

LITERATURE, &c.

A SAILOR'S STORY.

"Come, spin us a yarn, Jack, my boy," said a curly-headed, rosy-checked young midshipman, to old Jack Palmer, one evening, as we were running down the Spanish Main, before as sweet a breeze as ever filled a to-gallant-sail. Jack Palmer was an old sea dog, and a clever fellow, at least in the Yankee sense of the word. He had seen all sorts of service, and knew all sorts of stories, which were perhaps not the less amusing for their want of grammar, and their abundance of sea phrases. He was master's mate of the gun-deck; but when called upon for a story by Rosy Willy, (the name of the little reefer that had asked Jack for a yarn,) his business for the day was finished; the grog had been served; the bull stowed away in the spirit-room; and the key of the hatch returned to the master. It was a pleasant evening, too, and it was only three bells of the second dog-watch, and of course too early to turn in, Jack sat down on the fo'castle chest, and signified his willingness to comply. He was immediately surrounded by a knot of midshipmen, eager to listen, and, after the usual preliminary of a fresh quid, he began as follows:—

Merriville Terry, or, as they used to call him for shortness, Merry Terry—and a right good name it was, for he was as gay a lark as ever gave life and animation to a steerage mess-table—was one of the noblest middies that I ever knew. He was as full of rigs and jokes as a French man-of-war is of music, and they were quite as harmless, too; for Merry never said any thing to hurt a shipmate's feelings, and no one ever thought of getting angry at his fun. There wasn't a reefer in the whole fleet that did not love him like a brother; nor a luff that when there was hard duty to do, did not favor him all he could; for Merry had a delicate constitution, and could not stand the rough and tumble of the service as well as some. But he was no skulk, and blow high or blow low, Merry never shrank from his watch. When the relief was called at night, whether it was calm or storm, all sail or close-reefed top-sail and fore-sail, it made no difference, on deck he always was before the sound would be out of the bell. He did not tumble up the hatchway either, as some of you reefers do, with your hands in your becketts, and your bow-ports half shut, or fumbling at your button-holes like a green-horn at a gasket; but up he sprung, wide awake, and tugged from clue to ear; as if all dressed to go on shore on liberty. As I said afore, every body from stern to stern liked Merry Terry, or for the matter of that from one end of the navy list to the other—all except one man. As for the sailors, it would have done your heart good to see how they watched his eye when he had charge of the deck, as if they wanted to spell out his orders before he had time to speak 'em. They would do more for a single look of Merry, than for all the curses and damns of the skipper, though backed by the boatswain's mate with the cuts in hand. It was not from any fear of him, you may be sure, for I don't believe Merry ever stopped a man's grog, or as much as gave him a cross word, in his life; but it was from pure love and respect. When he spoke, to be sure, there was something in his tone and manner that seemed to say he must be obeyed; and when he looked at a man who had been cutting up rustics, though he didn't frown, or swell, or try to look big, as I have seen some officers do, yet there was that in his eye that made the stoutest quail. It was just so among the reefers at the mess table. If two of them was sky-larking or quarrelling, or doing any thing ungentlemanly, Merry would just look at them, and they would leave off at once, and drop their heads like a dog-vane in a calm. I said every body loved him; I remember once, when we were beating up the Straits with a Levanter dead-a-head, and blowing so heavy it almost took the very buttons off our jackets, that Merry, some how or other, happened to fall overboard. He had been standing on the taffrel, with his quadrant in his hand, trying to get a chance at a lunar, when all of a sudden the old bulk made a heavy lee-lurch, and away he went splash into the water. Though there was a sea running like so many mountains chasing each other, yet before you could say Jack Robinson, no less than four stout fellows were overboard after him. It liked to have gone hard with the whole five, for it was more than the stoutest swimmer could do to keep his head above board, and before we could clear away the stern boat, though we didn't stop to cast off the gribes, but cut and slashed away, they were almost out of sight to leeward. Old Tom Bowman, the quarter-gunner, and Bill Williams, the captain of the fo'castle, made out to reach Merry just as he was going down the last time; and though it were as much as their own lives were worth, they held him up till the boat came to their assistance. I well remember the joy of all hands when the boat pulled up under the stern, near enough for 'em to see that Merry was in it; and when they hooked the tackles, I don't believe that ever a ship's crew ran away with the falls with as much good will as ours did that evening in running up the jolly boat that had saved Merry Terry.

