

## SAILORS' SNUG HARBOR.

THE waters of the open sea, as they rush past Sandy Hook on the flood-tide, strike upon a low-lying shore overshadowed by abruptly terminating cliffs. This is the north-easterly face of Staten Island. The channel-way between it and the south-western end of Long Island is the Narrows, the fortified entrance to New York Harbor. Following the trend of the shore-line of Staten Island northward, it becomes less and less exposed to the sea winds, and soon makes a sharp bend to the westward, where the tranquil Kill von Kull separates the island from New Jersey.

Long ere they reach this sheltered region the sea winds have spent their force, and the roar of the crashing billows is never heard. And here is situated, in almost rural quiet and beauty, Sailors' Snug Harbor, where the aged or crippled mariner, escaping the storms and dangers of the sea, finds a safe retreat. Between the main building of the Harbor and the lodge at the foot of the grounds, stands a monument to the founder, Robert Richard Randall. In addition to this, a bronze statue of Randall, by Augustus St. Gaudens, has just been completed for the Snug Harbor grounds.

The father of "Captain" Robert Randall—as he is called by courtesy—was a Scotchman, who came to America in 1776, and settled in New Orleans. The Spanish governor and intendant of that city, Don Bernardo de Galvez, having declared the port open for the sale of prizes of Yankee privateers, Mr. Randall took an active interest in that great fleet of private-armed vessels, whose exploits on the high seas, and even upon the coast of Great Britain itself, did much to contradict the modest assertion of the "British Naval Register" that:

"The winds and seas are Britain's wide domain,  
And not a sail but by permission spreads."

At his death his son Robert inherited the estate. The latter was accustomed to come North to pass the summer months, and it was while on a visit to New York city that he made the acquaintance of a Mr. Farquhar, a man possessed of means, but broken down by ill-health. The mild climate of Louisiana agreed with the invalid, and a proposition to exchange estates was taken into consideration.

\* These facts were given by the late Isaac Bell, Esq., who was foreman of the jury in the great trial to break the will of Robert Richard Randall. For thirty years in the national and state courts a vigorous warfare was waged to test the validity of the will between the heirs and executors, and among the most prominent contestants was a bishop of Nova Scotia.

After a bonus of five hundred guineas had been sent to Mr. Farquhar, this was effected. Mr. Randall was now a suburban citizen of what was then the little city of New York. His property consisted of real estate fronting on both sides of Broadway and adjacent streets, and extending from Eighth to Tenth streets. At the distance of about one-half mile to the westward and southward, namely, near the site of the old Presbyterian church, stood the dwelling of Captain Randall. Upon the piazza of this house, shaded by a luxuriant growth of ivy and clematis, the old gentleman was wont to sit in fine weather, with his dog by his side. Before the door were three rows of gladioli, which he carefully nurtured. He was a bachelor; at least, there is no record of his having been married. On the first day of June, 1801, Mr. Randall, being very ill and feeble, but of "sound, disposing mind and memory," made his will. Alexander Hamilton and Daniel D. Tompkins drew up the papers. In this document he directed his just debts to be paid; that an annuity of forty pounds a year be given to each of the children of his half-brother, until they were fifteen years old; a sum of one thousand pounds to each son upon his twenty-first birthday, and a like sum to the daughters upon their marriage. He bequeathed to his housekeeper his sleeve-buttons and a life annuity of forty pounds. To his steward, he left his watch and forty pounds, and to another servant, his shoe and knee buckles and twenty pounds. When this had been recorded, he looked up with an expression of anxiety.

"I am thinking," he said, "how I can dispose of the remainder of my property most wisely. What think you, General?" turning to Hamilton.

"How did you accumulate the fortune you possess?"

"It was made for me by my father, and at his death I became his sole heir."

"How did he acquire it?" asked Hamilton.

"By honest privateering," responded Randall. Hamilton suggested that a fortune made at sea might appropriately be left for the benefit of unfortunate and disabled seamen.\*

In March, 1830, the Supreme Court gave





A VIEW ALONG THE FRONT.

the final adjudication, and sustained the will. The trustees under the will consist of the mayor and recorder of the city of New York, the president and vice-president of the Marine Society, the president of the Chamber of Commerce, the rector of Trinity Church, and the minister of the First Presbyterian Church in New York city.

Soon after Capt. Randall's death it was found that the location of the Snug Harbor within the city limits would be attended with many inconveniences. In 1831 Staten Island was selected as a proper site, both on account of its salubrious climate and its proximity to the ocean. In that year a farm of about 160 acres was purchased for \$16,000, and the buildings were begun.

At the time of the bequest Randall's property was of little value, being mostly farming land, situate on the outskirts of the populated parts of the city; hence the income was at first very small, not exceeding one thousand dollars. As the population of the city increased, the rental rose by degrees, until in the present year it has reached a sum bordering upon four hundred thousand dollars.

The buildings of Sailors' Snug Harbor lie creamy-white and cool mid a forest of great elms, and look out stolidly and unmoved at the unrest of life as represented by the noisy little tugs on the river and the white-winged craft that skim the waters of the bay beyond. A rounding bank extends in a long line of unbroken beauty to the right, with sides that quiver with foliage in the sunlight.

Though their surroundings are pastoral, the

appearance of the inmates of this retreat, as well as their conversation, is of the sea—salty. Entering the grounds, the visitor observes a number of sturdy old men, unmistakably sailors, pacing about in the paths or reclining under the trees. Upon a long bench, immediately in front of the buildings, others are sitting side by side, smoking and chatting. Many are maimed, and not a few so aged that they can only totter about with shaking heads and limbs that knock the one against the other.

