

THE GREEN PEA PIRATES

By PETER B. KYNE

Author of "WEBSTER-MAN'S MAN," "THE VALLEY OF THE GIANTS," ETC.

Copyright, by Peter B. Kyne

"Green Pea Pirates" is a combination of sea and land narrative told in the inimitable style which has given the Peter B. Kyne stories such a strong pull with the reading public. It is jolly, even rollicking and has thrill, romance and punch.

CHAPTER I.

They had seen the fog rolling down the coast shortly after the Maggie had rounded Pillar Point at sunset and headed north. Captain Scraggs had been steaming too many unprofitable years on San Francisco bay, the Suisun and San Pablo sloughs and dogholes and the Sacramento river to be deceived as to the character of that fog, and he remarked as much to Mr. Gibney. "We'd better turn back to Halfmoon bay and tie up at the dock," he added.

"Calamity howler!" retorted Mr. Gibney and gave the wheel a spoke or two. "Scraggs, you're enough to make a real sailor sick at the stomach."

"But I tell you she's a tute fog, Gib. She rises up in the marshes of the Sacramento and San Joaquin, drifts down to the bay and out the Golden Gate and just naturally blocks the wheels of commerce while she lasts. Why, I've known the ferry boats between San Francisco and Oakland to get lost for hours on their twenty-minute run—and all along of a blasted tute fog."

"I don't doubt your word a mite, Scraggs. I never did see a ferry-boat skipper that knew shucks about sailing," retorted the imperturbable Gibney responding. "Me, I'll smell my way home in any tute fog."

"Maybe you can an' maybe you can't, Gib, although far be it from me to question your ability. I'll take it for granted. Nevertheless, I ain't a-goin' to run the risk of you havin' catarrh of the nose an' confusin' your smells tonight. You ain't got nothin' at stake but your job, whereas if I lose the Maggie I lose my hull fortune. Bring her about, Gib, an' let's bustle back."

"Don't be an old woman," Mr. Gibney pleaded. "Scraggs, you just ain't got enough works inside you to fill a wrist watch."

"I ain't a-goin' to poke around in the dark an' a tute fog, feelin' for the Golden Gate," Captain Scraggs shrilled peevishly.

"H—'s bells an' panther tracks! I've got my old courses, an' if I foller them we can't help gettin' home."

Captain Scraggs laid his hand on Mr. Gibney's great arm and tried to smile paternally. "Gib, my dear boy," he pleaded, "control yourself. Don't argue with me, Gib. I'm master here an' you're mate. Do I make myself clear?"

"You do, Scraggs. But it won't avall you nothin'. You're only master becuz of a gentleman's agreement between us two, an' because I'm man enough to figger there's certain rights due you as owner o' the Maggie. But don't you forget that accordin' to the records o' the inspector's office, I'm master of the Maggie, an' the way I figger it, whenever there's any call to show a little real seamanship, that gentleman's agreement don't stand."

livered, nevertheless, impersonally. He closed the pilot-house door furiously behind him and started for the galley. "Some bright day I'm goin' to git tired o' hearin' you cuss my proxy," Mr. Gibney bawled after him, "an' when that fatal time arrives I'll scatter a can o' Kill-Flea over you an' the shippin' world'll know you no more."

"Oh, go to—glory, you pig-iron polisher," Captain Scraggs tossed back at him over his shoulder—and honor was satisfied. In the lee of the pilot house Captain Scraggs paused, set his infamous old brown derby hat on the deck and leaped furiously upon it with both feet. Six times he did this; then with a blow of his fist he knocked the rick into a semblance of its original shape and immediately felt better.

"If I was you, skipper, I'd hold my temper until I got to port; then I'd git jingled an' forgit my troubles in-expensively," somebody advised him.

Scraggs turned. In a little square hatch the head and shoulders of Mr. Bartholomew McGuffey, chief engineer; first, second and third assistant engineer, oiler, wiper, water-tender, and coal-passer of the Maggie, appeared. He was standing on the steel ladder that led up from his stuffy engine room and had evidently come up, like a whale, for a breath of fresh air. "The way you ruin them bonnets o' yours sure is a scandal," Mr. McGuffey concluded. "If I had a temper as nasty as yours I'd take soothin' sirup or somethin' for it."

