

THE CENTURY MAGAZINE.

VOL. XLVI.

JUNE, 1893.

No. 2.

CAUGHT ON A LEE SHORE.

PLEASURES AND PERILS OF A CRUISE ON THE FLORIDA COAST.¹



TOWARD the end of 1890 we matured our plans for a cruise (our second) in Florida waters. Accordingly, about the end of December, my wife, I, and the steward of our yacht *Galatea* left England in the *Umbria*, and arrived at New York December 29. There we remained for a week, completing our camp outfit and fishing-gear, not forgetting charts and sailing directions.

Arriving at Jacksonville January 11, 1891, we made our final preparations, and departed for Titusville, at the head of Indian River, where we were met by our old acquaintance Captain Vann, the owner of the sloop *Minnehaha*, which we had chartered. Deep-draft vessels are useless for Florida waters: a maximum of three feet is all that is admissible. The *Minnehaha* was of a type common on Indian River, locally known as a "skipjack." She was flat-sided, with a rise of floor of about fifteen inches, and drew, with all her stores on board, about twenty-six inches of water. Over all she was 28 feet 7 inches; extreme beam, 12 feet 9 inches. She was decked as far aft as the cockpit, and had a deck-house, or booby-hatch, over the cabin, which gave about 4 feet 10 inches head-room. The cabin itself was 13 feet long by 10 feet wide, divided

fore and aft by the center-board trunk, which rose about 2 feet 6 inches from the floor. The cabin extended underneath the fore deck, and in that part of it all our light gear was stowed. There were two rudely constructed trestles, which did duty for bedsteads. My wife appropriated the starboard one, while I occupied the port. All the fittings were of the very roughest description; there was nothing yacht-like about them, but it was the best boat available that we knew of. Aft the cabin was an open cockpit 7 feet by 5 feet. In this space the crew—consisting of the skipper and the steward—lived, cooked, and slept, except at such times as we were able to pitch the tent and make a camp on shore. An awning spread over the main boom gave them shelter at night.

The rig was a simple one, consisting of two sails, jib and mainsail, both laced to booms. She spread a large area of canvas for her size. Although she had less than five hundredweight of ballast, she carried her canvas well, and in smooth water was very fast to windward (her draft was seven feet with the center-board down); but in anything of a lop or seaway she spanked and pounded, and proved very wet. Off the wind she was hard to steer, like all her type. She was good enough for smooth-

¹ This paper is a condensation of portions of a manuscript diary by Lieutenant William Henn, the well-known naval officer and yachtsman, who, in 1886, sailed

the *Galatea* against the *Mayflower* for the *America's* cup. The pictures are after drawings by the author and photographs by Mrs. Henn.—EDITOR.

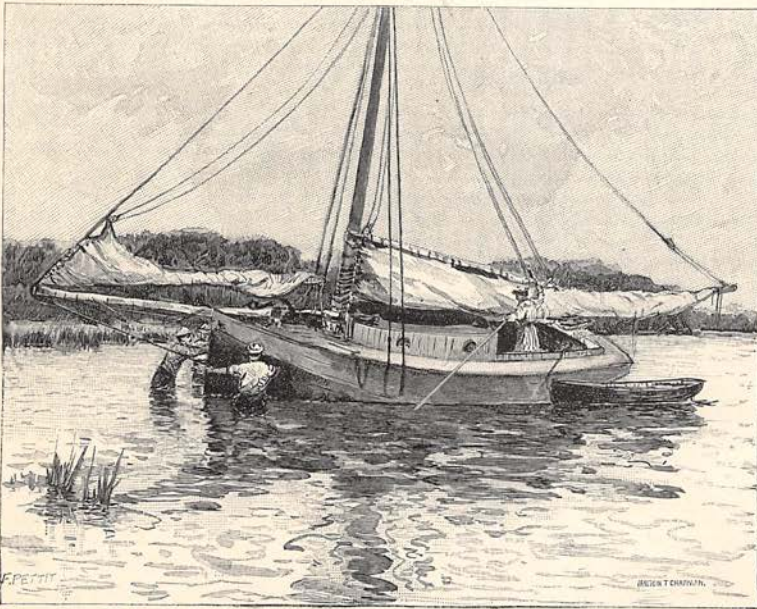
water work, but was very uncomfortable in the least bit of sea, and soon after we started she began to leak badly.

