

WHITE JACKET



HERMAN MELVILLE

White-Jacket

Or The World In A Man-Of-War

Herman Melville

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Herman Melville

1819-1891

Born, in New York City, 1 Aug. 1819. Went to sea, 1836. Schoolmaster, 1837-40. To sea again Jan. 1841. Ran away from ship on Marquesas Islands, 1842. Rescued after four months' captivity among the Typees. For a short time clerk at Honolulu. Returned to Boston, 1844. Married Elizabeth Shaw, 4 Aug. 1847. Lived in New York, 1847-50; at Pittsfield, Mass., 1850-63. Visits to Europe, 1849 and 1856. Frequently lectured in America, 1857-60. Returned to New York, 1863. District Officer, New York Custom House, Dec., 1866-86. Died, in New York, 28 Sept. 1891. Works: "Typee," 1846; "Omoo," 1847; "Mardi," 1849; "Redburn," 1849; "White Jacket" 1850; "Moby Dick," 1851 (English edn., called; "The Whale," same year); "Pierre," 1852; "Israel Potter," 1855 (in 1865 edn. called: "The Refugee"); "Piazza Tales," 1856, "The Confidence Man," 1857; "Battle-Pieces," 1866; "Clarel," 1876; "John Marr and Other Sailors" (priv.

ptd.), 1888; "Timoleon" (priv. ptd.), 1891.—Sharp, R. Farquharson, 1897, *A Dictionary of English Authors*, p. 193.

PERSONAL

Duyckinck, of the *Literary World*, and Herman Melville are in Berkshire, and I expect them to call here this morning. I met Melville the other day, and liked him so much that I have asked him to spend a few days with me before leaving these parts.—Hawthorne, Nathaniel, 1850, *Letter to Horatio Bridge*, *Personal Recollections of Nathaniel Hawthorne*, p. 123.

His extremely proud and sensitive nature and his studious habits led to the seclusion of his later years. . . . This seclusion endured to the end. He never denied himself to his friends; but he sought no one. I visited him repeatedly in New York, and had the most interesting talks with him. What stores of reading, what reaches of philosophy, were his! He took the attitude of absolute independence towards the world. He said, "My books will speak for themselves, and all the better if I avoid the rattling egotism by which so many win a certain vogue for a certain time." He missed immediate success; he won the distinction of a hermit. It may appear, in the end, that he was right. No other autobiographical books in our literature suggest more vividly than "Typee," "Omoo," "White Jacket," and "Moby Dick," the title of Goethe, "Truth and Beauty from my own life." "Typee," at least, is one of those books that the world cannot let die. — Coan, Titus Munson, 1891, *Herman Melville*, *Literary World*, vol. 22, p. 493.

As Borrow possessed the secret of winning the confidence of the gipsies, so Melville, by the same talisman of utter simplicity and naturalness, was able to fraternise in perfect good fellowship with the so-called savages of the Pacific.—

Salt, Henry S., 1892, "Marquesan Melville," *Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. 272, p. 251.

GENERAL

We first examined its merits ["Omoo"] as a piece of description, then considered it more especially with reference to its spirit, in what it leaves us to infer of the writer's intercourse with the natives, and what he tells us of their religious condition. . . . "Omoo" is a book one may read once with interest and pleasure, but with a perpetual recoil. It is poetically written, but yet carelessly, and in a bad spirit.—Peck, G. W., 1847, *Omoo*, *American Review*, vol. 6, p. 45.

Mr. Melville lived for four months, absolutely like a primitive man, in Noukahiva, a Polynesian island, and it is his adventures while there that form the subject of his first books, the narratives of his actual voyages. . . .

Unfortunately, Mr. Melville's style is so ornate, his Rubens-like tints are so vivid and warm, and he has so strong a predilection for dramatic effects, that one does not know exactly how much confidence to repose in his narrative. We do not take except *cum grano salis*, his florid descriptions. —Chasles, Philarète, 1852, *Anglo-American Literature and Manners*, p. 118.