It was a long cruise that we were together, and Merry got to be as much of a man in size and appearance as any of us, before it was over, though he couldn't have been more than eighteen then. On our arrival in New York, the most of the middies got their walking papers as soon as they could, and made sail, each for his own home. Merry's connexions, who were of Irish descent lived in Virginia, and it was that way he laid his course you may be sure. I remember very well when I had the third cutter called away and manned for him; and, as we wrung each other's hand at the gang-way neither of us had voice to say good-bye. My stomach felt all that day as empty as a midshipman's locker, and the ship seemed as lonesome to me as the old brig Nancy did once, when all hands died off of the yellow fever, and left me and the old tom cat the only living souls aboard of her.

For more than two years after Merryville and me parted, I lost the run of my old shippmate. He continued ashore, but I soon got tired of being cooped up in the narrow streets, with no chance of seeing more of the sky than chose to shine between the tops of the dingy houses. Happening to hear that some of my acquaintances were going on board a ship then fitting out at Boston, I applied for orders myself, where I had a little sea-room to ware and haul upon. That was a short cruise, and by the time twenty months were up, we were all home again, the crew discharged, and I, with my hands in my becketts, spinning street yarn, and having nothing in the world to do.

The next ship I was ordered to was my own namesake, old Jack Adams; she was lying in Hampton Roads, ready for sea. The first man I met as I went up the accommodation ladder, was Merry Terry himself, who stood upon the gangway-sill to receive me. I knew him at the first glance, though he was a good deal altered; and he knew me, too, as soon as his eye rested on my face. Merry was by this time about twenty years of age, or thereabouts, and a finer looking fellow never trod the quarter-deck. He had lately lost both his parents, and this had given a sort of sad expression to his countenance, that made him appear handsomer than ever. I soon found that he was the general favorite on board the ship, as indeed he always was, go where he would; and it was expected that before we sailed, he would get his parchment from Washington, and mount a swab. An elegant luff he would have made, too, for if ever man knew how to work a ship, it was Merry Terry. When he had the deck, the old craft herself seemed to know it; and no matter what kind of weather we had, she was sure to behave as obedient as a side-boy. I have seen him put her in stays where there wasn't a breaker of water to spare, with rocks both a-head and a-stern, and the wind wizzing round and round like a bee in a bucket of tar. But when it was 'helm's a-lee,' and Merry had the trumpet there was no such thing as missing stays.

I mind, I told you a while ago, that every body liked Merry Terry, except one man—that man was the skipper, somehow or other he hated him worse than the devil hates a marine. He used to ride him down like a main-tack, would row him on all occasions, and put him on all sorts of disagreeable duty. It was even thought he had placed a stopper on his promotion. The story among the reefers went, that Merry had come athwart captain's haws in some love affair; but whether that was so or not, was mere dead-reckoning, for Merry was as close as oyster, and never spoke a disrespectful word of his commander. In return for all the abuse he received, he would only curl his lip a little, and look at him dead in the eyes—but such a look as he would sometimes give him! I would rather, for my part, have been on short allowance of grog for a month. Well, things went on this way for some weeks, till at last sailing orders were given out, and, of course, there was no more going ashore for the middies. The boats were run up and stowed, the pole to-gallant mast struck, and storm pumps sent up in their place; all hands were called to unmoor, and we even hove short, so as to be ready to trip and be off, whenever word should come from the cabin to that effect. When all this was done, the captain sent up an order to have his gig lowered away and manned, and directly after came on deck himself, in a full rig of citizen's togs. Mr Terry stood in the gangway, leaning over the hammock cloth, when he heard the boatswain's-mate pipe away the gigs; and, as the familiar sound struck his ear, I noticed that he started and turned pale. It was a glorious night—much such an evening as this, only later, about two or three bells in the first watch, I think. As the captain passed over the gangway, he gave a peculiar kind of look at Merry—something like what a monkey would at a marine after stealing his pipe-clay—and then, turning round to the first luff, he said—'Remember, Mr Orlop, that you are under sailing orders, and that no one must leave the ship on any pretence.' As he spoke this, he turned another malicious glance at Merry out of the corner of his eye, and, jumping into the sternsheets of the gig, ordered the men to let fall and give way.

