

BULLION ON BULLION ROW

Strong Boxes of Precious Metal Safely Guarded Around Wall Street.

CROOKS GIVE THE BOODLE A FROST

The Money Truckman and His Business-Fortunes in the Pockets of a Messenger-Scenes in the Coin District.

Just inside the railing of the Mills building, down in broad street, says the New York Sun, and only a few yards away from where the throng of outside brokers jostle and shout in the roadway hangs a plate with a pencil attached by a string. Once in a while a clerk will hurry to the corner, take a look around, and then, not finding the person he seeks, will scribble something on this plate.

At intervals a big, heavy man strolls over and takes a look at it. If there is anything written upon it he will probably give a order to the driver of a two-horse truck which has stood for most of the day at the corner, the blankets will be taken off the horses and man and truck will set off down the street obviously on business intent.

You are likely to meet this or similar trucks with the names of the same owner upon them two or three times in the course of a day in and about Wall street. Sometimes the truck contains a few boxes or barrels, no different at a casual glance from any other boxes or barrels, or maybe there will be upon it a number of bricks of white metal, in appearance not unlike solder.

In either case there are likely to be two or three roughly dressed men seated with the driver or on the rear of the truck, and two or three more better clad men, whom anybody versed in the ways of the financial district will know once for bank clerks or bank messengers, swinging their legs from the tailboard or walking beside the vehicle.

There is nothing about the outfit likely to attract particular attention from anybody. A close observer may see that the boxes or bags are strongly ironed, locked and sealed, and he may wonder that mature bank clerks, who do not look as if they were inclined to frivolity, have time to spare for a ride on a truck which proceeds at a bare walking pace or even slower. But the usual passerby will never bestow a second glance upon the crawling vehicle.

It doesn't look different from a truck carrying any old kind of freight, but for all that the load it carries is often worth more than a great many of the buildings it passes. That load would set up a score of ordinary men with fortunes large enough to keep them in luxury without doing a stroke of work for the rest of their lives.

Bars of Solid Gold. The barrels contain bars of solid gold, the boxes are stuffed full of gold coin, and the white metal is bullion silver going from safe deposit vault to subterranean, or, if the load is gold coin, from bank to bank. The truck is Barkley's, the money truckman's, the state hung on the fence is Barkley's office, and the big man who consults him from time to time and might be a retired policeman or a well-to-do grocer is Barkley himself.

All Wall street knows this and knows what the truck contains when it passes with its load. But Wall street is not interested. It is a sight so common that it has become commonplace. In the fact that a shabby old truck with a million or two upon it crawls safely through the most crowded streets in the city with only a guard of two or three truckmen and a bank clerk or two to watch over it nobody sees anything out of the ordinary.

That news of the shipment is written on a slate which hangs on a fence in reach of every passerby is no less a matter of course. Gold has been transferred safely in that way for years and there is no reason why it should be any different now. As a matter of fact it would be harder to steal that gold than anything else in the city. In the first place, there is a guard of four to six men with every load of it.

In the second place, the gold is usually in bars weighing from five to ten ounces, polished and packed in kegs locked and sealed, with from three to a dozen bars in a keg. The gold coin is in strong boxes equally heavy.

The silver, which is carried here in the bottom of the truck, is in ingots, and a single ingot would be a good load for a powerful man.

Then the transfer usually takes place in crowded streets and in the crowd there is safety. It would be a bold gang of crooks than ever held up a train that would ever try to rob the money truck.

As the truck enters the office of Barkley, the money truckman, has been in the business all his life. He has a monopoly of the money carrying in this city and his father had it before him for more years than anybody now in Wall street remembers.

He is a conservative person. As his father did business, so does he. He has never went wrong with either, and the banks and the people whose business it is to handle millions have accepted the methods of both with perfect satisfaction. They are now a part of the daily routine and the street sees nothing wonderful about them.

An Ordinary Business. "Why," said the shipping clerk of one of the largest exchange houses in Wall street, when the Sun reporter sought information about gold transfers, "you can't write anything about that. It's the most ordinary everyday transaction down here.

"You just pack up the gold and seal it and send for Barkley and he carries it away to wherever it has to go. There isn't anything else to it."