"Typee" told nothing. It had no antecedents. It might have been an animal, or it might have been a new game, or it might have been a treatise on magic. Did they open the book, and look over the chapters, they were not much wiser. Barbarous congregations of syllables, such as Kory Kory, Nukuheva, Moa Artua, met their eyes. The end of it was, that the whole tribe of London and American critics had to sit down and read it all, before they dared speak of a book filled with such mysterious syllables. From reading

they began to like it. There was a great deal of rich, rough talent about it. The scenes were fresh, and highly colored; the habits and manners described had the charm of novelty; and the style, though not the purest or most elegant, had a fine narrative facility about it, that rendered it very pleasurable reading. . . . "Typee," the first and most successful of Mr. Melville's books, commands attention for the clearness of its narrative, the novelty of its scenery, and the simplicity of its style, in which latter feature it is a wondrous contrast to "Mardi," "Moby Dick," and "Pierre."—O'Brien, Fitz-James, 1853, *Our Young Authors*, Putnam's Magazine, vol. 1, pp. 155, 160.

Melville's own adventures had been those of a modern Captain John Smith in the Pacific islands and waters; so that the *pars magna fui* of his lively books gave them the needed fillip of personality, and duly magnified their elements of wonder. That brilliant power of delineation which, in Melville's conversation, so charmed his warm friends the Hawthornes, is apparently not heightened in his books, but would seem to be rather diminished by the exigencies of writing. But the personal narrative or fiction of "Typee," "Omoo," and "Moby Dick," with their adventurous rapidity of description of Pacific seas, ships, savages and whales, represented the restless facility which has always been an American trait, and which occasionally develops into some enduring literary success. — Richardson, Charles F., 1888, *American Literature*, 1607-1885, vol. n, p. 404.

There was a wealth of imagination in the mind of Mr. Melville, but it was an untrained imagination, and a world of the stuff out of which poetry is made, but no poetry, which is creation and not chaos. He saw like a poet, felt like a poet, thought like a poet, but he never attained any proficiency in verse, which was not among his natural gifts.

His vocabulary was large, fluent, eloquent, but it was excessive, inaccurate and unliterary. He wrote too easily, and at too great length, his pen sometimes running away with him, and from his readers. There were strange, dark, mysterious elements in his nature, as there were in Hawthorne's, but he never learned to control them, as Hawthorne did from the beginning, and never turned their possibilities into actualities.— Stoddard, Richard Henry, 1891, *The Mail and Express*.

"Typee" and "Omoo," mistaken by the public for fiction, were, on the contrary, the most vivid truth expressed in the most telling and poetic manner. My father, the Rev. Titus Coan, went over Melville's ground in 1867, and while he has criticized the topography of "Typee" as being somewhat exaggerated in the mountain distances, a very natural mistake, he told me that the descriptions were admirably true and the characterizations faultless in the main. The book is a masterpiece, the outcome of an opportunity that will never be repeated. Melville was the first and only man ever made captive in a valley full of Polynesian cannibals, who had the genius to describe the situation, and who got away alive to write his book.—Coan, Titus Munson, 1891, *Herman Melville, Literary World*, vol. 22, p. 493.

Melville's most artistic work is to be found in "Typee," the first blossom of his youthful genius. This idyl, which set all the world to talking, undoubtedly will hold a permanent position in American literature, and most people will wish to read its sequel, "Omoo." The character of "Fayaway" and, no less, William S. Mayo's "Kaloolah," the enchanting dreams of many a youthful heart, will retain their charm; and this in spite of endless variations by modern explorers in the same domain. . . . The events of the Civil War gave a strong lyrical movement to Melville's pen, which had rested for nearly ten years when the volume of "Battle Pieces and

Aspects of the War" appeared in 1866. Most of these poems originated, according to the author, "in an impulse imparted by the fall of Richmond," but they have as subjects all the chief incidents of the struggle. The best of them are "The Stone Fleet," "In the Prison Pen," "The College Colonel," "The March to the Sea," "Running the Batteries," and "Sheridan at Cedar Creek." Some of these had a wide circulation in the press, and were preserved in various anthologies. Mr. Stoddard has called "Sheridan" the "second best cavalry poem in the English language, the first being Browning's, 'How They Brought the Good News from Ghent to Aix.'" There are in this poem lines as lofty in sentiment and expression as Bryant, or the author of "Lines on a Bust of Dante," or Mr. Stoddard himself could have written.—Stedman, Arthur, 1891, *Melville of Marquesas*, Review of Reviews, American Ed., vol. 4, p. 429.