Before proceeding further with this narrative, due respect for the reader's curiosity directs that we diverge for a period sufficient to present a brief history of the steamer Maggie and her peculiar crew. We will begin with the Maggie.

She had been built on Puget sound back in the eighties, and was one hundred and six feet over all, twenty-six feet beam and seven feet draft. Driven by a little steple compound engine, in the pride of her youth she could make ten knots. However, what with old age and boiler scale, the best she could do now was six, and had Mr. McGuffey paid the slightest heed to the limitations imposed upon his steam gauge by the supervising inspector of boilers at San Francisco, she would have been limited to five. Each annual inspection threatened to be her last, and Captain Scraggs, her sole owner, lived in perpetual fear that eventually the day must arrive when, to save the lives of himself and his crew, he would be forced to ship a new boiler and renew the rotten timbers around her deadwood. She had come into Captain Scraggs' pos-



"I Certainly Do, Scraggs, Old Pepper-Pot," He Replied Calmly.

session at public auction conducted by the United States marshal, following her capture as she sneaked into San Francisco bay one dark night with a load of Chinamen and opium from Ensenada. She had cost him fifteen hundred hard-earned dollars. Scraggs—Phineas F. Scraggs, to employ his full name—was precisely the kind of man one might expect to own and operate the Maggie. Rat-faced, snaggle-toothed and furtive, with a low cunning that sometimes passed for great intelligence, Scraggs' character is best described in a homely American word. He was "ornery." A native of San Francisco, he had grown up around the docks and had developed from messboy on a river steamer to master of bay and river steamboats, although it is not of record that he ever commanded such a

craft. Despite his "tucket" there was none so foolish as to trust him with one—a condition of affairs which had tended to sour a disposition not naturally sweet. The yearning to command a steamboat gradually had developed into an obsession. Result—the "fast and commodious S. S. Maggie," as the United States marshal had had the audacity to advertise her.

In the beginning, Captain Scraggs had planned to do bay and river towing with the Maggie. Alas! The first time the unfortunate Scraggs attempted to tow a heavily laden barge up river, a light fog had come down, necessitating the frequent blowing of the whistle. Following the sixth long blast, Mr. McGuffey had whistled Scraggs on the engine-room howler; swearing horribly, he had demanded to be informed why in this and that the skipper didn't leave that dod-gasted whistle alone. It was using up his steam faster than he could manufacture it. Thereafter, Scraggs had used a patent foghorn, and when the honest McGuffey had once more succeeded in conserving sufficient steam to crawl up river, the tide had turned and the Maggie could not buck the ebb. McGuffey declared a few new tubes in the boiler would do the trick, but on the other hand, Mr. Gibney pointed out that the old craft was practically punk aft and a stiff tow would jerk the tail off the old girl. In despair, therefore, Captain Scraggs had abandoned bay and river towing and was prepared to jump overboard and end all, when an opportunity offered for the freighting of garden truck and dairy produce from Halfmoon bay to San Francisco.

But now a difficulty arose. The new run was an "outside" one—salt water all the way. Under the ruling of the inspectors, the Maggie would be running coastwise the instant she engaged in the green-pea and string-bean trade, and Captain Scraggs' license provided for no such contingency. His ticket entitled him to act as master on the waters of San Francisco bay and the waters tributary thereto, and although Scraggs argued that the Pacific ocean constituted waters "tributary thereto," if he understood the English language, the inspectors were obdurate. What if the distance was less than twenty-five miles? they pointed out. The voyage was undeniably coastwise and carried with it all the risk of wind and wave. And in order to impress upon Captain Scraggs the weight of their authority, the inspectors suspended for six months Captain Scraggs' bay and river license for having dared to negotiate two coastwise voyages without consulting them. Furthermore, they warned him that the next time he did it they would condemn the fast and commodious Maggie.