As long as the sound of the oars in the rowlocks could be heard, Merry stood as still as a stock-fish, his eye following the wake of the boat till it was lost in the haze of distance. When he could neither hear nor see it any longer, he began to walk about as wild as the devil in a gale of wind; and the reefers who would have done anything they could to soothe him, saw clear enough that it wasn't a matter for them to meddle with. In the midst of his agitation, a shore-boat came along-side, the waterman in which handed a note up to the middy that went to the gang-way to receive it, and immediately shoved off again. The note, of course was given to the officer of the deck, according to man-of-war fashion, and he being a stately, pompous sort of fellow, took his own time to send one of the side-boys for a lantern. When the glim came up, he walked to the file-rail, and looking at the superscription, discovered that the note was for Merry Terry. The latter on learning this eagerly extended his hand for it, and, tearing it open rapidly devoured its contents; then, rushing to the gangway, he would have sprung into the shore-boat, which he hoped was still alongside; but, during the officer of the deck's delay, it had already got far beyond hailing distance. Three or four times Merry paced up and down the deck in violent agitation, his lip as white and quivering as a jib in the wind, and his eyes shining like the top glim of a commodore's ship. All at once he walked right up to the first luff, who was standing abaft leaning on the taffrel, and, in a voice that seemed to come from the cable tier, it was so hoarse and deep, he said, 'Mr O.lop, I must go ashore to-night.' 'You cant, Mr Terry, you heard the captain's orders.' 'Damn the captain!' (It was the first word I ever heard Merry swear, though he and I had been messmates going on five years.) 'Mr Terry, you forget yourself!' answered the first luff, in a firm yet mild tone. 'If you use such language,

Sir, you will force me to a disagreeable exercise of my duty.' 'I mean no disrespect to you, Mr Orlop,' said Merry, partly recollecting himself; 'but I am half distracted. If you will lend me your ear, Sir, in a more private part of the ship, I will relate to you what may perhaps change your notions of duty.'

Mr Orlop was of that class of officers who to the knowledge and skill of an able seaman, added the feelings and address of a perfect gentleman. He, as well as every person else on board, had seen and felt indignant at the treatment Merry received at the captain's hands; and some of the whispers respecting the cause had also reached him. Perceiving that poor Merry was now uncommonly agitated, and fearing that he might commit some indiscretion which would oblige him to exert unpleasant authority, he readily complied with his request, and led the way to his own state room.

The conference, whatever was its nature, was of short duration; but while it lasted many a curious glance was cast toward the state-room door, and—I am almost ashamed to own it—many a listening ear was inclined towards the bulk-head. There was little satisfaction got that way, howsoever, for nothing was heard but a low, humming sound, now and then broken by a muttered curse in Mr Orlop's voice; and terminated at last by a sudden exclamation of that gentleman, loud enough for the whole steerage, and birth-deck into the bargain, to hear. 'Enough Mr Terry, enough!' cried he. 'You shall have it—if it costs me my commission you shall have it! There is a point where obedience becomes a crime. When military discipline conflicts with the principles of honour, I will be the first to set an example of insubordination.'