In spite of all the obscurities and mannerisms which confessedly deform his later writings, it remains true that naturalness is, on the whole, Melville's prime characteristic, both in the tone and in the style of his productions. His narratives are as racy and vigorous as those of Defoe or Smollett or Marryat; his character-sketches are such as only a man of keen observation, and as keen a sense of humour, could have realised and depicted. His seamen and his sea captains all, his savages ashore and aboard, from the noble unsophisticated Mehevi in "Typee" to the semi-civilised comical Queequeg in "The Whale," are admirably vivid and impressive, and the reader who shall once have made their acquaintance will thenceforward in no wise be persuaded that they are not real and living personages. Moreover, there is a large-souled humanity in Melville—the direct outcome of his generous, emotional, yet uniformly sane temperament—which differentiates him entirely from the mere artist or

litterateur.—Salt, Henry S., 1892, "Marquesan Melville," Gentleman's Magazine, vol. 272, p. 254.

His masterpiece, "Moby Dick, or the White Whale." If it were not for its inordinate length, its frequently inartistic heaping up of details, and its obvious imitation of Carlylean tricks of style and construction, this narrative of tremendous power and wide knowledge might be perhaps pronounced the greatest sea story in literature. The breath of the sea is in it and much of the passion and charm of the most venturous callings plied upon the deep. It is a cool reader that does not become almost as eager as the terrible Captain Ahab in his demoniacal pursuit of Moby Dick, the invincible whale, a creation of the imagination not unworthy of a great poet—Trent, William P., 1903, A History of American Literature, p. 390.

WHITE-JACKET

CHAPTER I. THE JACKET.

It was not a *very* white jacket, but white enough, in all conscience, as the sequel will show.

The way I came by it was this.

When our frigate lay in Callao, on the coast of Peru—her last harbour in the Pacific—I found myself without a *grego*, or sailor's surtout; and as, toward the end of a three years' cruise, no pea-jackets could be had from the purser's steward: and being bound for Cape Horn, some sort of a substitute was indispensable; I employed myself, for several days, in manufacturing an outlandish garment of

my own devising, to shelter me from the boisterous weather we were so soon to encounter.

It was nothing more than a white duck frock, or rather shirt: which, laying on deck, I folded double at the bosom, and by then making a continuation of the slit there, opened it lengthwise—much as you would cut a leaf in the last new novel. The gash being made, a metamorphosis took place, transcending any related by Ovid. For, presto! the shirt was a coat!—a strange-looking coat, to be sure; of a Quakerish amplitude about the skirts; with an infirm, tumble-down collar; and a clumsy fullness about the wristbands; and white, yea, white as a shroud. And my shroud it afterward came very near proving, as he who reads further will find.

But, bless me, my friend, what sort of a summer jacket is this, in which to weather Cape Horn? A very tasty, and beautiful white linen garment it may have seemed; but then, people almost universally sport their linen next to their skin.

Very true; and that thought very early occurred to me; for no idea had I of scudding round Cape Horn in my shirt; for *that* would have been almost scudding under bare poles, indeed.

So, with many odds and ends of patches—old socks, old trowser-legs, and the like—I bedarned and bequilted the inside of my jacket, till it became, all over, stiff and padded, as King James's cotton-stuffed and dagger-proof doublet; and no buckram or steel hauberk stood up more stoutly.

So far, very good; but pray, tell me, White-Jacket, how do you propose keeping out the rain and the wet in this quilted *grego* of yours? You don't call this wad of old patches a

Mackintosh, do you?—you don't pretend to say that worsted is water-proof?

No, my dear friend; and that was the deuce of it. Waterproof it was not, no more than a sponge. Indeed, with such recklessness had I bequilted my jacket, that in a rain-storm I became a universal absorber; swabbing bone-dry the very bulwarks I leaned against. Of a damp day, my heartless shipmates even used to stand up against me, so powerful was the capillary attraction between this luckless jacket of mine and all drops of moisture. I dripped like a turkey a roasting; and long after the rain storms were over, and the sun showed his face, I still stalked a Scotch mist; and when it was fair weather with others, alas! it was foul weather with me.

Me? Ah me! Soaked and heavy, what a burden was that jacket to carry about, especially when I was sent up aloft; dragging myself up step by step, as if I were weighing the anchor. Small time then, to strip, and wring it out in a rain, when no hanging back or delay was permitted. No, no; up you go: fat or lean: Lambert or Edson: never mind how much avoirdupois you might weigh. And thus, in my own proper person, did many showers of rain reascend toward the skies, in accordance with the natural laws.