In this extremity, Fate had sent to Captain Scraggs a large, imposing, capable, but socially indifferent person who responded to the name of Adelbert P. Gibney. Mr. Gibney had spent part of an adventurous life in the United States navy, where he had applied himself and acquired a fair smattering of navigation. Prior to entering the navy he had been a fore-mast hand in clipper ships and had held a second mate's berth. Following his discharge from the navy he had sailed coastwise on steam schooners, and after attending a navigation school for two months, had procured a license as chief mate of steam, any ocean and any tonnage.

Unfortunately for Mr. Gibney, he had a falling. Most of us have. The most genial fellow in the world, he was cursed with too much brains and imagination and a thirst which required quenching around pay day. Also, he had that beastly habit of command which is inseparable from a born leader; when he held a first mate's berth, he was wont to try to "run the ship" and, on occasions, made out suggestions to his skipper. Thus, in time, he acquired a reputation for being unreliable and a wind-bag, with the result that skippers were chary of engaging him. Not to be too prolix, at the time Captain Scraggs made the disheartening discovery that he had to have a skipper for the Maggie, Mr. Gibney found himself reduced to the alternative of longshore work or a fo'castle berth in a windjammer bound for blue water.

With alacrity, therefore, Mr. Gibney had accepted Scraggs' offer of seventy-five dollars a month—and found"—to skipper the Maggie on her coastwise run. As a first mate of steam he had no difficulty inducing the inspectors to grant him a license to skipper such an abandoned craft as the Maggie, and accordingly he hung up his ticket in her pilot house and was registered as her master, albeit, under a gentleman's agreement with Scraggs he was not to claim the title of captain and was known to the world as the Maggie's first mate, second mate, third mate, quartermaster, purser and freight clerk. One Nella Halvorsen, a solemn Swede with a placid, bovine disposition, constituted the fo'castle hands, while Bart McGuffey, a wastrel of the Gibney type but slower-witted, reigned supreme in the engine room. Also his case resembled that of Mr. Gibney in

that McGuffey's job on the Maggie was the first he had had in six months and he treasured it accordingly. For this reason he and Gibney had been inclined to take considerable slack from Captain Scraggs until McGuffey discovered that, in all probability, no engineer in the world, except himself, would have the courage to trust himself within range of the Maggie's boilers, and, consequently, he had Captain Scraggs more or less at his mercy. Upon imparting this suspicion to Mr. Gibney, the latter decided that it would be a cold day, indeed, when his ticket would not constitute a club wherewith to make Scraggs, as Gibney expressed it, "mind his P's and Q's."

It will be seen, therefore, that mutual necessity held this queerly assorted trio together, and, though they quarreled furiously, nevertheless, with the passage of time their own weaknesses and those of the Maggie had aroused in each for the other a curious affection. While Captain Scraggs frequently "pulled" a monumental bluff and threatened to dismiss both Gibney and McGuffey—and, in fact, occasionally went so far as to order them off his ship, on their part Gibney and McGuffey were wont to work the same racket and resign. With the subsidence of their anger and the return to reason, however, the trio had a habit of meeting accidentally in the Bowhead saloon, where, sooner or later, they were certain to bury their grudge in a foaming beaker of steam beer, and return joyfully to the Maggie.

Of all the little ship's company, Nella Halvorsen, colloquially designated as "The Squarehead," was the only individual who was, in truth and in fact, his own man. Nella was steady, industrious, faithful, capable, and reliable; any one of a hundred deckhand jobs were ever open to Nella, yet, for some reason best known to himself, he preferred to stick by the Maggie. In his dull way it is probable that he was fascinated by the agile intelligence of Mr. Gibney, the vitriolic tongue of Captain Scraggs, and the elephantine wit and grizzled bear courage of Mr. McGuffey. At any rate, he delighted in hearing them snarl and wrangle.

However, to return to the Maggie which we left entering the tute fog a few miles north of Pillar point:

CHAPTER II.