In the halls of the buildings, as well as on the grounds, old sailors are pacing to and fro, as though standing their watch aboard ship and waiting to be relieved. Indeed, this air of waiting, of expectancy, may be said to pervade the institution. The sailor's life is active, bustling, free. Is it surprising, then, that he should become restive when unemployed; that he should chafe under restraint? These men that move restlessly about the Harbor have cruised in every ocean. They speak of East India, of Africa, and of Greenland, as though they were on the other side of the Kill von Kull.

"How does she head now, Cap'n Foster?" says Chaplain Jones to a fine old fellow, who is puckering up his mouth as if about to whistle, but emitting no sound.

"Due no'th, sir—all's well."

Foster served through the war aboard the Federal war-ships, although well along in years at the time. He was boatswain for many years before that event, and has been "piping-the-side" so long that his mouth as-



sumes the peculiar appearance already described. The entrance to his chamber presents a truly nautical appearance, and the visitor must pass through a whole fleet of small craft,—barks, brigs, schooners, and sloops,—the result of his jack-knife leisure, arranged upon chests of drawers.

Foster feels keenly the loss of his old friend James Spencer, who died here a few years since. Spencer was the last survivor of the famous fight between the American frigate *Essex*, Captain David Porter, and the British cruisers *Phoebe* and *Cherub*, in the harbor of Valparaiso, in the war of 1812, which has been characterized by Cooper as "one of the most remarkable combats to be found in the history of naval warfare." During the action Spencer served the second gun on the larboard, now designated the port side of the gun-deck. Here is his description as given to Chaplain Jones before his death: "It were in March, 1812, an' we were a-layin' in Valparaiso. There were a English frigate an' a sloop outside. The sloop, when she run in, came up wery near us, an' bein' taken aback, her jib-boom it came across our fo'c'sle. The old man [Cap'n Porter] he suspected that she were up to somethin', an' he calls all hands to board the enemy. But the cap'n of the sloop apologized an' sheered off. The next day we put to sea, but was struck by a squall while a-roundin' a headland, carried away the maintopmast, an' had to anchor. Then the Englishmen came for us, and when we went fur the frigate, the sloop she came about, an' in a minute we had it hot an' heavy,—one on the starboard quarter an' the other on the larboard bow, a-pourin' shot into us like hail. The men was mowed down like grass, but we returned the fire as long as we could, an' then the cap'n he gave orders that all English-born men of the crew might swim ashore if they liked, fur of the British caught 'em they would treat 'em as deserters. Many of 'em were drowned." Farragut, who was a midshipman on the *Essex*, always received his old shipmate with friendliness when in this neighborhood. Spencer thus described to Chaplain Jones one of these visits: "The Admiral was a-sittin' on a sofy. 'Jim,' says he, 'you an' me 's got nearly into port! I wonder which on us will fetch up fust.'" At the Admiral's funeral, Spencer insisted upon following the hearse, though it was cold and rainy, and it was from the effects of his exposure on that day that he died shortly afterward.

Aged as he was, no man in the Snug Harbor was more industrious than Spencer. Down in the basement of the institution, which is given over to basket, mat, and ham-

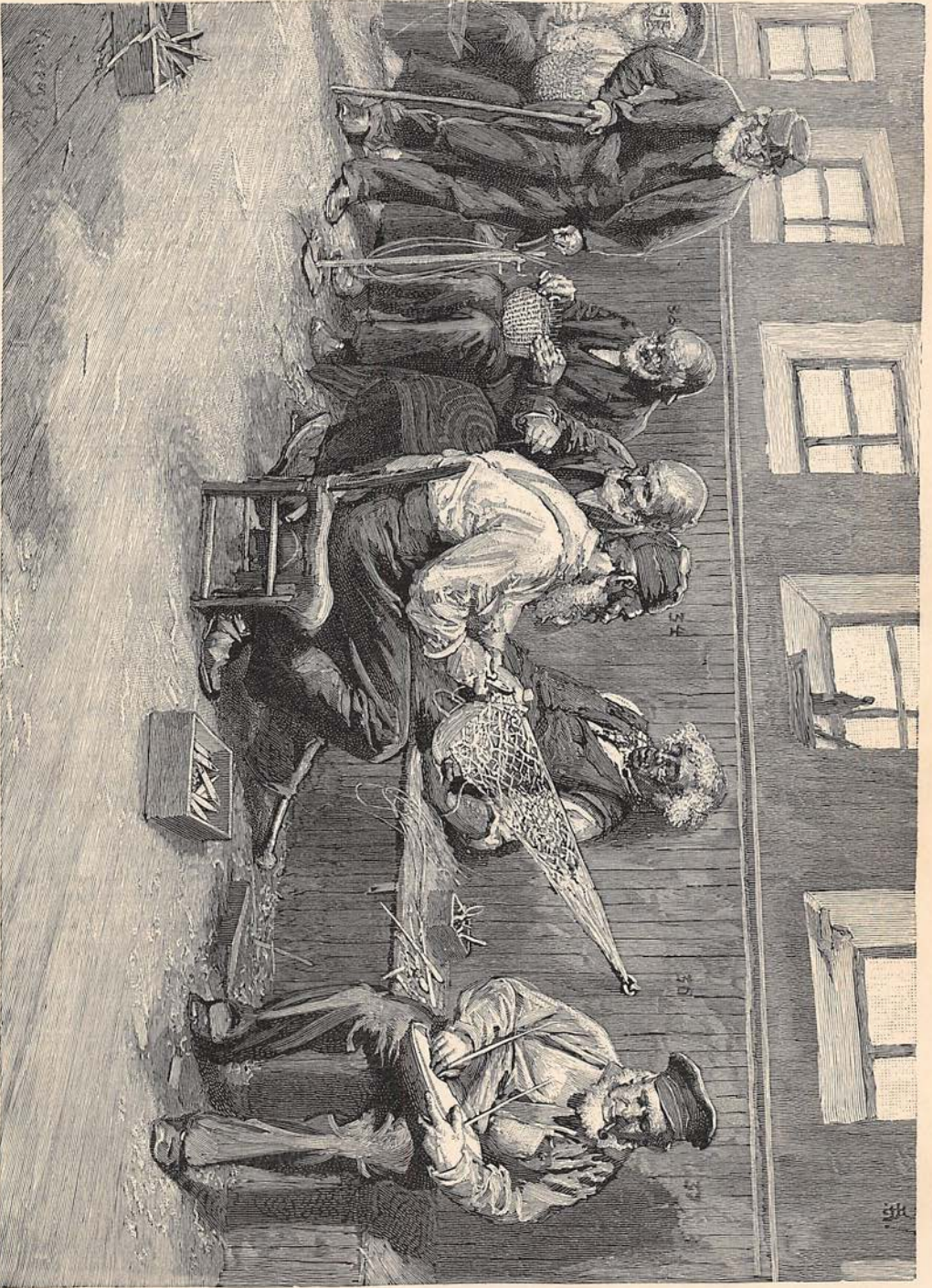
mock making, the men often pause in their labors to discuss some of the wonderful yarns that the veterans are wont to spin there.