At 9:30 of a lovely morning, January 15, we cast off from the wharf. Properly speaking, Indian River is not a river, but a long, shallow salt-water lagoon running parallel with the Atlantic Ocean. This lagoon is about 150 miles in length, and, except in the narrows, is from one to five miles in width. It has two communications with the ocean, one opposite St. Lucie or Fort Capron, about ninety miles south of Titusville, and the other at its southern extremity at Jupiter. The depth varies from ten feet to as many inches, but channels have been dredged through the principal shoals and oyster-bars for craft drawing four feet of water. An hour or two after starting, the wind shifted and came dead ahead, and we had an opportunity of seeing what the *Minnehaha* could do to windward. Slowly but surely we caught up and passed boat after boat, and I could see Skipper was getting "the last inch" out of her, and

out the cruise we suffered much inconvenience and discomfort from this trouble. January 18, in Indian River narrows, we ran hard and fast on an oyster-bar. All hands, except my wife, who worked away with a "setting-pole," had to jump overboard to shove the sloop off—a style of navigation called by the Indian River boatmen "shirt-tailing."

At 6:30 on January 19 we were under way with a fresh breeze from the north, bound to Jupiter, forty miles to the southward, and the *Minnehaha* made short miles of it. About noon the lighthouse was abeam of us, and we were steering for the point near the inlet where we had made our camp four years before. We soon cleared the ground and pitched the tent. While engaged in this work, our old friend Captain Carlin, who is in command of the life-saving station at Jupiter, made his appearance, and welcomed us warmly. The fishing proved as good as ever, large numbers of bluefish and pompano being caught daily.

One day Captain Carlin brought a young



DRAWN BY CARLTON T. CHAPMAN.

AGROUND.

ENGRAVED BY F. A. PETTIT.

doing it well. At 4 P. M. we were off Rockledge, twenty-two miles from Titusville, and there we decided on anchoring for the night. After midnight on January 17 the rain came down in torrents, and lasted until morning. The downpour soon searched out all weak places on deck, and, to our great disgust, we found the water had penetrated in quantities, which showed that the leaks were serious. Skipper "guessed he'd find them out and fix them," but this he never was able to do, and through-

racoons on board as a present for my wife. The little creature, which we named "Cherokee Kate," was nine or ten months old, and was still very wild and vicious.

At sunrise on January 23 the weather was fine, so I gave the order to strike the tent and prepare for sea. Skipper showed signs of being unwilling to start, and was very dilatory, but by seven we had everything stowed on board, and, hoisting our sails, finally got off. We had to help her along with the setting-



DRAWN BY CARLTON T. CHAPMAN.

JUPITER INLET.

ENGRAVED BY J. HELWELL.

poles, as a strong flood was running, but at the inlet we had wind enough to burst through it, and we crossed the bar without shipping a drop of water, disturbing in our passage over it several large sharks and saw-fish, some of which were close enough to be touched with the boat-hook. Shaping our course south, we ran parallel to the beach, keeping about a quarter of a mile outside the surf to avoid as much as possible the current of the Gulf Stream, which here sets close along the shore. We were at last fairly started on our cruise, and the *Minnehaha*, for the first time in her existence, was breasting the waters of the broad Atlantic. The sea was smooth, the wind being light, and Skipper's spirits revived; but in spite of it all he was not very cheerful, and opined "that a 'norther' was brewing," and "hoped we'd be lucky enough to reach a harbor before it struck us." We soon passed the life-saving station, and the crew turned out and gave us a cheer, at the same time running up the American ensign at the flagstaff. We dipped our burgee, as an acknowledgment, little imagining that the next time we saw them we should be in dire distress and in want of their assistance.

At 9:25 P. M. we were off New River Inlet, about fifty-three miles distant from Jupiter, and Skipper's forebodings as to being caught by "a norther" were not going to be fulfilled. We had intended to stop at New River for a few days, as the fishing there is excellent, and game abounds in the vicinity; but as it was dark before we reached the inlet, and there being only three feet of water on the bar, we decided on proceeding to Biscayne Bay, about twenty miles further south. At 1:30 we sighted the light on the northern extremity of the Florida Reef, and at 2 A. M. arrived off the passage between Virginia Key and Key Biscayne. Here we

anchored to await daylight, having sailed seventy-three miles from Jupiter.

On approaching Coconut Grove, we observed several yachts at anchor, their white sails glistening in the bright morning sun. A signal was flying from a wharf, which proved to be the burgee of the Biscayne Bay Yacht Club. We hauled down our private signal, substituting for it the burgee of the Royal Northern Yacht Club. A yacht now got under way and came out to meet us, and we were warmly welcomed by her owner, the secretary of the club, who piloted us to the anchorage. Our "mud-hook" had hardly reached the bottom before the genial commodore, whose flag was flying on board his sharpie, the *Presto*, came on board, and tendered to us all the privileges of the club.

The sharpie is, without doubt, both for build, rig, and accommodation, the best type of craft for navigating Florida waters that I am acquainted with, especially the type which finds favor with the yachtsmen of Biscayne Bay. These sharpies are round-bottomed, and carry several tons of ballast, but the draft, without the center-board, does not exceed three feet. They are far superior to the flat-bottomed type, which pound heavily in the least loup of the sea, and are wet and uncomfortable except in smooth water. They sail fast both on and off the wind, are easily handled with a small crew, and are good and safe sea-boats. They are ketch-rigged, with one head-sail, and have a peculiarly cut topsail, which is very effective off the wind.