But here be it known, that I had been terribly disappointed in carrying out my original plan concerning this jacket. It had been my intention to make it thoroughly impervious, by giving it a coating of paint, But bitter fate ever overtakes us unfortunates. So much paint had been stolen by the sailors, in daubing their overhaul trowsers and tarpaulins, that by the time I—an honest man—had completed my quiltings, the paint-pots were banned, and put under strict lock and key.

Said old Brush, the captain of the *paint-room*—"Look ye, White-Jacket," said he, "ye can't have any paint."

Such, then, was my jacket: a well-patched, padded, and porous one; and in a dark night, gleaming white as the White Lady of Avenel!

CHAPTER II. HOMEWARD BOUND.

"All hands up anchor! Man the capstan!"

"High die! my lads, we're homeward bound!"

Homeward bound!—harmonious sound! Were you *ever* homeward bound?—No?—Quick! take the wings of the morning, or the sails of a ship, and fly to the uttermost parts of the earth. There, tarry a year or two; and then let the gruffest of boatswains, his lungs all goose-skin, shout forth those magical words, and you'll swear "the harp of Orpheus were not more enchanting."

All was ready; boats hoisted in, stun' sail gear rove, messenger passed, capstan-bars in their places, accommodation-ladder below; and in glorious spirits, we sat down to dinner. In the ward-room, the lieutenants were passing round their oldest port, and pledging their friends; in the steerage, the *middies* were busy raising loans to liquidate the demands of their laundress, or else—in the navy phrase—preparing to pay their creditors *with a flying fore-topsail*. On the poop, the captain was looking to windward; and in his grand, inaccessible cabin, the high and mighty commodore sat silent and stately, as the statue of Jupiter in Dodona.

We were all arrayed in our best, and our bravest; like strips of blue sky, lay the pure blue collars of our frocks upon our shoulders; and our pumps were so springy and playful, that we danced up and down as we dined.

It was on the gun-deck that our dinners were spread; all along between the guns; and there, as we cross-legged sat, you would have thought a hundred farm-yards and meadows were nigh. Such a cackling of ducks, chickens, and ganders; such a lowing of oxen, and bleating of lambkins, penned up here and there along the deck, to provide sea repasts for the officers. More rural than naval were the sounds; continually reminding each mother's son of the old paternal homestead in the green old clime; the old arching elms; the hill where we gambolled; and down by the barley banks of the stream where we bathed.

"All hands up anchor!"

When that order was given, how we sprang to the bars, and heaved round that capstan; every man a Goliath, every tendon a hawser!—round and round—round, round it spun like a sphere, keeping time with our feet to the time of the fifer, till the cable was straight up and down, and the ship with her nose in the water.

"Heave and pall! unship your bars, and make sail!"

It was done: barmen, nipper-men, tierers, veerers, idlers and all, scrambled up the ladder to the braces and halyards; while like monkeys in Palm-trees, the sail-loosers ran out on those broad boughs, our yards; and down fell the sails like white clouds from the ether—topsails, top-gallants, and royals; and away we ran with the halyards, till every sheet was distended.

"Once more to the bars!"

"Heave, my hearties, heave hard!"

With a jerk and a yerker, we broke ground; and up to our bows came several thousand pounds of old iron, in the shape of our ponderous anchor.

Where was White-Jacket then?

White-Jacket was where he belonged. It was White-Jacket that loosed that main-royal, so far up aloft there, it looks like a white albatross' wing. It was White-Jacket that was taken for an albatross himself, as he flew out on the giddy yard-arm!

CHAPTER III. A GLANCE AT THE PRINCIPAL DIVISIONS, INTO WHICH A MAN-OF-WAR'S CREW IS DIVIDED.

Having just designated the place where White-Jacket belonged, it must needs be related how White-Jacket came to belong there.

Every one knows that in merchantmen the seamen are divided into watches—starboard and larboard—taking their turn at the ship's duty by night. This plan is followed in all men-of-war. But in all men-of-war, besides this division, there are others, rendered indispensable from the great number of men, and the necessity of precision and discipline. Not only are particular bands assigned to the three *tops*, but in getting under weigh, or any other proceeding requiring all hands, particular men of these

bands are assigned to each yard of the tops. Thus, when the order is given to loose the main-royal, White-Jacket flies to obey it; and no one but him.

And not only are particular bands stationed on the three decks of the ship at such times, but particular men of those bands are also assigned to particular duties. Also, in tacking ship, reefing top-sails, or "coming to," every man of a frigate's five-hundred-strong, knows his own special place, and is infallibly found there. He sees nothing else, attends to nothing else, and will stay there till grim death or an epaulette orders him away. Yet there are times when, through the negligence of the officers, some exceptions are found to this rule. A rather serious circumstance growing out of such a case will be related in some future chapter.