As he spoke thus, the door of the state-room was thrown violently open, and the two officers issued suddenly to view. The cheeks and lips of Merry were still pale and quivering, while the face of the other was flushed with a deep red. They both ran rapidly up the companion-ladder, Mr Orlop, at the same moment calling out to me—'Mr Palmer,' said he, 'call the boatswain, and order him to get out the first cutter immediately. Do you attend yourself, sir, on the birth-deck, and start up all the men!'

By this time, his foot was on the top-step of the ladder. As soon as his head was fairly above the combings of the hatch, he began again: 'Boatswain's mate!' 'Sir!' sung out old Renben James, in his peculiar drawl. 'Call away the first cutters, and do you stand by and see to getting up the yard-tackles.—Captain of the fo'castle, there!' 'Sir!' bawled the captain of both starboard and larboard watch, at once, startled at the loud earnestness of the first lieutenant's voice. 'Lay aloft, and stand by to get your yard-tackles on the fore yard!—Quarter gunners, do you do the same on the main!—Foretop, there, out on the yard with you, and send down a whip for the yard-tackle block!' 'Ay, ay, sir!' promptly responded a voice from the foretop; and with these and similar orders and replies, intermixed with the shrill pipings of the boatswain and his mates, the spar-deck now resounded for several minutes. By the end of that time the cutter was hoisted out, and brought to at the gangway. She was no sooner there than Merry Terry sprang down the side, and the crew after, who, though they wondered as much as all the rest of us, officers and men, how all this was going to end, yet seeing they would oblige their favorite by moving lively, shoved off, and had up their oars in the crossing of a royal. 'Mr Terry,' cried the first lieutenant, 'remember your word of honour that you will return to-night, provided you find or make all safe!' 'Upon my honor,' answered Merry, laying his hand on his heart: then turning quickly to the men, 'give way!' and as long as we could hear him, he kept saying every now and then, 'give way, my hearties, give way—pull with a will,' and such like.

To be Continued.

THE FREEBOOTER OF LOCHABAR.

TOWARDS the end of the seventeenth century, there lived a certain notorious freebooter, in the county of Moray, a native of Lochabar, of the name of Cameron, but who was better known by his cognomen of *Padric Mac an-Ts'agairt*, which signifies, 'Peter, the priest's son.' Numerous were the creachs or robberies of cattle, on the great scale, driven by him from Strathspey. But he did not confine his depredations to that country; for sometime between the years 1690 and 1695, he made a clean sweep of the cattle from the rich pastures of the Aird, the territory of the Frasers. That he might put his pursuers on a wrong scent, he did not go directly to Lochabar, but crossing the River Ness at Lochend, he struck over the mountains of Strathnairn and Strathdarn, and ultimately encamped behind a hill above Duthel, called from a copious spring on it, *Cairn-au-Sh'uaran*, or the Well Hill. But notwithstanding all his precautions, the celebrated Simon Lord Lovat, then chief of the Frasers, discovered his track, and despatched a special messenger to his father in law, Sir Ludovick Grant of Grant, begging his aid in apprehending Mac-an-Ts'agairt, and recovering the cattle.

It so happened that there lived, at this time, on the laird of Grant's ground, a man also called Cameron, surnamed Mugachmore, of great strength and undaunted courage; he had six sons and a stepson, whom his wife, formerly a woman of high character, had before her marriage with Mugach, and, as they were all brave, Sir Ludovick applied to them to undertake the recapture of the cattle. Sir Ludovick was not mistaken in the man. The Mugach no sooner received his orders, than he armed himself and his little band, and went in quest of the freebooter, whom he found in the act of cooking a dinner from part of the spoil. The Mugach called on Padric and his men to surrender, and they, though numerous, dreading the well-known prowess of their adversary, fled to the opposite hills, their chief threatening bloody vengeance as he went. The Mugach