One portion of the basement, that from which daylight is debarred, is given over to the blind men. Here they sit all day working, telling stories, or listening to some old mariner who, so crippled as to be unfit for work, is glad to read aloud to them for a few pence a day. Under the eaves of the westernmost building a score of cripples are busy upon fancy netting and work-baskets. Looking out upon them from behind the iron bars of "the cage" is the only prisoner in the institution. His mates say he is neither ill nor demented, but is troubled with a complaint which is as prevalent among landsmen as among sailors. They describe it as "pure cussedness." One of its symptoms was that upon arising in the morning he was in the habit of going from room to room and pulling the aged and decrepit mariners out of bed and otherwise disturbing the peace.

Those who make baskets, mats, and nets are by no means the only artisans in the institution. Scattered through the building are men engaged in the construction of finely modeled miniature vessels, while others paint marine views on clam and other shells. This taste for art is carefully fostered by the governor, who recently gave old Captain Davis *carte-blanc* to decorate the walls of the reception room with nautical designs, sea serpents, and other marine monsters; and through his instrumentality at least one of the old masters has been placed in every room—in some cases two.

Ranged side by side at long tables in a well-appointed dining-hall, the weather-beaten old salts are served by a number of their comrades, selected by the governor especially for this service. There is no stint—no fixed quantity or ration beyond which an inmate may not go. The tables are loaded down with well-selected, well-cooked food, and it is a pleasing sight to watch the fine old fellows as they "buckle to," so to speak, in dead earnest. That nice distinction that obtains on ship-board between the position of the inmates of the cabin and the fore-castle has no place here. Men who have been disabled while serving before the mast sometimes find it difficult to comprehend this, and it is said that instances are by no means rare where new-comers have shown an inclination to keep on the lee-side of the dining-room in deference to the presence of captains under whom they have served. They soon outgrow this, however, and learn to sit at the table beside their former commanders with composure. Thus it not infrequently happens that the once master of a





IN THE WORKSHOP, AT SAILORS' SNUG HARBOR.



great ship finds himself in company with men who, during the tempest and the gale, were wont to do his bidding. When skies are clear and freshening breezes drive the prow through glistening seas, the great war-ship strides haughtily past the peaceful merchantman or humble fishing-smack; but when clouds lower and tempests threaten, they seek alike the shelter of the same harbor, and ride side by side at anchor as members of one common brotherhood. So at Snug Harbor the captain, the inmate of the galley, and Jack before the mast forget their former stations. Shattered by the same gales, they have dropped anchor here till the storms of life are past.

Chaplain Jones, already mentioned, presides at the little church in the grounds of the Harbor. He is a sailor himself, having served before the mast many years, and knows how to talk to those who "follow the sea." When a mere lad he ran away from his English home and shipped aboard an East Indiaman. He is about sixty-five now, and many years ago forsook the sea to study theology. As soon as he was qualified, he went among the sailors of the great lakes, and afterward opened a Bethel in St. Louis. Then he returned hither and became the pastor of the Mariners' Church. Worn out from early exposure and hardships, he was about to start for Europe in search of health and rest, when he was appointed to his present post by the trustees.

The visitor to the Harbor who fails to hear him address his shipmates robs himself of a spectacle at once interesting and unique. Familiar with the characteristics of the sailor, Dr. Jones addresses him in his own language, and this is the prime reason of his influence over him.

Here is the substance of a sermon:

"There are two questions which a sailor involuntarily asks himself before he obeys: 'Who gives the order? Does he mean me?'"

The speaker pauses and regards his auditors, well knowing that this would astonish them. He is not mistaken. It does.

"Humph!" audibly growls an old tar. "Calls hisself a sailor man, and talks about a sailor a-argumentin' afore he jumps to obey." "Yes," continues the chaplain, "I knew this would startle you, but it is nevertheless true. Let me explain. Imagine a ship going down the bay. As she makes an offing outside, the pilot leaves her, the to'-gallan'-s'ls are set and sheeted home, and she squares away on her course. Now appears upon the quarter-deck a young man with high-heeled boots, tight trousers with quarter-gallery pockets, sheeted home at the ankles, and stove-pipe hat. He has a full cargo of grog aboard. Suddenly he seizes hold of a back-stay to steady himself,

puts his hand alongside his mouth, and sings out: 'Let go them fore-to'-gallan' halyards!'"