Were it not for these regulations a man-of-war's crew would be nothing but a mob, more ungovernable stripping the canvas in a gale than Lord George Gordon's tearing down the lofty house of Lord Mansfield.

But this is not all. Besides White-Jacket's office as looser of the main-royal, when all hands were called to make sail; and besides his special offices, in tacking ship, coming to anchor, etc.; he permanently belonged to the Starboard Watch, one of the two primary, grand divisions of the ship's company. And in this watch he was a maintop-man; that is, was stationed in the main-top, with a number of other seamen, always in readiness to execute any orders pertaining to the main-mast, from above the main-yard. For, including the main-yard, and below it to the deck, the main-mast belongs to another detachment.

Now the fore, main, and mizen-top-men of each watch—Starboard and Larboard—are at sea respectively subdivided into Quarter Watches; which regularly relieve

each other in the tops to which they may belong; while, collectively, they relieve the whole Larboard Watch of topmen.

Besides these topmen, who are always made up of active sailors, there are Sheet-Anchor-men—old veterans all—whose place is on the forecastle; the fore-yard, anchors, and all the sails on the bowsprit being under their care.

They are an old weather-beaten set, culled from the most experienced seamen on board. These are the fellows that sing you "*The Bay of Biscay Oh!*" and "*Here a sheer hulk lies poor Torn Bowling!*" "*Cease, rude Boreas, blustering railer!*" who, when ashore, at an eating-house, call for a bowl of tar and a biscuit. These are the fellows who spin interminable yarns about Decatur, Hull, and Bainbridge; and carry about their persons bits of "Old Ironsides," as Catholics do the wood of the true cross. These are the fellows that some officers never pretend to damn, however much they may anathematize others. These are the fellows that it does your soul good to look at;—hearty old members of the Old Guard; grim sea grenadiers, who, in tempest time, have lost many a tarpaulin overboard. These are the fellows whose society some of the youngster midshipmen much affect; from whom they learn their best seamanship; and to whom they look up as veterans; if so be, that they have any reverence in their souls, which is not the case with all midshipmen.

Then, there is the *After-guard*, stationed on the Quarterdeck; who, under the Quarter-Masters and Quarter-Gunners, attend to the main-sail and spanker, and help haul the main-brace, and other ropes in the stern of the vessel.

The duties assigned to the After-Guard's-Men being comparatively light and easy, and but little seamanship

being expected from them, they are composed chiefly of landsmen; the least robust, least hardy, and least sailor-like of the crew; and being stationed on the Quarter-deck, they are generally selected with some eye to their personal appearance. Hence, they are mostly slender young fellows, of a genteel figure and gentlemanly address; not weighing much on a rope, but weighing considerably in the estimation of all foreign ladies who may chance to visit the ship. They lounge away the most part of their time, in reading novels and romances; talking over their lover affairs ashore; and comparing notes concerning the melancholy and sentimental career which drove them—poor young gentlemen—into the hard-hearted navy. Indeed, many of them show tokens of having moved in very respectable society. They always maintain a tidy exterior; and express an abhorrence of the tar-bucket, into which they are seldom or never called to dip their digits. And pluming themselves upon the cut of their trowsers, and the glossiness of their tarpaulins, from the rest of the ship's company, they acquire the name of "*sea-dandies*" and "*silk-sock-gentry*."

Then, there are the *Waisters*, always stationed on the gun-deck. These haul aft the fore and main-sheets, besides being subject to ignoble duties; attending to the drainage and sewerage below hatches. These fellows are all Jimmy Duxes—sorry chaps, who never put foot in ratlin, or venture above the bulwarks. Inveterate "*sons of farmers*," with the hayseed yet in their hair, they are consigned to the congenial superintendence of the chicken-coops, pig-pens, and potato-lockers. These are generally placed amidships, on the gun-deck of a frigate, between the fore and main hatches; and comprise so extensive an area, that it much resembles the market place of a small town. The melodious sounds thence issuing, continually draw tears from the eyes of the *Waisters*; reminding them of their old paternal pig-

pens and potato-patches. They are the tag-rag and bob-tail of the crew; and he who is good for nothing else is good enough for a *Waister*.