"Nothing ever goes wrong and there really isn't anything interesting about it. It is there, now."

The reporter thought there was. But the money truckman was of the same opinion as the money exchange clerk. Said he: "Things have been printed in the papers years ago about this business, but father didn't hold with them or give the information the papers got. And I won't. There isn't anything about it to make a story about any. We just move the stuff. We're happy to have it, but it's the money truckman is big—six feet tall at least—and as broad and solid as he is tall. His face is as set and firm as his frame is solid.

If a man could look like a stone wall that man would be Barkley. Nobody who looked at him twice would trust him with a million. It wouldn't trouble him. He would just sit on the million till the owner came back to claim it, and before

that nobody could get him to forget his watch on it any more than anybody could induce a good bulldog to drop a particularly juicy bone.

He was superintending the transfer of a truckload of silver when the reporter tried to find out things about the bullion-carrying from him. He checked off each ingot four times, not as if he was doubtful about the metal, but as a matter of duty.

Then he watched one of his men stamp his firm sign upon each ingot with a steel die punched by a heavy hammer, gave his receipt for the cargo and moved away with it down Wall street as unemotional as any slab of silver in the load.

The Rear Guard. With him was a smaller, more active-looking man with a dash of the west—apparently a hiker from the mountains of the brown sambreiro. If the build of the horse truckman plainly showed that he could tell any ill-intentioned crook with one blow of his big fist, the other man looked as though he would surely have a revolver in his hip pocket and would know how to use it.

Besides the pair there were on the truck with the driver a couple of stalwart men who had assisted in loading the silver when it came up on the little sidewalk elevator from the safe deposit vault beneath the Mills building. One of them recognized the value of the freight as it was carried out to the truck, and commented on it.

"Geat!" remarked a weak-chinned, over-dressed young man whose trousers were turned up to gladden beholders with a view of his shapely legs. "Wouldn't that make you sick?"

"Yer couldn't get none of it," responded the hatchet-faced youth who accompanied him, "and if yer could, yer couldn't get away with it. If yer could, no more ledgers for me."

Sometimes there is a million dollars' worth in one of those truck loads. Sometimes there is more, but not much. A million in gold with its accompanying packing cases will weigh nearly three tons; a million in silver more than a dozen times as much.

Wall street has at times moved as much as \$25,000,000 or \$30,000,000, all of this huge sum in bullion, in a day from different points in the district to other points or out of it. A single bank or firm of money brokers has transferred \$5,000,000 or \$6,000,000 in a single shipment abroad.

The money truckman carries all this and he has never lost a single cargo, however small the amount. Once there was a hullabaloo about a missing slab of silver, but it turned up in the office of the money broker who raised that it had been stolen.

He carries the gold which is shipped abroad to the vessel which has to carry it and brings back to Wall street the imported bullion. It is a lucrative business and he and his family have had a monopoly of it since it began in this city. It is in transferring other kinds of money that the banks take chances. It was not for the sake of the gold carted through the streets that the dead line for crooks was established at Fulton street.

Messengers and Their Rolls. The bank messenger coming from the Clearing house after the day's balance has been struck will often carry back to his bank from \$1,000,000 to \$5,000,000 in cash in his leather pouch or in his trousers pocket; that is, in bills of large denominations, usually \$10,000 notes.

A bank's balance at the Clearing house will range from \$1,000,000 to \$5,000,000, or more. The messenger taking back the City National, will often have at the close of business from \$3,000,000 to \$5,000,000 to its credit. The messenger takes back to the bank that amount in bills.

He does not go alone. Usually it is a pair of men who escort the millions. There is the messenger with the money in his pocket, a clerk and the bank's detective or hoocher, whose physique and quickness have usually earned for him his job. The detective is armed.

So, though a bank messenger's millions are in a safe, they are carried off, it would practically be impossible to get them at any cost. They are not carried where a lucky grab would make them even temporarily change ownership.

The most valuable bundle of wealth that circulates through the streets in this city, however, is not moved in the financial district at all. It passes between the comptroller's office in the Stewart building and the city hall, and Eddie, who has been the comptroller's messenger from time immemorial, carries it.