Again the speaker pauses and watches the effect of this on the men before him. From bench to bench men are leaning forward, their arms resting upon the backs of the seats in front. The muscles stand out upon their weather-beaten faces. There is a pause. "What would you do?" demands the chaplain. "I shouldn't obey it!" comes back in hoarse but decided tones, and the masters and mates of East Indiamen, the captains of the tops, quartermasters, boatswains, coxswains, and gunners of war-ships, settle back again in their seats in evident relief.

"That's it, and so I told you at the start. A sailor, at least unconsciously, asks himself, 'Who gives the order?' There is a call, ay, a command now being given to you, and I am here to deliver it. It's from the Master. He is calling you all the time. You were surprised when I said that a sailor involuntarily asked himself who gave the order before he obeyed it, and yet many of you have been hesitating to obey an order for fifty, ay, for sixty years and more. He calls you, and he has a right to call you, for you shipped under him at childhood.

"Now comes the next question: 'Does he mean me?' Again I'll illustrate. Two men are for'ard. One is serving the standing part of the main-tack, the other is passing the ball [spun yarn]. The captain from the quarter-deck sings out: 'Tom! heave out that weather foresheet!' [in order to tauten the clew-garnet]. Tom doesn't hear the order. The second mate, standing on the break of the quarter-deck, finding the order not obeyed, calls out to the other man: 'Jim! why don't you heave out that foresheet?' 'He told Tom to do it, sir,' replies Jim, with an air of injured innocence.

"That's just what many of you are doing now when the Master is calling—asking yourselves if he means you. I tell you he does mean you, so delay no longer in obeying his order."

Here is another sermon from the text, "Let go that stern-line," which is given like the other in substance. "I once stood on the wharf watching a brig get ready for sea," began the Rev. Mr. Jones. "The top-s'ls and courses were loosed, the jib hung from the boom, and the halyards were stretched out ready to run up. Just at this moment the pilot sprang from the wharf to the quarter-deck, inquiring as he did so of the mate in command, 'Are you all ready?'"

"'All ready, sir,' said the officer. Then came the command: 'Stand by to run up that jib!—Hands by the head-braces!—Cast off your head-fast, and stand by aft there to let go that stern-line!—LET GO!—Man the tops'l-halyards!—Run 'em up, boys—run 'em up!—"



Does the jib take?—Haul over that star-board sheet!

"She pays off fine—there she goes, and—'HILLOA! HILLOA! WHAT'S THE MATTER? What's fast there? STARBOARD THE HELM! STARBOARD!' shouts the pilot. 'What holds her? Is there anything foul aft there? WHY, LOOK AT THAT STERN-LINE! Heave it off the timber-head!—HEAVE OFF THAT TURN.'

"'It's foul ashore, sir!' says one of the crew.

"'Then cut it, cut it! D'ye hear? Never mind the hawser! Cut it before she loses her way.'

"By this time there was a taut strain on the hawser. A seaman drew his sheath-knife across the strands, which soon parted, the brig forged ahead, the sails were run up and trimmed to the breeze, and the brig *Billow* filled away.

"So, too, when I see men who have immortal souls to save bound to the world by the cords, the hawsers of their sins, then I think of that scene, and feel like crying out: Gather in your breast-lines and haul out from the shores of destruction. Fly, as Lot from the guilty Sodom! Oh, let go that stern-line!"

But there are many of the old tars who do not take any interest in spiritual subjects, though they are inordinately fond of spirits. No matter how interesting the sermon or how eloquent the chaplain, the members of one watch of them are pretty sure to nod, careen from side to side, or doze peacefully on each other's shoulders, while the members of the other straggle out to sleep under the trees, where it is cooler.

The Rev. Mr. Jones says that whenever he tries to convert the type of mariner last described, he gets the same response: "Oh, don't talk about them things to me. I've been without 'em now for sixty years. I reckon I kin stan' it fur a year or two longer."

Many of the excellent laws by which the Harbor is governed were inaugurated by brave old Captain De Peyster, for many years governor. When the trustees talked about superseding him on account of his age, he went down to the Harbor wharf and threw himself overboard. Many stories are told here of the bravery and seamanship of De Peyster. While his ship was lying in the Whampoa Reach, in Chinese waters, one Sunday, an American missionary came off to preach. In the midst of the service an intoxicated British sailor plunged headlong into the rushing tideway. Scarcely had the waves closed over him when from the high quarter-deck Captain De Peyster sprang after, and grasped the struggling tar by the hair. The powerful current had carried the two far to seaward before a boat could be got to them.

Captain Whiting, recently deceased, served as mate with De Peyster. Relating the story some time ago, he said that there was not any more preaching aboard that day, and that the cheering from the surrounding ships, principally British, whose crews had witnessed De Peyster's exploit, was the most enthusiastic and prolonged he ever heard. Mates and skippers, tars and coolies, shouted as though they would split their throats, and the British East India captains came alongside in their boats to grasp the captain's hand. A meeting was held at Canton, a subscription taken up, and an elegant and appropriate present made De Peyster by his brother skippers of all nationalities.

