

on and skimmed round the *Onyx*, like a flock of dark-winged sea-birds; but he was obliged to go ashore in one of them to buy a new anchor and cable; and when the anchor had been fished, the skipper relieved his feelings by giving Jack a drubbing, for which he did not take the trouble to invent a reason.

"Run up and shake out the main-royal, you lazy young whelp!" the skipper bellowed to Jack in the fair weather that followed the foul, as the *Onyx* stood down Channel. Jack, whose sea-sickness had passed, was delighted at the chance of getting something sailor-like to do, but he had the vaguest idea of where and what the main-royal was; and because he hesitated, the skipper was going to lick him again. The pilot, however, interposed, and gave Jack a dim notion of what he was expected to do. He did not run up the rigging very nimbly—especially when he had no rattlins to help him; he turned giddy every now and then, and clutched the shrouds as if he could not "run" or "shin" up another foot: he fumbled sadly with the unfamiliar sail—fancying every moment that he was going to be shaken off the yard like a rotten pear; but still, as the pilot said, when Jack came down) beginning at last to recover his old opinion of his special aptitude for a sailor's life), his performance was "very fair for a beginning." Jack had expected louder laud than that; he had thought that even the skipper would clap him on the back. The skipper *did* clap him on the back—in a very unpleasant manner—the next time he ran foul of Jack when the pilot was not by.

The pilot was a very trifling check on the skipper's bad temper, but still Jack looked ruefully on the boat that carried the pilot ashore.

When Eddystone's star had faded from the sky, Jack began to think that he had been brought on board the *Onyx* simply to be tormented. With the rowdy portion of the crew, Jack was sharp enough to see, the skipper wanted to curry favour. The first mate, too, he seemed to want to win over—and to be puzzled because Mr. Munnens did not respond more cordially to his advances. Mr. Croggan and the carpenter he snubbed, and the jolly fellows in the fore-castle, who were far and away the best seamen in it, he was so fond of "bully-ragging," that even Mr. Munnens, well as he liked to hear any one blown up, when he had not the chance of blowing anybody up himself, used to put in his oar on the other side, simply out of the sympathy which every good seaman feels with another good seaman when his seamanship is unjustly impugned.

You must not suppose that Jack was al-

ways miserable; no boy can be, however badly he is treated. Jack soon got his sea-legs, and grew proud of being able to go aloft without feeling at all funky. When Mr. Croggan, as was often the case, had the sole command during the captain's watch, and the drunken captain was snoring in his berth, Jack was safe. Mr. Croggan was as kind to him as he could be, and the good fellows, who happened to be all in the captain's watch, wouldn't let the other men treat Jack as a football. Besides, the savagest people cannot keep on being savage for ever. They will let you alone sometimes, because they cannot get any fun out of plaguing you—especially if they see that you are beginning not to mind—and that was how Jack began to feel after a bit.

And then he saw Madeira—a silver mist rising out of a golden sea; and porpoises were harpooned, and dolphins grained, and bonito hooked, and flapping sharks hauled on board with a lump of pork down their horrid horseshoe mouths, and flying-fish fell on deck; and Jack managed to get a taste of them all; and as he ate, he thought what a much more heroic personage he was (though he *was* kicked about like a dog) than the fellows who used to lick him at Elm House, but who had not the pluck to run away from Saturday's "resurrection-pie."

Jack did not much relish crossing the Line, however. He was the only one on board the *Onyx* who had not crossed it before, and the savage fellows made up for their lack of other fun by "taking it out of" Jack extensively, and even the jolly fellows thought that he was fair game then. Jack was lathered with unmentionable soap, the huge shaving-brush was dabbed into his mouth, the skin was rasped off his cheeks and chin with a jagged bit of rusty iron hoop, and then—up flew his heels, and he was floundering in a tub of filthy water. And when he had scrambled out, in spite of the many hands that tried to keep his head under, and was gasping for breath as if he must shake to pieces, bucketful after bucketful of water was shot into his face to drive the breath out of him again.

But Jack recovered his breath, and the lumbering, leaky old *Onyx* waddled on with him into the South Atlantic. He saw the Southern Cross and the Magellan Clouds, and whales sending up silvery jets, and routing about in the waves like monstrously magnified pigs in a monstrously magnified strawyard. He pitched biscuit to the huge grey and white albatrosses when they leisurely folded their wide double-jointed wings in a calm, and swam up to the side like tame ducks.