It consists of newly signed city bonds. Wherever an issue of these bonds has been made, after having been filed out in the comptroller's office, they must be signed by the mayor. They are not then registered, but with the mayor's signature upon them they seem and might possibly be accepted as securities, even in the world of fraud. And no thief would get far with the plunder. The city sees to that.

But the sight of the messenger with millions in bonds, the little posies of three or more bearing millions in real cash through the financial quarters to the banks, the bare legs in the money truck, the kegs of gold bars and the strong boxes full of gold coin must sometimes make some evil minds dream dreams such as made Superintendent Bynnes long ago establish that dead line above the streets of temptation.

Still Keeps It Up. "During a period of poor health some time ago I had a trial bottle of DeWitt's Little Early Risers," says Justice of the Peace Adam Shook of New Lisbon, Ind. "I took them and they did me so much good I have used them ever since." Safe, reliable and gentle, DeWitt's Little Early Risers help the grip and stimulate the liver and promote regular and easy action of the bowels.

The Weeping Willow. The weeping willow tree came to America through the medium of Alexander Pope, the poet, who planted a willow twig on the banks of the Thames at his Twickenham villa. The twig came to him in a box of figs sent from Smyrna by a friend who had just all in the South Sea bubble and had gone to that distant land to recoup his fortunes. Harper's Encyclopedia tells the story of the willow's arrival in America. A young British officer who came to Boston with the army to crush the rebellion of the American colonies, brought with him a twig from Pope's new beautiful willow tree, intending to plant it in America when he should comfortably settle down on the lands confiscated from the conquered Americans. The young officer, disappointed in these expectations, gave his willow twig wrapped in oil silk, to John Parke Custis, Mrs. Washington's son, who planted it on his Arlington estate in Virginia. It thrived and became the progenitor of all our willow trees.

STRANDED.

By Henry Seton Merriman.

(Copyright 1902 by Henry Seton Merriman.) "Ascun chemin de fleurs ne conduit a la gloire."

It was nearly half-past eight when Grandhaven ran into a fog-bank, and the second officer sent a message to the captain's steward who was waiting at that great man's dinner table in the saloon.

The captain's steward was a discreet man. He gave the message in a whisper as he swept the crumbs from the table with a jerk of his napkin. The second officer could not, of course, reduce speed on his own responsibility. Grandhaven had been carrying through fog-banks ever since it left Plymouth in the gray of a November afternoon.

Every Atlantic traveler knows Grandhaven. It was so well known that every berth was engaged despite the lateness of the season. It was considered a privilege to sail with Captain Dixon, the most popular man on the wide sea. A few millionaires considered themselves honored by his friendship. One of them called him Tom on shore. He was an Englishman, though Grandhaven was technically an American ship. His enemies said that he owed his success in life to his manners, which certainly were excellent. Not too familiar with anyone at sea, but unerringly discriminating between man and man, between a real position and an imaginary one. For in the greatest republic the world has yet seen men are keenly alive to social distinctions.

On the other hand his friends pointed to his record. Captain Dixon had never made a mistake in seamanship. He was a handsome man with a trim brown beard cut to a point in the naval style, gray blue eyes and a bluff way of carrying his head. The women passengers invariably fell into the habit of describing him as a splendid man, and the word seemed to fit him like a glove. Nature had certainly designed him to be placed somewhere in the front of life, to be shown up as a dandy and to be admired by the multitude. She had written success upon his sunburnt face.

He had thousands of friends. Every seat at his table was booked two voyages ahead—and he knew the value of popularity. He was never carried off his feet, but enjoyed it simply and heartily. For this reason he loved one summer voyage with a tall and soft-mannered Canadian girl, a Hebe, with the face of a Madonna; with thoughtful, waiting blue eyes. She was only 19, and, before him, the girl was astonished at her good fortune. For this reason he was king on his own great decks. No prince could be good enough for him—had princes been in the habit of crossing the Atlantic. Captain Dixon had now been married some years.