Three decks down—spar-deck, gun-deck, and berth-deck—and we come to a parcel of Troglodytes or "*holders*," who burrow, like rabbits in warrens, among the water-tanks, casks, and cables. Like Cornwall miners, wash off the soot from their skins, and they are all pale as ghosts. Unless upon rare occasions, they seldom come on deck to sun themselves. They may circumnavigate the world fifty times, and they see about as much of it as Jonah did in the whale's belly. They are a lazy, lumpish, torpid set; and when going ashore after a long cruise, come out into the day like terrapins from their caves, or bears in the spring, from tree-trunks. No one ever knows the names of these fellows; after a three years' voyage, they still remain strangers to you. In time of tempests, when all hands are called to save ship, they issue forth into the gale, like the mysterious old men of Paris, during the massacre of the Three Days of September: every one marvels who they are, and whence they come; they disappear as mysteriously; and are seen no more, until another general commotion.

Such are the principal divisions into which a man-of-war's crew is divided; but the inferior allotments of duties are endless, and would require a German commentator to chronicle.

We say nothing here of Boatswain's mates, Gunner's mates, Carpenter's mates, Sail-maker's mates, Armorer's mates, Master-at-Arms, Ship's corporals, Cockswains, Quarter-masters, Quarter-gunners, Captains of the Forecastle, Captains of the Fore-top, Captains of the Main-top, Captains of the Mizen-top, Captains of the After-Guard, Captains of the Main-Hold, Captains of the Fore-Hold,

Captains of the Head, Coopers, Painters, Tinkers, Commodore's Steward, Captain's Steward, Ward-Room Steward, Steerage Steward, Commodore's cook, Captain's cook, Officers' cook, Cooks of the range, Mess-cooks, hammock-boys, messenger boys, cot-boys, loblolly-boys and numberless others, whose functions are fixed and peculiar.

It is from this endless subdivision of duties in a man-of-war, that, upon first entering one, a sailor has need of a good memory, and the more of an arithmetician he is, the better.

White-Jacket, for one, was a long time rapt in calculations, concerning the various "numbers" allotted him by the *First Luff*, otherwise known as the First Lieutenant. In the first place, White-Jacket was given the *number of his mess*; then, his *ship's number*, or the number to which he must answer when the watch-roll is called; then, the number of his hammock; then, the number of the gun to which he was assigned; besides a variety of other numbers; all of which would have taken Jedediah Buxton himself some time to arrange in battalions, previous to adding up. All these numbers, moreover, must be well remembered, or woe betide you.

Consider, now, a sailor altogether unused to the tumult of a man-of-war, for the first time stepping on board, and given all these numbers to recollect. Already, before hearing them, his head is half stunned with the unaccustomed sounds ringing in his ears; which ears seem to him like belfries full of tocsins. On the gun-deck, a thousand scythed chariots seem passing; he hears the tread of armed marines; the clash of cutlasses and curses. The Boatswain's mates whistle round him, like hawks screaming in a gale, and the strange noises under decks are like volcanic rumblings in a mountain. He dodges sudden sounds, as a raw recruit falling bombs.

Well-nigh useless to him, now, all previous circumnavigations of this terraqueous globe; of no account his arctic, antarctic, or equinoctial experiences; his gales off Beachy Head, or his dismastings off Hatteras. He must begin anew; he knows nothing; Greek and Hebrew could not help him, for the language he must learn has neither grammar nor lexicon.

Mark him, as he advances along the files of old ocean-warriors; mark his debased attitude, his deprecating gestures, his Sawney stare, like a Scotchman in London; his—"cry your merry, noble seignors!" He is wholly nonplussed, and confounded. And when, to crown all, the First Lieutenant, whose business it is to welcome all newcomers, and assign them their quarters: when this officer—none of the most bland or amiable either—gives him number after number to recollect—246—139—478—351—the poor fellow feels like decamping.

Study, then, your mathematics, and cultivate all your memories, oh ye! who think of cruising in men-of-war.

CHAPTER IV. JACK CHASE.

The first night out of port was a clear, moonlight one; the frigate gliding though the water, with all her batteries.

It was my Quarter Watch in the top; and there I reclined on the best possible terms with my top-mates. Whatever the other seamen might have been, these were a noble set of tars, and well worthy an introduction to the reader.