The ship *Columbus*, commanded by De Peyster, while beating down the channel from Liverpool, bound to New York, in 1837, was caught in a terrific gale that threatened to drive her ashore in Cardigan Bay, on the Welsh coast. Huge billows rolled in order to the shore, the wave behind tumbling upon that before, foamed over the rocks, and thundered to the skies. There seemed to be only the slimmest chance of weathering the coast, according to Captain Whiting, who was aboard; but De Peyster took this chance, and by a most admirable display of seamanship saved his vessel. One of the few unsuccessful measures introduced by De Peyster while governor of the institution was the serving of a ration of cider to the men, in the hope that it would at least lessen if it did not altogether check the use of intoxicating stimulants. Almost immediately thereafter many of the old sailors, having imbibed spirits to excess under cover of the cider, showed traces of unsteadiness not previously observed. De Peyster sent for those thus affected and inquired the cause of their unsteadiness. Had they acknowledged the fact that it was liquor, they would have been kept within bounds for several weeks; so, with one accord, they attributed it to the cider. "Very well," said De Peyster, "if you consider cider intoxicating, you'll not get any more," and the cider ration was abolished. The inmates of the Harbor are allowed to remain outside the gates during the day, but must obtain leave to absent themselves for the night. Intoxication, disorderly conduct, or non-compliance with the rules governing the institution is punished by what is known at the Harbor as "taboo." In its local sense this means a specified term of punishment or loss of liberty. The forcible breaking of "taboo" is followed by expulsion from the institution.

The visitor to the Harbor is surprised to find its aged occupants engaged all day in making baskets, nets, mats, etc.



"Why do they work so hard in this haven of rest?" he will inquire.

It is to obtain money.

"But why do they need money? Are they not supplied with food, clothes, lodging, and even tobacco?"

Yes; but they need money to pay for the little wants not supplied by the institution, among which liquor plays a by no means unimportant part. They will tell you that sailors at their time of life cannot comfortably go without liquor; that constant exposure to storm and deprivation made it necessary in the first instance, and that now their waning forces call still more loudly for it.

In the Greenwich Hospital each of the sixteen hundred pensioners was allowed a ration of liquor, and sums of from three to five shillings weekly, according to grade, for tobacco and pocket money.

The late Governor of the Harbor, Captain Melville, who died March 5th of this year, was a strict disciplinarian, but a man withal in whose hands the scales of justice were evenly balanced. His successor is Captain G. D. S. Trask, who for many years followed the sea, and who is the son of a captain prominent in the Liverpool trade in the days of clipper ships.

As may be imagined, it requires a firm hand to control eight hundred sailors, many of whom have been in the habit of commanding and not of obeying. It not infrequently happens that newly arrived inmates become nervous and irritable at the dead calm of the Harbor, and complain that "there aint enough drinkin' an' fightin' a-goin' on," and these have to be weeded out. One of the last naval engagements of any consequence that took place at the Harbor was between an old salt, John Bainsborough, and a man-of-war's man, Sandy Brown by name. Both were discharged.

The oldest sailor in the Harbor is Captain Devoe, born in 1786. Devoe is of Italian parentage, and shipped in the French Imperial Navy toward the close of the Napoleonic era. Later on he served in the American merchant service and in the navy.

John Foster was born in 1806. At the breaking out of the Mexican war he was bo's'n on the bark *Peolia*, Captain Peckham, engaged in carrying troops, and during the late war quartermaster aboard the United States Coast Survey steamer *Vixen*, Captain Boutelle, which showed the fleet under Commodore Dupont the way into Fort Fisher.

Captain Sam Whiting, recently deceased, called the poet-laureate of the Harbor, was sailing-master on the steamer *Arctic*, which, in company with the clipper bark *Release*, composed in 1855 the United States search expe-

dition for Kane and Sir John Franklin. In 1837 Whiting was on the United States steamer *Poinsett*, belonging to the quartermaster's department of the army, and which, after the treacherous capture of the Seminole Chief Osceola under a flag of truce, brought him to Charleston. At the breaking out of the civil war he commanded the steam-ship *Marion*, plying between Charleston, S. C., and New York: When South Carolina seceded, Captain Whiting was ordered by the Charleston authorities to strike his flag and set that of the Confederacy in its place. To this order Whiting returned a stubborn refusal, a refusal that endangered alike his own life and the safety of his vessel. At the risk of drawing the fire of the forts in the harbor, he sailed defiantly out to sea, flying both the Federal ensign and the Union Jack. On his return to Charleston he was deprived of his command, mobbed in the streets, and compelled to flee for his life.

Captain William Hudson, a graduate of the Naval Academy, also an inmate, was the commander of the ill-fated steam-ship *Golden Gate*, of the Pacific Mail Steamship Company, which was burned on the Mexican coast some years since. By able seamanship he got his vessel ashore in smooth water before she sank, and thus succeeded in saving the lives of most of his passengers and crew.

Captain William Garland, another inmate, was born in 1806, and entered the navy as a midshipman in 1818. In 1830 he was aboard the *Boston* sloop-of-war, Captain G. W. Storer, which conveyed Commodore Porter, father of the present Admiral, to Constantinople, he having been appointed by President Jackson Consul-general to the Barbary powers. Garland witnessed the action between the French and the Algerines. During the second day's fight his ship ran in between the fires to take off the consul and citizens of the United States, both combatants saluting the flag as she passed. Captain Garland's father was a lieutenant in the French fleet commanded by the Count de Grasse before Yorktown.