Captain Scraggs and The Squarehead partook first of the ham and eggs, coffee and bread, which the skipper prepared. Scraggs then prepared a similar meal for Mr. Gibney and McGuffey, set it in the oven to keep warm, and descended to the engine room to relieve McGuffey for dinner. Nella at the same time took the course from Mr. Gibney and relieved the latter at the wheel. By this time, darkness had descended upon the world, and the Maggie had entered the fog; following her custom she proceeded in absolute silence, although as a partial offset to the extreme liability to collision with other coastwise craft, due to the non-whistling rule aboard the Maggie, Mr. Gibney had laid a course half a mile inside the usual steamer lanes, albeit due to his overwhelming desire for peace he had neglected to inform his owner of this; the honest fellow proceeded upon the hypothesis that what people do not know is not apt to trouble them.

Captain Scraggs read the log and reported the mileage to Mr. Gibney, who figured with the stub of a pencil on the pilot house wall, wagged his head, and appeared satisfied. "Better go for'd," he ordered, "an' help The Squarehead on the lookout. At eight o'clock we ought to be right under the lee o' Point San Pedro; when I whistle we ought to catch the echo thrown back by the cliff. Listen for it."

Promptly at eight o'clock Mr. McGuffey was horrified to see his steam gauge drop half a pound as the Maggie's siren sounded. Mr. Gibney struck his ingenious head out of the pilot house and listened, but no answering echo reached his ears. "Hear anything?" he bawled.

"Hear'd the Maggie's siren," Captain Scraggs retorted venomously. Mr. Gibney leaped out on deck, selected a small head of cabbage from a broken crate and hurled it forward. Then he sprang back into the pilot house and straightened the Maggie on her course again. He leaned over the binnacle, with the cuff of his watchcoat wiping away the moisture on the glass, and studied the instrument carefully. "I don't trust the danged thing," he muttered. "Guess I'll haul her off a coupler points an' try the whistle again."

He did. Still no echo. He was inclined to believe that Captain Scraggs had not read the taffrail log correctly, and when at eight-thirty he tried the whistle again he was still without results in the way of an echo from the cliff, albeit the engine room howler brought him several of a profuse character from the perspiring McGuffey. "We've passed Pedro," Mr. Gibney decided. He ground his cud and muttered ugly things to himself, for his dead reckoning had gone astray and

he was worried. The fog, if anything, was thicker than ever.

Time passed. Suddenly Mr. Gibney thrilled electrically to a shrill yelp from Captain Scraggs.

"What's that?" Mr. Gibney bawled.

"I dunno. Sounds like the surf, Gib."

"Ain't you been on this run long enough to know that the surf don't sound like nothin' else in life but breakers?" Gibney retorted wrathfully.

"I ain't certain, Gib."

Instantly Gibney signaled McGuffey for half speed ahead.

"Breakers on the starboard bow," yelled Captain Scraggs.

"Port bow," The Squarehead corrected him.

"Oh, my great patience!" Mr. Gibney groaned. "They're on both bows an' we're headed straight for the beach. Here's where we all go to the devil together," and he yanked wildly at the signal wire that led to the engine room, with the intention of giving McGuffey four bells—the signal



But No Answering Echo Reached His Ears.

aboard the Maggie for full speed astern. At the second jerk the wire broke, but not until two bells had sounded in the engine room—the signal for full speed ahead. The efficient McGuffey promptly kicked her wide open, and the Fates decreed that, having done so, Mr. McGuffey should forthwith climb the ladder and thrust his head out on deck for a breath of fresh air. Instantly a chorus of shrieks up on the fo'castle head attracted his attention to such a degree that he failed to hear the engine room howler as Mr. Gibney blew frantically into it.

Presently, out of the hubbub forward, Mr. McGuffey heard Captain Scraggs wall frantically: "Stop her! For the love of heaven, stop her!" Instantly the engineer dropped back into the engine room and set the Maggie full speed astern; then he grasped the howler and held it to his ear.

"Stop her!" he heard Gibney shriek. "Why in blazes don't you stop her?" "She's set astern, Gib. She'll ease up in a minute."

"You know it!" Gibney answered significantly. The Maggie climbed lazily to the crest of a long oily roller, slid recklessly down the other side, and took the following sea over her taffrail. She still had some head on, but very little—not quite sufficient to give her decent steerage way, as Mr. Gibney discovered when, having at length communicated his desires to McGuffey, he spun the wheel frantically in a belated effort to swing the Maggie's dirty nose out to sea.