We left Miami on January 29, bound to Key West, distant to the southward about 150 miles, and after several stops reached there February 4. About noon we anchored among a fleet of small yachts whose crews appeared

to regard us with a certain amount of curiosity, for our craft was of a build unfamiliar to the Key-Westerns, and their interest was further aroused by seeing the signal of the Royal Northern Yacht Club fluttering at our topmast-head, and observing a lady on board.

February 6 we set sail for Cape Sable; but our bobstay snapped before we reached the bell-buoy, so we had to return for repairs, making an early start on the 7th. About four o'clock we ran on a bank of coral mud and grass, and stayed there till 9:30, when, getting afloat, we were moored alongside a shelving bank of sand in Little Cape Sable Creek, about ten miles west of Cape Sable. Skipper and I started to explore the creek, which was hedged in with an almost

where. So, leaving the sloop, we made two large fires on the sand-bank, cutting down and piling on the green mangrove-branches—anything to make a smoke, or smudge. To a certain extent our efforts were crowned with success, and, wrapped in wreaths of smoke, we made a hasty dinner, and anxiously watched the rising tide. The light of the fires threw a ruddy glare on the surface of the creek, lighting up the dark, impenetrable walls of mangroves, and now and again we could see the dorsal fins of the sharks that were coming in on the flood-tide. In spite of our sufferings we determined to fish for them, and in a few minutes the shark-line was rigged. Baiting the hook with a four-pound Spanish mackerel, we pitched it out a few yards from the shore,



DRAWN BY CARLTON T. CHAPMAN.

FROM JUPITER INLET INTO THE OPEN.

ENGRAVED BY A. HAYMAN.

impenetrable growth of tall mangrove-trees. Presently the air became dark with mosquitos, and, pursued by the pests, we pulled back to the sloop, which, to our dismay, we found had been left aground by the ebbing tide. Night was rapidly approaching, and the mosquitos were more numerous and fiercer than ever. We were literally devoured by them; our clothes were little protection; they penetrated every-

and, making the end fast to a tree, waited developments. We were not kept long in suspense; in less than five minutes the slack line, which was coiled on the sand, began to run out. After twenty feet or so had disappeared, we seized it, and held on, jerking it hard to drive the hook well home; in an instant we felt we were fast in something, for in spite of the combined efforts of Skipper, steward, and myself, all



DRAWN BY CARLTON T. CHAPMAN.

A WHARF AT KEY WEST.

ENGRAVED BY C. W. CHADWICK.

of us were swiftly dragged toward the water's edge, and the next moment the quiet waters of the creek were lashed into foam, as a huge shark plunged and rolled on the surface, vainly endeavoring to get rid of the good steel hook with its three feet of chain. The struggle was of short duration, for after a momentary "tug of war"—twelve feet of shark versus seventeen feet of man—we dragged the great brute's head on the shelving sand, and sent a four-pound ax crashing into its brain. The hook being then cut from its jaws and rebaited, was again cast out. In less than an hour we had hooked five, and landed three ranging from nine to twelve feet in length, and, feeling we had done our duty by the sharks, we were satisfied. At 9:30 the next morning we were sailing up the coast. We were all feeling very sorry for ourselves, suffering terribly from mosquito-bites, and many were the imprecations we uttered against "Little Cape Sable Creek." I have had considerable experience with mosquitos and their ways, in many parts of the globe; but except on one occasion, when elephant-hunting in Ceylon, I was never so badly bitten, nor have ever suffered as much. We afterward heard that this creek was notorious as being the worst place on the coast for these pests.

At 4 P. M. we were abreast of Pavillion Key, which seemed to be alive with pelicans sitting on the mangrove-trees, while many frigate-birds were soaring high overhead. On landing, we found the sand covered with the tracks of racoons and possums, and we saw traces of a deer. Returning on board, we rigged up and

baited the shark-line, putting it overboard after dark, and securing the end to the mast. Soon after midnight we were awakened by the violent motion of the sloop. At first I was at a loss to account for it; then suddenly remembering the shark-line, I roused my wife and crew, and hurried on deck. Sure enough, something was hooked, for the line was as taut as a bar, and the sloop, tugging and straining at her cable, was sluing and sheering about in a very lively fashion. We soon got hold of the line, and then it was a case of "pull devil, pull baker," the huge fish plunging and lashing on the surface and nearly dragging us overboard, and with blows from his powerful tail making the phosphorescent water fly in all directions. At last we mastered him, and, dragging him alongside, bent the fore-halyards on to the line for a purchase, and succeeded in lifting the brute's head clear of the water. Then the question arose, How to get the hook out of his jaws? My wife was equal to the occasion, and appeared on the scene with her 45-caliber Smith & Wesson pistol, loaded and ready for action, four rounds from which fired into his brain had the effect of quieting the monster, when, after wetting us all over with a final convulsive lash of his tail, he turned "belly up." We quickly cut out the hook with an ax, after first measuring the fish's length with a boat-hook (it proved to be a little under twelve feet), and then turned in again.