His marriage had made a perceptible change in the man's appearance. A bachelor captain appeals to a different world. He was still a great favorite with men. Although Grandhaven had been only on night at sea, the captain's table had no vacant seats. There were all old travelers and there had been the libations of the gods no made manifest by empty bottles and not a little empty laughter. Dixon, however, was steady enough. He had reluctantly accepted one glass of champagne from the bottle of a senator, powerful in shipping circles. He had his trousers made a point of drinking water at table. The modern sailor is one of the startling products of these odd times. He dresses for dinner, and when off duty may be found sitting on the saloon stairs discussing with the ladies passengers the respective merits of Wagner and Chopin in the grand style. The captain's band—when he ought to be asleep in bed in preparation for the middle watch.

The captain received the message with a curt nod. But he did not rise from the table. He knew that a hundred eyes were fixed upon him, watching his every glance. If he had jumped up and hurried from the table the night's rest of half a hundred anxious ladies would inevitably suffer.

He took his watch from his pocket and rose laughing at some sally made by a neighbor. As he passed down the length of the saloon he saw the steward and exchanged a laughing word with another. He was a very gracious monarch.

On deck it was wet and cold. A keen wind from the northwest seemed to promise a heavy sea and a dirty night when the Lizard should be under way. The protection of the high Devon moorlands left behind. The captain's cabin was at the head of the saloon stairs. Captain Dixon lost no time in changing his smart new jacket for a thicker coat. Oilskins and a narrow iron ladder into the howling darkness of the upper bridge with a brisk readiness to meet any situation.

The fog bank was a thick one. It was like a sheet of thin and very wet cotton wool laid upon the sea. The lights at the bow and the huge steamer were barely visible. There was no glare aloft where the main light stared unblinkingly into the mist.

Dixon exchanged a few words with the second officer, who was rather restless, by the engine room telegraph. They spoke in monosyllables. The dial showed "full speed ahead." Captain Dixon stood chewing the end of his golden mustache, which he had drawn in between his teeth. He looked forward and aft and up aloft in three quick movements. The coastguard had laid his two hands on the engine room telegraph and reduced the pace to half speed. There were a hundred people on board who would take note of it with a throbbing of uneasiness at their hearts, but that could not be helped.

The second officer stepped sideways into the chartroom, reluctant to turn his eyes elsewhere than dead ahead into the wind and mist, to make a note in two books that lay open on the table under the shaded electric lamp. It was twenty minutes to 9. Grandhaven's quick ship, but it was also a safe one. The captain had laid a course close under the Lizard lights. He intended to alter it, but not yet. The mist might lift. There was plenty of time; for by dead reckoning he could scarcely hope to sight the coast, but the coastguard's clock. The captain turned and said a single word to his second officer and a moment later the great fog horn above them in the darkness coughed out its deafening note of warning. A dead silence followed. Captain Dixon stood with a curt grunt of satisfaction. There was nothing near them. They could carry on, playing their game of blindman's bluff with fate, open-eyed, steady, watchful.

There was no music tonight, though the band had played the cheeriest tunes during dinner. Many of the passengers were in their cabins already; for Grandhaven was rolling gently on the shoulder of the Atlantic swell. The sea was heavy, but not so heavy as they would certainly encounter west of the Land's End. Presently Grandhaven crept out into a clear space, leaving the fog bank in rolling clouds like cannon smoke behind her.

"Ah!" said Captain Dixon, with a sigh of relief. He had never been really anxious. The face of the second officer, ruddy and gleaming with sweat, looked suddenly and sundry lines around his eyes were wiped away as he stooped over the

sound of the escape of steam, which was almost instantly silenced. Then he heard nothing more. He went back to the station and made a dash for the breakers. He was so sure of his own ears that he took a lantern and went down to the beach. There he found nothing. He stumbled on toward Cadwith along the unbroken beach. At times he covered his lantern and peered out to sea. At last something white caught his eye. It was half afloat amid the breakers. He went knee deep and dragged a woman to the shore. She was quite dead. He held his lantern above his head and stared out to sea. The face of the water was flecked with dark shadows, and white patches. He was alone, two miles from land, up a steep comb and through muddy lanes, and as he turned to trudge toward the cliffs his heart suddenly leaped to his throat. There was someone approaching him across the shingle called to him, with command and a deadly resolution in its tones.

"You a coast guard?" it asked. "Yes."

The man came up to him and gave him orders to go to the nearest village for help, for lanterns and carts.

"What ship?" asked the coast guard. "Grandhaven, London, New Orleans," was the answer. "Hurry, and bring as many men as you can. Get a boat about here!"