First and foremost was Jack Chase, our noble First Captain of the Top. He was a Briton, and a true-blue; tall and well-knit, with a clear open eye, a fine broad brow, and an abounding nut-brown beard. No man ever had a better heart or a bolder. He was loved by the seamen and admired by the officers; and even when the Captain spoke to him, it was with a slight air of respect. Jack was a frank and charming man.

No one could be better company in forecastle or saloon; no man told such stories, sang such songs, or with greater alacrity sprang to his duty. Indeed, there was only one thing wanting about him; and that was a finger of his left hand, which finger he had lost at the great battle of Navarino.

He had a high conceit of his profession as a seaman; and being deeply versed in all things pertaining to a man-of-war, was universally regarded as an oracle. The main-top, over which he presided, was a sort of oracle of Delphi; to which many pilgrims ascended, to have their perplexities or differences settled.

There was such an abounding air of good sense and good feeling about the man, that he who could not love him, would thereby pronounce himself a knave. I thanked my sweet stars, that kind fortune had placed me near him, though under him, in the frigate; and from the outset Jack and I were fast friends.

Wherever you may be now rolling over the blue billows, dear Jack! take my best love along with you; and God bless you, wherever you go!

Jack was a gentleman. What though his hand was hard, so was not his heart, too often the case with soft palms. His

manners were easy and free; none of the boisterousness, so common to tars; and he had a polite, courteous way of saluting you, if it were only to borrow your knife. Jack had read all the verses of Byron, and all the romances of Scott. He talked of Rob Roy, Don Juan, and Pelham; Macbeth and Ulysses; but, above all things, was an ardent admirer of Camoens. Parts of the *Lusiad*, he could recite in the original. Where he had obtained his wonderful accomplishments, it is not for me, his humble subordinate, to say. Enough, that those accomplishments were so various; the languages he could converse in, so numerous; that he more than furnished an example of that saying of Charles the Fifth— *he who speaks five languages is as good as five men*. But Jack, he was better than a hundred common mortals; Jack was a whole phalanx, an entire army; Jack was a thousand strong; Jack would have done honour to the Queen of England's drawing-room; Jack must have been a by-blow of some British Admiral of the Blue. A finer specimen of the island race of Englishmen could not have been picked out of Westminster Abbey of a coronation day.

His whole demeanor was in strong contrast to that of one of the Captains of the fore-top. This man, though a good seaman, furnished an example of those insufferable Britons, who, while preferring other countries to their own as places of residence; still, overflow with all the pompousness of national and individual vanity combined. "When I was on board the *Audacious*"—for a long time, was almost the invariable exordium to the fore-top Captain's most cursory remarks. It is often the custom of men-of-war's-men, when they deem anything to be going on wrong aboard ship to refer to *last cruise* when of course everything was done *ship-shape and Bristol fashion*. And by referring to the *Audacious*—an expressive name by the way—the fore-top Captain meant a ship in the English navy, in

which he had had the honour of serving. So continual were his allusions to this craft with the amiable name, that at last, the *Audacious* was voted a bore by his shipmates. And one hot afternoon, during a calm, when the fore-top Captain like many others, was standing still and yawning on the spar-deck; Jack Chase, his own countryman, came up to him, and pointing at his open mouth, politely inquired, whether that was the way they caught *flies* in Her Britannic Majesty's ship, the *Audacious*? After that, we heard no more of the craft.

Now, the tops of a frigate are quite spacious and cosy. They are railed in behind so as to form a kind of balcony, very pleasant of a tropical night. From twenty to thirty loungers may agreeably recline there, cushioning themselves on old sails and jackets. We had rare times in that top. We accounted ourselves the best seamen in the ship; and from our airy perch, literally looked down upon the landlopers below, sneaking about the deck, among the guns. In a large degree, we nourished that feeling of "*esprit de corps*," always pervading, more or less, the various sections of a man-of-war's crew. We main-top-men were brothers, one and all, and we loaned ourselves to each other with all the freedom in the world.

Nevertheless, I had not long been a member of this fraternity of fine fellows, ere I discovered that Jack Chase, our captain was—like all prime favorites and oracles among men—a little bit of a dictator; not peremptorily, or annoyingly so, but amusingly intent on egotistically mending our manners and improving our taste, so that we might reflect credit upon our tutor.

He made us all wear our hats at a particular angle—instructed us in the tie of our neck-handkerchiefs; and protested against our wearing vulgar *dungeree* trowsers;

besides giving us lessons in seamanship; and solemnly conjuring us, forever to eschew the company of any sailor we suspected of having served in a whaler. Against all whalers, indeed, he cherished the unmitigated detestation of a true man-of-war's man. Poor Tubbs can testify to that.