The Cross-Rip light-ship is well known to those who have visited the Vineyard Sound. Many a light-ship anchored here to warn passing vessels from this dangerous locality has itself been lost. For many years Captain Benjamin Gardiner, now an inmate of the Harbor, commanded this vessel. Other vessels could lie safely under the lee of the shore in the gale, but there was no lee for him. In consequence, the command of this light-ship was by no means a sinecure. When he parted his chains in a gale, he was sure of "fetching up," as he describes it, on the inhospitable shores of Cape Cod or Martha's Vineyard, or, if the gale was from the westward, the un-



pleasant alternative of going on the terrible reefs of Nantucket Shoals. His orders, he says, were "to go up or down," by which was no doubt meant that he should either sink or go ashore rather than drift about and thus mislead the passing mariner. Captain Gardiner lost two ships during his term of service, but saved his crew both times, and was frequently adrift in the gale. Once he was compelled to make an involuntary cruise of forty-two days, during which he says he was "a-driftin' all around the lot." At the expiration of that time the light-house authorities doubtless came to the conclusion that Captain Gardiner had either gone to the bottom or was cruising on the African coast, warning vessels to keep off the Cross-Rip. While on his station he was often run down in thick weather, and the honest old sailor yet waxes indignant when he describes the ignorance exhibited by passing skippers of the position of their vessels. On one occasion, the weather being thick, he was struck by a full-rigged ship a glancing blow, but powerful enough to drive the bows of the vessel into the pantry of the light-ship. "I come a-runnin' on deck," said Captain Gardiner, describing the incident, "an' I sings out to the captain, 'What are you a-tryin' to do?' 'I'm a-tryin' to find the Cross-Rip,' says he. 'Well, you've found it now, and the light-ship, too,' says I; 'an' you kin just keep out o' my pantry, fur you aint got no business in there.' Then he sheered off."

One of the most interesting characters, perhaps, that ever lodged in Snug Harbor, was an old, weather-beaten man-of-war's man, P. J. Miller by name, who was famous for yarn-spinning, which he had reduced to a science. During nearly half a century's service as boatswain in the navy he had cultivated the faculty of improving a yarn every time he told it, no matter how slight the original materials. During his last years of service aboard ship, Miller, by reason of his age, was granted liberties rarely enjoyed by boatswains, and of the many stories told about him in the navy the following is one of the best:

"Do you know *H. R. H.* the Duke of Edinburgh?" demanded Miller one day of the officer of the deck.

"No;" responded the latter, "I don't, do you?"

"Do I know *H. R. H.* the Duke of Edinburgh? Well, I should say I did."

"Why, where did you get acquainted with him, Mr. Miller?"

"Where did I meet him?—well, I met him in Canadian waters, an' me and him was great friends."

"I suppose you used to call on him frequently?"

"Yes, I did; an' he never wouldn't let any of the marines bother me with questions as to where I was a-goin' of. One day he says to me, 'P. J.,' says he, 'don't you never pay no attention to them marines and quartermasters and the like when you're a-comin' aboard fur ter see me. Jest you climb over the side and slide right down inter the cabing,' says he, 'and help yerself to whatever yer fancy!' 'H. R. H.," says I, 'put it thar!—and we shook."

This story of the aged boatswain, of course, went the rounds of the ship. Afterward when the ship, which was the flag-ship, was in English waters, a big British man-of-war hove in sight early one evening, and the guns from the English fleet riding at anchor saluted until the waters were covered with smoke. The old boatswain had seen the flag of the newcomer, and surmising that it was commanded by his quondam friend, the Duke of Edinburgh, he suddenly became very busy "piping the side," and evaded the questionings of the officer of the deck in regard to his royal friend. The next day the Admiral paid his respects to the Duke of Edinburgh, and a day later the Duke came to return the Admiral's visit. The drums beat to quarters, and the marines were drawn up and presented arms. The Duke's face wore a curious expression when he reached the cabin. "Admiral," said he, as he turned from side to side before his host, "is there anything on my back, any chalk or the like?"

"No, sir," responded the Admiral. "Why do you ask?"

"Because," said the Duke, "I noticed, as I came over the side, that the marines smiled at me!"

"The marines *smiled* at you?" slowly repeated the Admiral, amazed that such a breach of discipline should have occurred. Then he called for the captain, and the captain sent for the officer of the deck. The latter, being interrogated, acknowledged that what the Duke had said was unfortunately true. "The truth is," he began, "we have aboard this ship the oldest bos'n in the navy. Many of the senior captains took their first lessons in knotting and splicing from him, and for this reason he enjoys certain liberties aboard not usually given to the men." Then he repeated the "P. J. Miller and Duke of Edinburgh" story, to the great delight of the royal visitor, who, besides being an able seaman, is possessed of great good-nature. He insisted upon seeing the old bos'n, and the word was passed forward for P. J. Miller. When Miller got the word to "lay aft," and heard that it came from the Admiral himself, he was sorely troubled. He took off



his hat and pulled his forelock over his forehead before he had reached the break of the quarter-deck, and descended into the cabin on legs that knocked the one against the other. Knowing full well what naval discipline was, hanging would, in his eyes, have been a light penalty for his offense, and he was fully prepared to receive sentence.

But the Duke soon re-assured the old fellow. "P. J., old man," said he, advancing and good-naturedly extending his hand, "put it there! Whenever you come aboard my ship to see me, never mind the marines and the quartermasters and the cox'ns and the rest of them, but slide right down into my cabin and help yourself to whatever you fancy!"

When P. J. Miller heard the Duke repeat the language of his own yarn, he almost fainted, and had to be assisted up the companion-way. But he pulled himself together when he saw the officer of the deck to whom he had told his yarn, and, as he passed, he hissed out: "There! didn't I tell yer that H. R. H. were a friend o' mine?"