"There is one on the beach half a mile along to the southward. But you cannot launch her through this."

"Oh, no," said the coast guard. "The coast guard glanced at the man with a sudden interest. "Who are you?" he asked. "Stoke—frat mate," was the reply.

The rest of the story of the wreck has been told by other pens, in the daily newspapers. How forty-seven people were crowded into the lifeboat from Cadwith picked up some floating insensibles on the ebbing tide with lifebuoys tied securely round them; how some men proved themselves great and some women greater; how a few proved themselves very contemptible, indeed; how the quiet chief officer, Stoke, a very common and weary sentiment which applied powerfully to the majority of their readers. Some of the newspapers, while agreeing that the first officer having saved many lives by his great exertions during the night and perfect organization for relief and help the next day, had made a mistake in not ordering the lifeboat to be lowered, and that the captain was the better part, and that they preferred to bear in such cases that all the officers had perished.

Stoke dispatched the surviving passengers by train from Helston back to London. They were not content with presenting him with a service of plate. They thought him stern and unapproachable. But before they were back at their homes or with their friends. Many of the dead were recovered and sent to sea in the heavy crop of the sea. St. Keverne churchyard. It was Stoke who organized these quiet burials and took a careful note of each name. It was he to whom the friends of the dead made their complaint or took their grateful remembrances, to both of which alike he gave a sympathetic hearing.

"Keep it at that," he said to the second officer, indicating the dial of the engine room.

"Stay where you are," he shouted to the two ladies who were preparing to quit the wheelhouse.

If Captain Dixon had never made a mistake in seamanship he must have thought the possibilities of this mistake out in all their bearings. For the situation was queer and compact in his mind. The order to stop the engine was given in sequence and were given to the right man.

From the deck beneath arose a confused murmur like the straining of bees in an overturned hive. Then a sharp order in one voice, clear and strong, followed by a second.

"Good," said the captain; "Stoke has got 'em in hand."

He broke off and looked sharply fore and aft and up above him at the towering funnel.

"She's heeling," he said. "Martin, she's heeling. The ship was slowly turning on its side, like some huge and stricken dumb animal laying itself down to die.

"Yes," said the captain, with a bitter laugh, looking up at the two steersmen who had come a second time to the threshold of the wheelhouse. "Yes, you can go."

He turned to the engine room telegraph and rang the "Stand by," but there was no answer. The engineers had come on deck.

"She's got to go," said Martin, the second officer, deliberately.

"You had better follow them," replied the captain, with a jerk of the head toward the ladder down which the two steersmen had disappeared.

"Go," said Martin. "My place is here. There was no nervousness about the man now.

The murmur on the deck had suddenly risen to shrieks and angry shouts. Some were getting ready to die in a most unbecoming manner. They were fighting for the boat. The captain's voice, however, ceased giving orders. It afterward transpired that the chief officer, Stokes, was engaged at this time on the sloping decks in tying life belts round the women and throwing them overboard, despite their shrieks and struggles. The coastguard found these women strewn along the beach like wreckage below St. Keverne—some that night, some at dawn—and only two were dead.

The captain snapped his finger and the gesture of annoyance which was habitual to him. Martin knew the meaning of the sound, which he heard through the shouting and the roar of the wind and the hissing of a cloud of steam. He placed his hand on the deck of the bridge as if to feel it. He had only in a trich to turn his head and see the coastguard's vessel was lying over farther now. There was no vibration beneath his hand; the engines had ceased to work.

There was something else behind them—a sort of veiled light.

"It was kind of you to come so soon," he said, taking a chair by the fire. "There was only one lamp in the room and its light scarcely reached her face.

"But for all the good he did in coming it would seem that he might as well have stayed away, for he had no comfort to offer her. He drew forward a chair and sat down with that squareness of movement which is natural to the limbs of men who deal exclusively with nature and action, and he looked into the fire without saying a word. Again it was she who spoke and her words surprised the man who had only dealt with women at sea, where women are not seen at their best.

"I do not want you to grieve for me," she said quietly. "You have enough trouble of your own without thinking of me. You have lost your friend."