Seven o'clock A. M., February 10, saw us under way with a light southeast wind, bound to Great Marco, distant about twenty-five miles.

At noon the temperature of the air was 82° in the shade, and the sea-water was 74°. Off Cape Romano the wind fell very light, and on the numerous sand-banks in its vicinity we saw great numbers of pelicans, both white and brown, the white variety being the more numerous. At 4 P. M. we were off Caximbas Pass, and the wind had almost died out. The sea was alive with porpoises, which were leaping clear out of water, and presently we sailed through a shoal of great devil-fish, some of them being close enough to strike with a harpoon; but although we had on board the weapons and lines, I had no desire to use them—devil-fish, as I well know from former experiences, being awkward customers to tackle, even in a properly equipped craft with skilled hands to throw the irons, and afterward to manage the lines and boat. Some of the fish we passed seemed fully eighteen or twenty feet across, from wing to wing, and would probably be the same length from the tips of their horns to the ends of their tails. Many years ago I assisted at the capture of one near Port Royal, Jamaica, which towed us for more than two hours. We were in a 5-oared 27-foot whale-boat, and had no less than three whale-irons fast in the fish; but before we killed it the boat had shipped a great deal of water, and we were all soaked to the skin by the shower of spray which the monster threw over us. This specimen, which was considered by no means a large one, measured sixteen feet in length, about seventeen in breadth, and was estimated to weigh more than a ton. Wonderful stories are told about these fish, of their lifting ships' anchors, and enveloping swimmers with their enormous wings, and drowning them; but I cannot vouch for their accuracy. Skipper, who had never before seen nor heard of these creatures, seemed relieved when we saw the last of them. Just as the sun was setting we arrived off Great Marco Pass, the wind being so light that we were barely able to hold our own against the tide, which was setting out by the channel with a velocity of nearly three knots an hour; but at last we succeeded in passing the inner fairway buoy, and "brought up for the night."

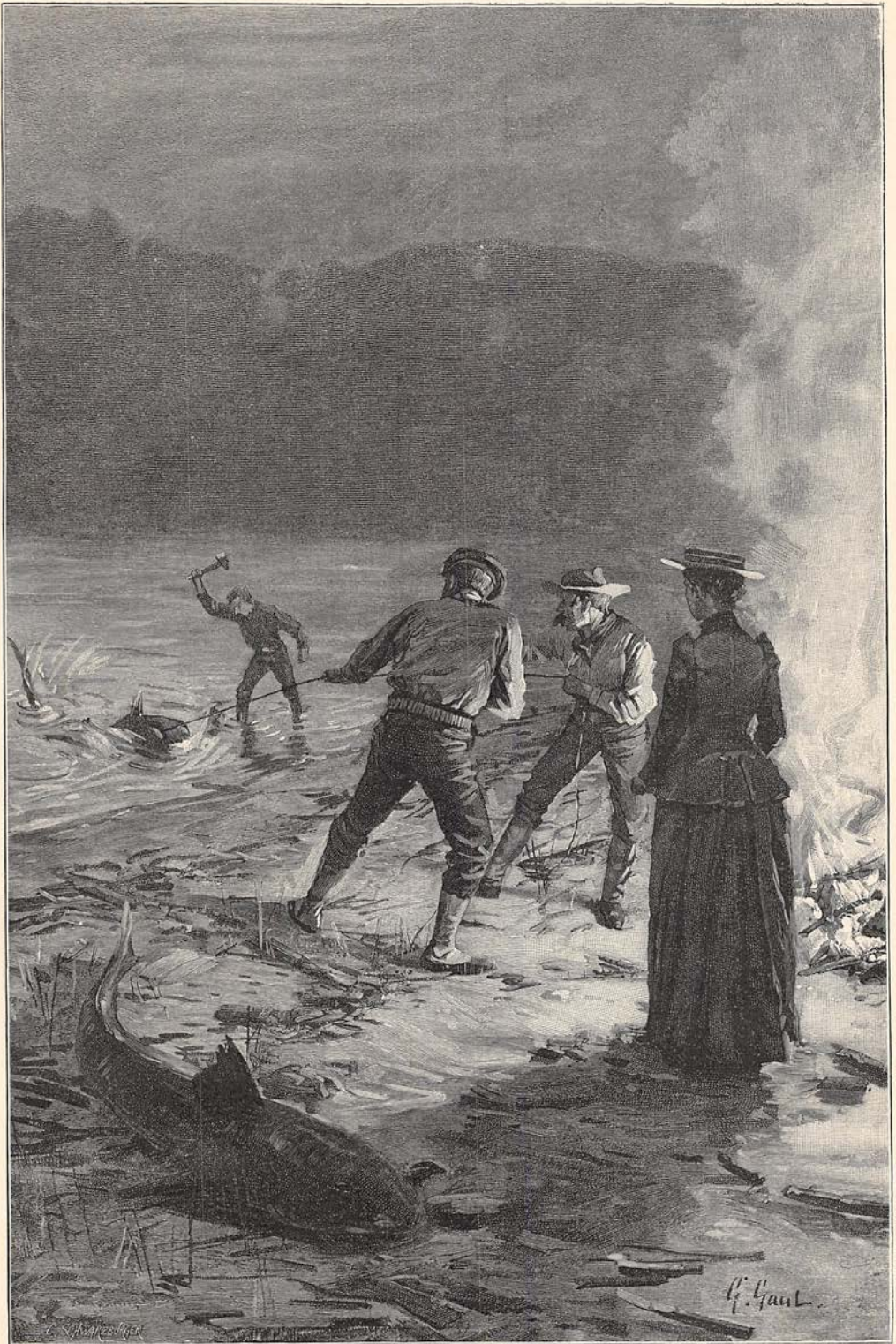
The settlement on Marco Island consists of two or three families, and here there is a post-office. We anchored off the dock, and soon settled with Mr. C—— about hauling out the *Minnehaha*. She had been leaking badly ever since leaving Indian River.