Down on the unplanned planks of the Snug Harbor wharf, a score of old salts, regardless of slivers, sit the livelong day and watch the white-winged craft passing up and down. Over their brawny chests their jaws move in measured sweep. Being "square-riggers," that is to say, having served all their life aboard ships, barks, and brigs, they look with silent contempt upon the fore-and-aft vessels of the river. Indeed, they cannot abide schooners, save that description of this craft which, deep-hulled and foamy-topped, may be had at the public-house about a cable's length up the road. Each veteran seaman has striking characteristics. Here is John Lebas, who is said to come nearer to the old style man-of-war's man than any man at the Harbor. He doesn't wear a queue, to be sure, but those long curls that fall about his shoulders might easily be gathered up into the old style marine pigtail. Next to him is he whom his brother sailors designate as "Sinbad," because he has made so many long voyages and had such hair-breadth escapes. Still further on is the veteran who paints marine views on clam shells, and sells them in the ferry-house. Here comes old Captain Brown down the hill toward the wharf. You would hardly believe him to be threescore and ten by his sprightly gait. Captain Brown raises watermelons in the season and sells them to the stammering people. Immediately behind him is the old colored sailor Rube, who once ornamented the galley of the bark *Pride of the Sea*. Captain Brown and Rube are inseparable companions, and very properly, too, for Rube is the inventor, or rather compounder, of the

"universal drops," said to be good in cases of watermelon and all that the name implies. When Captain Brown goes about selling watermelons he generally takes Rube along. Thus is the summer visitor enabled to purchase the bane and the antidote at one and the same time.

"Hello! Jim—goin' to launch her?" calls Captain Brown to a little, weazened old fellow climbing down the side of the dock with a miniature ship under his arm and a broad smile of satisfaction on his face.

"Ay, that's it," responds Jim, who was formerly quartermaster on the *Terror* monitor. He has spent many weeks in building the ship, and now will be decided whether or not his skill has been wasted on a bad model. Broken glass, and sand-paper, and putty, and paint have done their work on the hull. Her wedge-like stern and forefoot, her well-flanged bow and rounded bends, her clean run, and her rudder, delicately hung, are all evidences of his skill. Her tapering spars are stepped, her rigging is set up, her slender yards are crossed, and her rude sails bent. The diminutive anchors, with top-string for cables, are suspended from the cat-heads, and the stars-and-stripes flung to the breeze from her mizzen-peak. Carefully the old fellow launches her. "She seems to feel the thrill of life along her keel," and starts off on a wind with every stitch of canvas drawing.

Firemen, machinists, and stokers are refused admittance to the Harbor, even though having served the requisite five years aboard American ships, on the ground that they are not "seamen," and therefore do not come within the provisions of the will. For, though the term "seaman" has been held to include "every person employed on board in the care, preservation, or navigation of any vessel, or in the service on board of those engaged in such care, preservation, or navigation," the trustees have deemed it expedient to adhere to the strict letter of the will. Doubtless, had Captain Randall been aware of the important part steam was to play in the propulsion of vessels, he would have provided for the maintenance of the marine machinist and stoker, as well as of those who reef the main-top-sail aloft or stir the duff-pudding below. The authorities say that they must "draw the line" somewhere, or the Harbor would soon be full of coal-heavers, to say nothing of stewardesses, who, under a strict construction of the law, are sailors also. This exclusion of stokers and machinists or oilers works a cruel injustice to many worthy men, who, if they be not sailors in the opinion of the authorities of the Harbor, share at least with them the vicissitudes and the perils incident to a seafaring life.



The evident intention of the founder of the institution was to furnish a refuge for those who go down to the sea in ships, irrespective of vocation. Else would he have excluded cooks, who, though usually able seamen, and ready to lend a hand in cases of emergency, do not ship to shorten sail in stormy weather, and cannot, therefore, be compelled to do it. Manning the yards in a gale of wind is perilous work, but so is serving the boilers when the ship is pitching and rolling athwart seas.

Not long ago two men, Robert Osbon and Edward Kelly by name, incapacitated from further service by reason of injuries received in the performance of their duties in the fire-room, were refused admission to the Harbor on the ground that they were not sailors. Kelly served for forty years on various steamers, and both he and his comrade had suffered the shipwreck and famine that go hand in hand with long sea-service. Strenuous and determined efforts were made to force the trustees to admit these men, but without success. The eyes of the law had looked upon them as being sufficiently sailors to have each month the usual stipend for the support of the marine hospitals deducted from their pay. But marine hospitals are for seamen temporarily ailing, not for those permanently disabled; and hence these poor fellows were cast adrift after years of honest toil, broken in health, maimed of limb, and this, too, in the neighborhood of an institution the support of whose inmates requires little more than a third of its revenue.

Whether the sailor is as happy under the conditions obtaining at a Home as he is with a small pension, is a question upon both sides of which much may be said. Successive boards of admiralty of the Royal Navy, after considering the subject for one hundred and sixty years, finally decided that he was not, and in 1865 the Greenwich Hospital, established in 1705 as a home for superannuated

and decrepit seamen, alike of the navy and merchant service, was closed. So far as the pensioners were concerned, the institution was found to be a monastery in which hundreds of men lived together without any of the soul-sustaining inducements of monasticism. The old sailors of this English refuge, like those of similar refuges, proved on the whole painful objects to contemplate. Leading lives useless to themselves and others, their best occupation was to recount, with the garrulity of age and the boastfulness of self-absorption, the exploits of long ago. Now the income of the Greenwich Hospital (considerably over one hundred and fifty thousand pounds sterling) is used as a pension fund. The beneficiaries are scattered over the kingdom, most of them living with or in the neighborhood of their relatives, and, despite the weight of years, finding light employment. Even before the doors of the Greenwich Hospital were closed there was a system of "out-pensions," by which a veteran entitled to the benefits of the institution could remain with his relatives and yet draw a small stipend, which, added to the modest sum earned by occasional employment, assured him at least a living without becoming a burden upon any one.