He made a little movement of the lips and glanced at her slowly. He held his lip between his teeth, as he was wont to do it during the moments of suspense before letting go the anchors in a crowded roadstead as he stood at his post on the forecastle head awaiting the captain's signal. She was the first to divide what the ship had been to him. Her eyes were waiting for his. They were all right with a gentle glow, which he took to be pity. She spoke calmly and her voice was always low and quiet. But he was quite sure that her heart was broken and the thought must have been conveyed to her by the silent messenger that passes to and fro between kindred minds, for she immediately took up his thought.

"Oh, no," she said, rather hurriedly, "as if it would break my heart. Long ago I used to think it would. I was very proud of him and of his popularity. But—"

And she said no more, but sat with dreaming eyes looking into the fire. After a while she spoke again. "You must not grieve for me," she said, returning persistently to her point. She was quite simple and honest. Here was that rare wisdom which is given only to the pure in heart, for they see through to the end of things and sift out the honest from among the false.

It seemed that she had gained her object, for Stokes was visibly relieved. He told her many things which he had withheld from other inquirers. He cleared Dixon's good name from anything that might have been an error which is only human, and spoke of the captain's splendid nerve and steadiness in the hour of danger. Inensibly they lapsed into a low-voiced discussion of Dixon as of the character of a lost friend equally dear to them both.

"But he never told me his name," she said, "and I was really necessary to go in order to catch his train, impatient to meet her eyes—which were waiting for his—for a moment as they said good-bye; as the man who is the slave of a habit waits impatiently for the time when he can give way to it."

He went home to the room he always occupied near his club in London. There he found a number of letters which had been sent on from the steamship company's office. The first he opened bore the postmark of St. Just in Cornwall. It was from one of the other captains, and spoke of the captain's splendid nerve and steadiness in the hour of danger. Inensibly they lapsed into a low-voiced discussion of Dixon as of the character of a lost friend equally dear to them both.

"Dear sir," he wrote. "One of your crew or passengers has turned up here on foot. He must have been wandering about for nearly a week and in distress. At my house he was unharmed. He began to write a letter but could not finish it and gives no name. Please come over and identify him. Meanwhile I will take good care of him."

Stoke opened the folded paper which had done for the man. It was a letter from St. Keverne. "Dear Jack," it began. One or two sentences followed, but there was no sequence or sense in them. The writing was that of Captain Dixon without its characteristic firmness or cohesion.

Stoke glanced at his watch and took up his bag—a new bag, which he had bought in Falmouth stuffed full of a few necessities pressed upon him by kind persons at St. Keverne when he stood among them in the clothes in which he had swum ashore, which had dried upon him during a long November night. There was just time to catch the night mail to Penzance. Heaven was kind to him and gave him no time to think.

The coach leaves Penzance at 9 in the morning for a two-hour climb over bare moorland to St. Just—a little gray, remote town on the western sea. The loneliness of the hills is emphasized here and there by the ruin of an abandoned mine. St. Just itself, the very scene of remoteness—is yearly diminishing in importance and population, sending forth her burrowing sons to the place in the world where silver and copper and gold are found.

The coast-guard station was awaiting Stoke's arrival in the little deserted square where the Penzance omnibus deposits its passengers. The two men shook hands with a subtle and a little like a handshake which draws together seamen of all classes and all nations. They walked away together on matters of their daily business.

"He doesn't pick up at all," said the coast-guard captain at length; "just sits there on his back and looks after him, but he can't stir him up. If anybody could she could."

And the man walked on looking straight in front of him with a patient eye. He spoke with unconscious feeling.

"He is a gentleman despite the clothes he came ashore in. Getting across the water states under a cloud is likely as not," he said presently. "Some bank manager perhaps. He must have changed clothes with some forecastle hand. They were seamen's clothes and he had been sleeping or hiding in a ditch."

He led the way to his house, standing apart in the well-kept garden of the station. He opened the door of the simply furnished drawing room.

"Here is a friend come to see you," he said, and standing aside he invited Stoke to sit down and see her. I have been staying at home and take her punishment quietly—unlike some of them."

