessity for leaving home, if we are to be stared out of countenance by our household gods, at the antipodes.

Another trifling peculiarity attracted our attention. I allude to the trumpet-shaped water pipes, sticking boldly out from below every balconied window, of all colors and sizes, reminding us of misshapen angels, with puffed out cheeks, and trombones, invariably found in the upper angles of miraculous, or scriptural paintings: fortunately there was no rain, or we might have been gratified with a douche that the great Preussnitz himself would have been proud of.

By no art or teaching can His Imperial Majesty, with "all the Senate at his heels," be induced to give a respectable currency to the country. The stamped paper of the empire in rais fluctuates like quicksilver at the mart, and it is next to impossible to form any reasonable conjecture what change may take place from day to day. In lieu of this, copper coins, nearly the diameter of ship biscuits, valued from twenty to forty rais, and com

monly called "dumps," are used in every day traffic, but should a person require more than one dollar at a time, it were advisable to employ a negro and basket to transport them.

Among the devices before touched upon, in the way of ambulation, was one which amused us excessively. Nothing less than a four-mule omnibus, driven by the most remarkable Jehu ever beheld—evidently one who had seen, or at least heard of, the natty style things were conducted at Charing Cross before rails were laid. I had the honor to be propelled by this individual a number of times, and it was well worth a "dump" to see him pull on a very dirty buskin glove, the manner he handled the rope reins, give his glazed hat a rap, and button up a huge box coat, with the sun pouring down a stream of noonday fire; then an encouraging yell to the leaders, swinging himself from side to side, away he rattled to the astonishment of every wonder-loving person in the neighborhood. The mules acted up to their natural propensities; at times dashing along the sidewalks, and against houses; again coming to a dead halt, and favoring each other with a few slapping salutes with their heels; then off they clattered once more, until about to double a sharp corner, when if they did not bolt into the pulperia opposite, like a Habanese volante, the conductor, with the most imperturbable dignity, would crack his leathern whip, shout like a devil, and do his possible to run over a covey of miserable lame blackies, who would start up in great bewilderment, like boys catching trapball, without knowing precisely in which direction would be safest to dodge the eccentric vehicle. I always cheered my friend with reiterated marks of approbation, as I look with leniency upon the peculiarities of mankind, and ever make a rule to respect the absurdities of others. The Jehu

whose accomplishments I have so faintly portrayed, can be regarded at any hour of the day, on the road to Boto Fogo, and he will be found quite as interesting an object of curiosity as the Falls of Tejuco, to say nothing of the fatigue and expense of the journey