The inauguration of such a system at Sailors' Snug Harbor would, beyond question, give great satisfaction, and many would take advantage of it to live with or near their children or grandchildren in quiet contentment, instead of moping gloomily about the quadrangle of the Harbor. Under the present rules an inmate may easily obtain permission to absent himself from the institution as long as he likes, but he receives no allowance while away.

It is to be hoped that the trustees will soon be brought to look into this matter; ascertain the value of the food, clothes, and lodging an inmate of the Harbor is entitled to under Randall's will, and, should he so elect, give it to him in hard cash.

*Franklin H. North.*

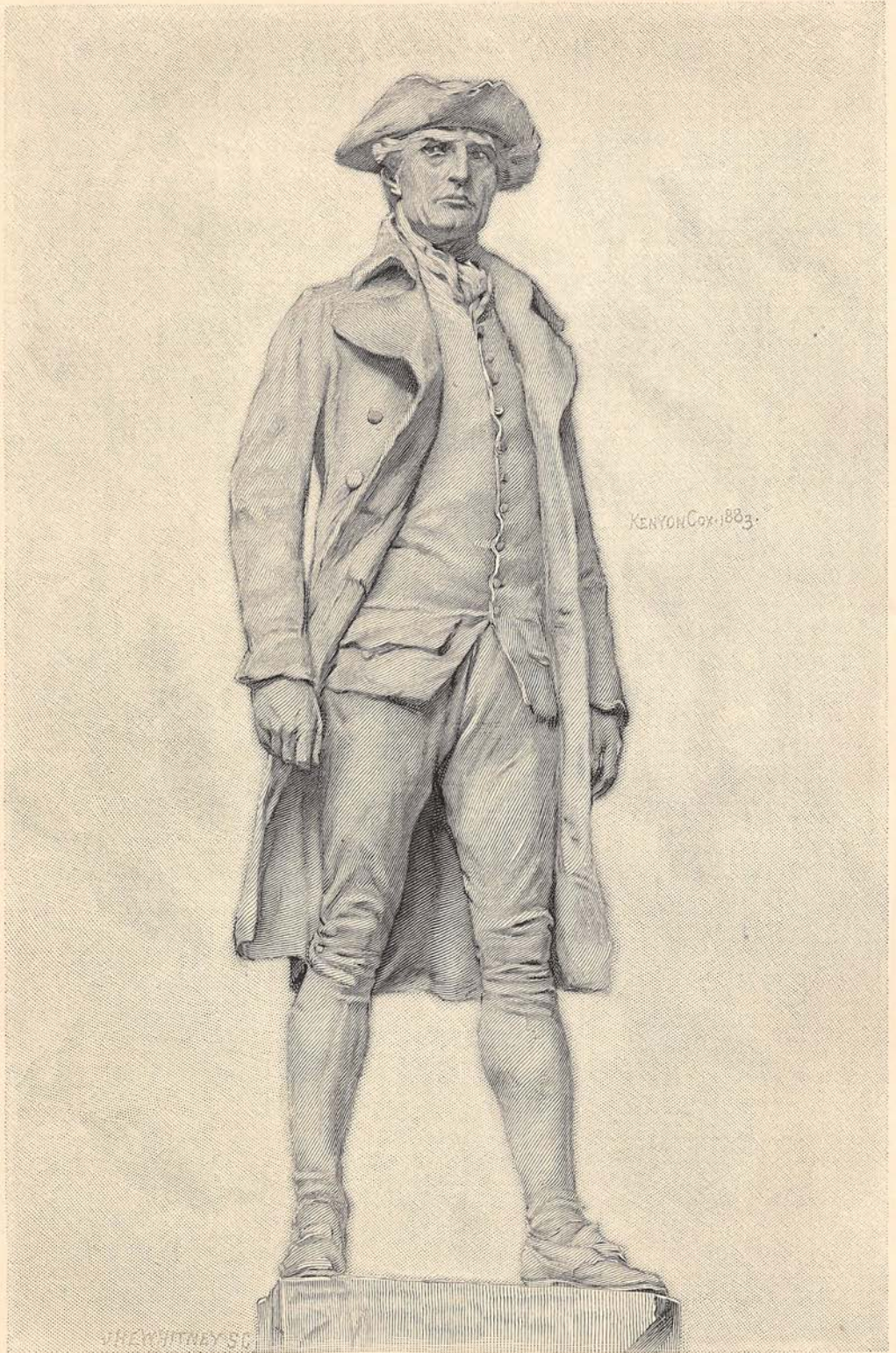
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## THE BIRTH OF MAN.

### A LEGEND OF THE TALMUD.

WHEN angels visit earth, the messengers  
Of God's decree, they come as lightning, wind:  
Before the throne, they all are living fire.  
There stand four rows of angels — to the right  
The hosts of Michael, Gabriel's to the left,  
Before, the troop of Ariel, and behind,  
The ranks of Raphael; all, with one accord,  
Chanting the glory of the Everlasting.





ROBERT RICHARD RANDALL, FOUNDER OF SAILORS' SNUG HARBOR.

DRAWN BY KENYON COX FROM THE STATUE BY AUGUSTUS ST. GAUDENS.