At Marco I met "Joe," the skipper of a 30-foot sloop, which was undergoing repairs, who offered to pilot me on a tarpon expedition. After rowing for half an hour we headed for a bight which Joe called Tarpon Bay. We anchored in five feet of water on the edge of the chan-

nel, and began operations by several exciting encounters with sharks, which bit off the hooks. Then we lighted our pipes, and patiently watched. Half an hour passed, and still no sign. The tarpon had disappeared, and so had the sharks; not a fin was visible, but the sun was blazing hot, and I was beginning to think tarpon-fishing a delusion. Even Joe was not very sanguine, and said it was rather early in the season for them to bite well. We were discussing the advisability of shifting our ground, when once more the line began to move, very gently and slowly, but evenly and with increasing velocity. The slack had almost run overboard when, a hundred feet away from the skiff, a dazzling mass of silver some six feet in length shot high into the air, and fell back with a crash which whitened the water with foam, and could be heard half a mile off. "Tar—pon! Tar—pon!" shouted Joe. To pick up the rod was the work of an instant, and then the reel began to whiz as the noble fish dashed away at a tremendous speed, throwing a succession of magnificent leaps, shaking his head (as a dog does with a rat), and making extraordinary contortions in the air in vain endeavor to eject the hook. In a jiffy Joe had the skiff under way, and we followed the fish, which was tearing down the channel, as fast as we could, while I put on all the strain I dared, trying to check or turn him; but I might as well have tried to stop a torpedo-boat. He had now got about one hundred and fifty yards away, and the line in the reel was getting low, when out he jumped again, and, on regaining the water, turned and made straight for the skiff, passing within a few yards of it long before I had time to get a taut line on him.

"Keep a level head, boss, and I guess you 'll get him; he's got the hook well down. Start in now and work him for all you 're worth," said Joe, who was handling the skiff admirably. I soon got in all the slack, and was bearing hard on him, yet could make no impression. The fish was swiftly and steadily heading down the bay, keeping in the deep water, and we followed, sticking as close as we were able. Then, for the first time, I realized that I had a pretty big contract on hand.

Another wild rush was followed by a couple of grand jumps. "Now 's your time to make him tired. Worry him; don't give him a rest." I worried him all I knew how, until the tension of the line made it fairly sing again. The fish slowly yielded, and I succeeded in turning his head toward the shallow water. The last jumps appeared to exhaust him somewhat, and, by putting on all the strain the gear would bear, I at last got him out of the channel on the flats, where the water was barely four feet deep. He was now moving lazily



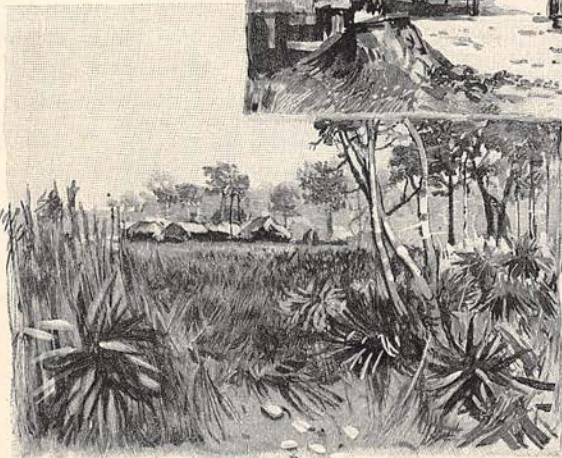
DRAWN BY GILBERT GAUL.

