

the men were hanging hardly dead, in order to recognise acquaintances below, and talk in the easiest way possible. Mr. Malloch eventually rose to various leading positions, both commercially and in a public capacity; he died, however, before I left California, his wife having long preceded him. The city, it is

well known, continued for some weeks under Vigilance control, during which period I left it with a mining party, and was afterwards chiefly occupied as a settler, or surveying under Government, and seeing life among the redwoods.



## YARNS.

BY A YOUNG SEA-CAPTAIN.

### I.

I WENT to sea as a naval cadet when I was twelve; if you think you're ever likely to be twelve, I advise you to do the same.

I can tell you all sorts of yarns about a seafaring life, but I can't put them together into one connected story as a "Memoir" or "Life and Adventures of," because I'm not a literary character.

During the Crimean war I was midshipman of a large paddle-wheel frigate in the Black Sea: the Russians nicknamed her the "*Black Cat* with the white paws," because she was painted black and had two white funnels: she could scratch and spit too. I don't recollect what her tonnage was or the length of the main-yard; if you want to know, you must really write and ask the Secretary of the Admiralty: I never can remember that sort of thing. When I passed for a mate, my passing-captains asked me the

length or the weight of something, and I told them I had no head for remembering figures: but I added that I always wrote down dimensions at the beginning of my log-book; they turned to the page and found it ruled with red and blue and black lines, and full of figures giving every conceivable weight and length in the ship: they were much impressed by it, and gave me a first-class certificate.

Nowadays a midshipman does not pass for a "mate," he passes for a "sub-lieutenant." I suppose it's thought to be a more genteel name; but I know I was very proud of being a mate.

The *Black Cat* was at anchor off the Katcha, to the west of Sebastopol, when that terrible gale of wind arose on the 14th of November, 1854. The Katcha is a mere stream draining a broad valley that runs inland to the mountains behind the town; towards Sebastopol the shore rises steadily, and becomes at last a high cliff, while on the