"Nothing doin'," he snarled. "She'll have to come to a complete stop before she begins to walk backward and get steerage way on again. She'll bump as sure as death an' taxes."

"She'll bump as sure as death an' taxes."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

"Spendthrift Wills" Common. "Spendthrift wills," in which the heir is placed virtually at the mercy of the executor, who must watch his conduct closely to determine whether the money properly can be turned over to him, are common. Monthly payments to heirs are often specified and provisions made for burials and the erecting of monuments. Conditions may be attached that a proposed church building to which the testator desires to leave the money must be built within a certain time or the bequest is forfeited. Money is placed in trust for sending children to college or for other purposes, and the trust company must see to it that it is used for the purposes specified and for no others.

Thousands Have Kidney Trouble and Never Suspect It

Applicants for Insurance Often Rejected.

Judging from reports from druggists who are constantly in direct touch with the public, there is one preparation that has been very successful in overcoming these conditions. The mild and healing influence of Dr. Kilmer's Swamp-Root is soon realized. It stands the highest for its remarkable record of success.

An examining physician for one of the prominent Life Insurance Companies, in an interview on the subject, made the astonishing statement that one reason why so many applicants for insurance are rejected is because kidney trouble is so common to the American people, and the large majority of those whose applications are declined do not even suspect that they have the disease.

Dr. Kilmer's Swamp Root is on sale at all drug stores in bottles of two sizes, medium and large. However, if you wish first to test this great preparation send ten cents to Dr. Kilmer & Co., Binghamton, N. Y., for a sample bottle. When writing be sure and mention this paper. Advertisement.

Cinders in the Eye. Roll soft paper up like a lamp-lighter, wet tip to remove or use medicine dropper to draw it out. Rub the other eye.

MOTHER! CLEAN CHILD'S BOWELS WITH CALIFORNIA FIG SYRUP

Even a sick child loves the "fruity" taste of "California Fig Syrup." If the little tongue is coated, or if your child is listless, cross, feverish, full of cold, or has colic, give a teaspoonful to cleanse the liver and bowels. In a few hours you can see for yourself how thoroughly it works all the constipation poison, sour bile and waste out of the bowels, and you have a well, playful child again.

Millions of mothers keep "California Fig Syrup" handy. They know a teaspoonful today saves a sick child tomorrow. Ask your druggist for genuine "California Fig Syrup" which has directions for babies and children of all ages printed on bottle. Mother! You must say "California" or you may get an imitation fig syrup.—Advertisement.

Way of the transgressor is hard, but some transgressors think the excitement is a recompense.

FOR MOTHERS! THIS ADVICE IS VITAL TO YOU

Council Bluffs, Iowa—"Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription was a wonderful help to me during pregnancy. At these times I have always relied on it to keep me healthy and strong. I am the mother of eleven healthy children and I took 'Favorite Prescription' with all of them (with perhaps one exception) and in addition to their being healthy, my suffering was very slight, due I am sure to the use of the 'Prescription.' Women who take it during this time will find it a very helpful medicine in every way." —Mrs. W. M. Statts, 2111 Ave. D. Get this Prescription now in tablets or liquid from your druggist. Also write in all confidence to Dr. Pierce, President of the Invalids' Hotel in Buffalo, N. Y., and get FREE MEDICAL ADVICE in return. Send him 10c if you wish a trial pkg. of the Prescription tablets.

Habit Nujol will give you the healthiest habit in the world. Without forcing or irritating, Nujol softens the food waste. The many tiny muscles in the intestines can then easily remove it regularly. Absolutely harmless — try it. The Modern Method of Treating an Old Complaint. Nujol For Constipation.

No Soap Better For Your Skin Than Cuticura Soap 25c, Ointment 25 and 50c, Talcum 25c.

Most men hate cleaning up their desks as much as women hate dish washing; but it has to be done.

Just say to your grocer Red Cross Ball Blue when buying bluing. You will be more than repaid by the results. Once tried always used.—Advertisement.

Music has charm in the country where the houses are a mile apart.

MURINE Night and Morning Keep Your Eyes Clean, Clear and Healthy Write for Free Eye Care Book Murine Co., Chicago, U.S.A.