ENGRAVED BY C. SCHWARZBURGER.

SHARK-FISHING, LITTLE CAPE SABLE CREEK.

along; we were literally towing him toward the shore. But it was hard work; my hands and arms were getting tired, and my garments were soaked with perspiration. Suddenly the tarpon stopped, and, turning rapidly, made another desperate rush for the deep water. The reel whizzed like a buzz-saw, and, in spite of all my efforts to check him, full eighty yards ran off before "the king" again flung himself high in the air; another spurt, followed by more leaps, showed that he had taken a new lease of life, and I began to despair of ever being able to tire him. It was a stand-up fight between man and fish, and so far the fish seemed to be the less tired of the two. More than an hour had elapsed since the first jump, and to all appearances "his majesty" was as fresh and lively as ever. I was feeling sore and strained about the hands

yards of the skiff, butting him hard, and doing all I could to bring him within reach of the gaff; but my efforts were in vain. Suddenly he came to the surface, and blew like a porpoise. "Now, look out," said Joe; "he'll be off again." That breath of air had undoubtedly put new life into him, for like a flash he ran out fifty or sixty yards of line, and again broke water. "That makes twelve jumps; he's a bully one. Hold on, and turn him again," roared Joe, and almost immediately the fish came straight for the skiff, actually passing under the bottom, though fortunately the line went clear. Again



DRAWN BY CARLTON T. CHAPMAN.

ENGRAVED BY C. SCHWARZBURGER.

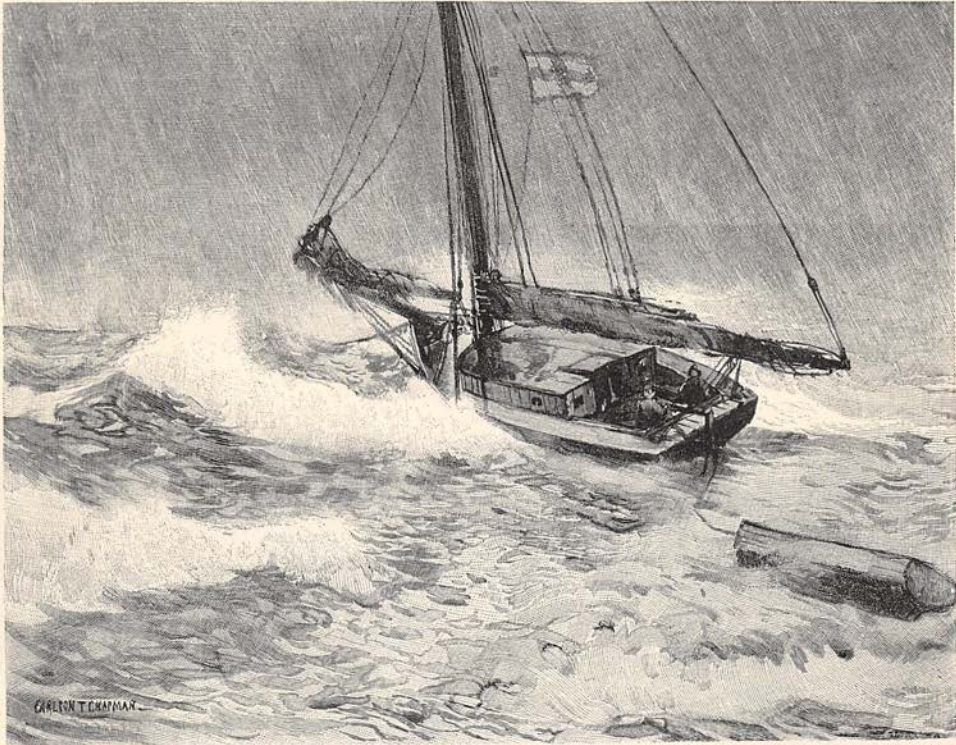
EVERGLADES AND INDIAN CAMP.

and arms, and my fingers had scarcely strength to turn the crank of the reel. Joe now volunteered to "give me a spell," but I declined the offer, and, getting a fresh grip of the rod, sitting well back, and bracing my feet against the bottom boards of the skiff, put on all the strain the rod would bear, and again brought my huge antagonist to a standstill. Then I started in to pull at him and to worry him, and presently he gave way, and again I led him into the shallow water. He was now much easier to manage, and soon I succeeded in getting him two or three hundred yards away from the channel, within twenty



"CHARMING BILLY" AND HIS PAPOOSE.

he rose to the surface to breathe, then another frantic rush, and two more leaps. But these were his last. We were now close to a small mangrove island, in shallow water, and the great fish was unmistakably beginning to tire, for now and then, as he turned, we could see his magnificent broadside; but still he was far from being "played dead," although I was very nearly played out. "Try to lift him," said Joe, who had unshipped the oar. The fish was now within six feet of the skiff, almost motionless, and we could see that the snell outside his jaw was badly frayed. Joe then stealthily seized the gaff, and as quick as lightning struck the tarpon through the shoulder. A desperate struggle ensued, but Joe held on, and so did the good barbed gaff and its long hickory pole. After an exciting ten or fifteen seconds, which



DRAWN BY CARLTON T. CHAPMAN.