And two hours later he was waiting for Mary Dixon in the little drawing room of the house in a Kentish village which he had helped Dixon to furnish for her. She did not keep him long; and when she came into the room he drew a sharp breath; but he had nothing to say to her. She was tall and strongly made, with fair hair and delicate coloring. She had no children, though she had been married six years, and nature seemed to have designed her to be the mother of a family. She was a woman of a certain grace and refinement. Stoke looked into her eyes and immediately the expectant look came into them.

not move or turn his head. Stoke closed the door behind him as he entered the room and went slowly toward the fireplace. Dixon turned and looked at him with shrinking eyes, like the eyes of a dog that has been beaten.

"Let us get on to the elms," he said in a whisper. "We cannot talk here."

He was clean shaven and his hair was grizzled at the temples. His face looked oddly weak, but he had a rather irascible chin, hitherto hidden by his smart beard. Few would have recognized him.

By way of reply Stoke went back toward the door.

"Come on, then," he said, rather curtly. They did not speak until they had passed out beyond the town toward the bare tableland that leads to the sea.

"Couldn't face it, Jack—that's the truth," said the captain at last. "And if you or any others try to make me I'll shoot myself. How many was it? Tell me quickly, man!"

"Over 100," replied Stoke. They walked out on the bare tableland and sat down on a crumbling wall.

"And what do the papers say? I have not dared to ask for one of them. Stoke shrugged his square shoulders.

"What does it matter what they say?" answered the man, who had never seen his own name in the newspapers. Perhaps he failed to understand Dixon's point of view.

"Have you seen Mary?" asked the captain.

"Yes."

"Then they sat in silence for some minutes. There was a heavy sea running and the rocks round the Land's End were black in a bed of pure white. The Longship's lighthouse stood up, a gray shadow in a gray scene.

"Come," said Stoke, "be a man and face it."

There was no answer and the speaker sat staring across the lashed waters to the west, his square chin thrust forward, his resolute lips close pressed, his eyes impassive. There was obviously only one course through life for this seaman—the straight one.

"It is only for Mary's sake," he added at length.

"Keeping the Gull lightship ESE and having the South Foreland V by N, you should find six fathoms of water at a neap tide," muttered Captain Dixon in a low monotone. He was unconscious of his companion's presence and spoke like one talking in his dreams.

Stoke sat motionless by him while he took his steamer in imagination through the Downs and round the North Foreland. But what he said was mostly nonsense, and he mixed up the bearings of the inner and outer channels into a hopeless jumble. Then he sat huddled upon the wall and lapsed again into a silent dream with eyes fixed on the western sea. Stoke took him by the arm and led him back to the town, this harmless, soft-spoken creature who had once been a brilliant man and had made but one mistake at sea.

Stoke wrote a long letter to Mary Dixon that afternoon. He took lodgings in a cottage outside St. Just, and he took the train to Cornwall. He told the captain of the coast guard that he had been able to identify this man and had written to his people in London.

Dixon recognized her when she came, but he soon lapsed again into his dream state of inebriation, and that which made him lose his grip on his reason was again the terror of having to face the world as the captain of the lost Grandhaven. To humor him they left St. Just and went to London. They changed their name to that which Mary had borne before their marriage, a French-Canadian name, Balliere. A great London specialist held out a dim hope of ultimate recovery.

"It was brought on by some great shock," he suggested.

"Yes," answered Stoke, "by a great shock—'in bereavement!'"

"Yes," answered Stoke slowly. It is years since the loss of Grandhaven and its story was long ago superseded and forgotten. And the London specialist was wrong.

The Ballieres live now in the cottage westward of St. Just toward the sea, where Stoke took lodgings. It was the captain's wish to return to this remote spot. Whenever Captain Stoke returns to England he spends his brief leave of absence in journeying to the forgotten mining town. Balliere passes his days in his garden, or on the low wall, looking with vacant eyes across the sea, whereon his name was once a household word. His secret is still safe. The world still exonerates him because he was drowned.

"He sits and dreams all day," is the report that Mary always gives to Stoke when she meets him in the town square, where the Penzance omnibus, the only link with the outer world, deposits its rare passengers.

"And you?" Stoke once asked her in a moment of unusual expansion, his deep voice half muffled with suppressed suspense.

She glanced at him with that waiting look which he knows to be there, but never meets. For he is a hard man—hard to her, harder to himself.

"And who shall gauge a woman's dream?"