Tubbs was in the After-Guard; a long, lank Vineyarder, eternally talking of line-tubs, Nantucket, sperm oil, stove boats, and Japan. Nothing could silence him; and his comparisons were ever invidious.

Now, with all his soul, Jack abominated this Tubbs. He said he was vulgar, an upstart—Devil take him, he's been in a whaler. But like many men, who have been where *you* haven't been; or seen what *you* haven't seen; Tubbs, on account of his whaling experiences, absolutely affected to look down upon Jack, even as Jack did upon him; and this it was that so enraged our noble captain.

One night, with a peculiar meaning in his eye, he sent me down on deck to invite Tubbs up aloft for a chat. Flattered by so marked an honor—for we were somewhat fastidious, and did not extend such invitations to every body—Tubb's quickly mounted the rigging, looking rather abashed at finding himself in the august presence of the assembled Quarter-Watch of main-top-men. Jack's courteous manner, however, very soon relieved his embarrassment; but it is no use to be courteous to *some* men in this world. Tubbs belonged to that category. No sooner did the bumpkin feel himself at ease, than he launched out, as usual, into tremendous laudations of whalemens; declaring that whalemens alone deserved the name of sailors. Jack stood it some time; but when Tubbs came down upon men-of-war, and particularly upon main-top-men, his sense of propriety was so outraged, that he launched into Tubbs like a forty-two pounder.

"Why, you limb of Nantucket! you train-oil man! you sea-tallow strainer! you bobber after carrion! do *you* pretend to vilify a man-of-war? Why, you lean rogue, you, a man-of-war is to whalemén, as a metropolis to shire-towns, and sequestered hamlets. *Here's* the place for life and commotion; *here's* the place to be gentlemanly and jolly. And what did you know, you bumpkin! before you came on board this *Andrew Miller*? What knew you of gun-deck, or orlop, mustering round the capstan, beating to quarters, and piping to dinner? Did you ever roll to *grog* on board your greasy ballyhoo of blazes? Did you ever winter at Mahon? Did you ever '*lash and carry*?' Why, what are even a merchant-seaman's sorry yarns of voyages to China after tea-caddies, and voyages to the West Indies after sugar puncheons, and voyages to the Shetlands after seal-skins—what are even these yarns, you Tubbs you! to high life in a man-of-war? Why, you dead-eye! I have sailed with lords and marquises for captains; and the King of the Two Sicilies has passed me, as I here stood up at my gun. Bah! you are full of the fore-peak and the forecastle; you are only familiar with Burtons and Billy-tackles; your ambition never mounted above pig-killing! which, in my poor opinion, is the proper phrase for whaling! Topmates! has not this Tubbs here been but a misuser of good oak planks, and a vile desecrator of the thrice holy sea? turning his ship, my hearties! into a fat-kettle, and the ocean into a whale-pen? Begone! you graceless, godless knave! pitch him over the top there, White-Jacket!"

But there was no necessity for my exertions. Poor Tubbs, astounded at these fulminations, was already rapidly descending by the rigging.

This outburst on the part of my noble friend Jack made me shake all over, spite of my padded surtout; and caused me

to offer up devout thanksgivings, that in no evil hour had I divulged the fact of having myself served in a whaler; for having previously marked the prevailing prejudice of men-of-war's men to that much-maligned class of mariners, I had wisely held my peace concerning stove boats on the coast of Japan.

CHAPTER V. JACK CHASE ON A SPANISH QUARTER-DECK.

Here, I must frankly tell a story about Jack, which as touching his honour and integrity, I am sure, will not work against him, in any charitable man's estimation. On this present cruise of the frigate *Neversink*, Jack had deserted; and after a certain interval, had been captured.

But with what purpose had he deserted? To avoid naval discipline? To riot in some abandoned sea-port? for love of some worthless signorita? Not at all. He abandoned the frigate from far higher and nobler, nay, glorious motives. Though bowing to naval discipline afloat; yet ashore, he was a stickler for the Rights of Man, and the liberties of the world. He went to draw a partisan blade in the civil commotions of Peru; and befriend, heart and soul, what he deemed the cause of the Right.

At the time, his disappearance excited the utmost astonishment among the officers, who had little suspected him of any such conduct of deserting.

"What? Jack, my great man of the main-top, gone!" cried the captain; "I'll not believe it."