"HANGING ON BY THE EYELIDS."

ENGRAVED BY J. W. EVANS.

to me seemed a lifetime, we had his head above the gunwale of the skiff, which was nearly half full of water (shipped during the final act), and reeving a stout line through his gills, secured it to the after thwart, cutting the snell, which was almost frayed through, adrift from the line; five minutes more would have done for it, but Joe's clever strike secured the fish. I felt thoroughly tired, my hands and arms were cramped and stiff, as were also the muscles of my back and shoulders. The fight had lasted for an hour and twenty-seven minutes.

Then, taking our prize in tow, we proceeded homeward; but on the way we nearly lost part of him, as a huge shark made a dash at the body of the defunct monarch, and just missed getting a mouthful. As it would not do to run any more risks, with considerable difficulty we lifted the tarpon into the skiff, and reached home without further adventures. The figures were: Length, 6 feet 6 inches; girth, 3 feet 2 inches; weight, 145¾ pounds. Joe said the fish "was lean," and not in the very best condition, or it would have weighed 160 pounds. After it was photographed, Joe took off the scales, my wife securing the best of them for preservation.

On February 14, the *Minnehaha's* repairs being complete, we sailed in company with the *Gipsy*, owned by a friend, for Charlotte Har-

bor, the limit of our cruise up the west coast, and Skipper's spirits rose when he saw the light on Sanibel Island. In the afternoon an old friend, ex-Commodore C—— of the New York Yacht Club, arrived in his 38-foot water-line sloop *Atala*. We had been antagonists in more than one hard-fought race since we first met on the Riviera. We decided to fish and sail in company, and had many days of pleasant sport. On February 25 I hooked a tarpon, which after a hard fight of over two hours was cleverly struck by the commodore's "goffer."

On March 1, the *Minnehaha*, in company with the *Gipsy* and the *Atala*, cruised up the Caloosa River twenty miles to Fort Myers, a thriving settlement with a population of about 700. Here we had varied experiences with tarpon. On March 5, at 5 A. M., when the first streak of yellow light brightened the eastern sky, and while the good people of Fort Myers were wrapped in sleep, we weighed anchor, and with the last of the ebb-tide, and a faint draft of southerly wind, we dropped slowly down the river, followed by the *Atala*. We had reached the farthest point of our voyage, and henceforth every mile we sailed would be bringing us nearer to Indian River again. It was a quiet and lovely scene: the broad river was like a mirror framed on each side by the dark

pine forests, and there was not wind enough to ruffle its surface, which reflected the exquisite hues and colors of a glorious sunrise. Our progress was very slow, and as we soon would have the tide against us, we began to think we were in for a long passage, when we saw smoke ascending astern, and presently the little steamer which plied between Punta Corda and Fort Myers hove in sight, and, on coming up to the *Atala*, took her in tow; she then steered for us, and, hailing Skipper to throw our line, pulled us down to Punta Rassa at an eight-knot speed. We landed, and after collecting our mails proceeded to St. James's City, arriving there about 10 A. M. Taking leave of our friends, we pre-

pared to set out on the return voyage, which was begun on March 6. A week later we arrived at Indian Key. The first streak of light of March 17 saw us under way, with a fresh southerly wind, and under a double-reefed mainsail we went flying up Hawk's Channel. Off Key Largo we were struck by a sharp squall from the southwest; we dropped the peak of the mainsail to it, and afterward close-reefed the sail; then skirting the shore of Old Rhodes Key, and keeping close to the northeast point, we sailed into Caesar's Creek, having done the forty knots from Indian Key in a little over six hours. After passing Rubicon Keys we were once more

in Biscayne Bay, and, the wind having moderated, we shook out all reefs and steered for Cocconut Grove, off which place we anchored at 4:30 P. M., receiving a hearty welcome from the members of the Biscayne Bay Yacht Club. My great ambition was to catch a tarpon in Biscayne Bay, as several noted New York anglers had fished for them without success, and I had been told "it was useless to try, as the tarpon there lived principally on shrimps, and would n't look at a mullet." I made up my mind to give them a fair trial, and on March 21 took one which in length was 6 feet 3 inches, girth 3 feet 2 inches, probable weight about 130 pounds.



DRAWN BY CARLTON T. CHAPMAN.

LAUNCH OF THE SURF-BOAT, JUPITER LIFE-SAVING STATION.

ENGRAVED BY H. E. SYLVESTER.

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On Sunday, March 22, we made an early start, and under a double-reefed mainsail, with a slashing northwest wind, soon reached the sheltered waters of the Miami River. A friend had very kindly arranged for us an expedition by land to the Indian village on the edge of the Everglades; and as there was no church service to be held at Miami, a mission to the Seminoles was decided on. Crossing the river to old Fort Dallas, we set forth. The track was rough; the coralline rocks everywhere cropped up, and the tough roots of the saw-palmettos protruded across the trail. Our wagon plunged into the midst of the great pine forest and a jungle of palmetto undergrowth, pitching and

rolling in a manner that threatened destruction to the vehicle, but which served only to increase the mirth of the passengers. Soon all semblance of a track ceased; then the colored coachman's navigation was marvelous, and the way in which he avoided disaster against the trunks of the huge pine-trees proved him to be an old helmsman. At length the prairies which mark the beginning of the Everglades hove in sight, and we soon emerged from the forest. A collection of palm-thatched huts on the edge of the great pine-woods which extended away to the north and eastward, and skirted the vast level expanse that stretched away to the south and west as far as the eye could reach, came in view, and the home of the Seminole was before us.

We soon drew near the camp, and found at home only "Charming Billy," his squaw, and papoose. All the others were at work in their fields in the Namak, some distance off. These Indians are very quiet and friendly. They cultivate sugar-cane, pumpkins, sweet-potatoes, etc., and they also make a good deal of starch from the root of the cassava, quantities of which grow in the pine-woods. They hunt in the fall and winter, and find their way frequently by water to Miami, bringing with them venison, skins, alligator-hides, birds, plumes, and starch, which they exchange for tobacco, calico, ammunition, etc. Billy expressed no curiosity as to the object of our visit, the real purpose of which was to enable my wife to photograph the Indians and their homes. Upon broaching the subject there was some slight demur, but after a little persuasion, and a friendly chat in which it was explained to Billy that we were "strangers from beyond the sea," he was won over, and consented. Mrs. Billy, however, utterly declined being pictured, but I managed to get a rough pencil sketch of her without being perceived.

On our way back we had gone scarcely a mile from the edge of the prairie when we became aware of a strong smell of burning wood, and on reaching an open spot observed great columns of dense smoke rising in the southwest. We were well to windward, and out of danger, but a strong west wind was blowing, and between the lulls we could plainly hear the hoarse roar of the flames, and the crashing of trees and branches, as they were overwhelmed and fell in the fierce conflagration, while clouds of light ashes were floating in the air, and falling all around us. We reached Fort Dallas without mishap, when, bidding adieu to Andrew and our kind host, we crossed the river to Miami, and regained our little vessel.

On March 24 we had a splendid morning, with a light northeast wind, and all of us felt sorry it was to be our last at lovely Miami. Our

friends came down to the wharf to see us start, and fairly loaded the *Minnehaha* with green coconuts, tomatoes, and flowers. After exchanging salutes with the commodore and the Yacht Club at Coconut Grove, we turned our head toward "Bear's Cut," and steered for the open sea.

On nearing Bear's Cut, the wind, which had been gradually dropping, died out to a light air, and as it was impossible to stem the strong flood-tide which was setting through it, we anchored for the night near the Key Biscayne in about six feet of water. The next day broke fine, with a flickering wind from the northward, and after sunrise a light fog rolled in, but soon lifted, and we got under way, and afterward anchored off the south beach of Virginia Key. At 10:30 the wind had shifted to the northeast, and the weather was looking fine and settled. As we could lay our course up the coast, the water being smooth, we weighed and proceeded to New River, distant about twenty miles.

We put out the trolling-lines, and were soon busy with the kingfish. We made good progress, and at 3:30 P. M. arrived off New River bar, which seemed to be smooth; but we decided on anchoring outside until we saw what the weather was going to do, for if the night promised well we made up our minds to give up the expedition to New River, and make a dash for Jupiter Inlet, the state of New River Bar auguring well for finding Jupiter Bar passable.

We were now about to undertake the longest and most dangerous run on the southeast coast of Florida; for we had between fifty and sixty miles to go, with no available harbor, if the sea should rise, for more than two hundred miles, unless we could regain Biscayne Bay. Jupiter Inlet had no more than four feet of water on the bar, and except in fine weather and with smooth water was a dangerous one to attempt. Hillsboro' and Lake Worth inlets, both of which we would have to pass before reaching Jupiter, were no better. If Jupiter Bar was impassable, we would be in an awkward predicament. But everything appeared to be in our favor—settled weather, a fair wind, and smooth water; so, congratulating ourselves on our good fortune, we made the requisite preparations for a night at sea, and at 6:30 P. M. let her go north.

Until midnight all went well. We had passed Hillsboro' Inlet, and were some twenty miles to the northward of it, when suddenly the wind increased, and hauled farther ahead, with passing showers of light rain; but the water was still smooth, so we reefed the mainsail and held on. At 3 A. M., having then passed Lake Worth Inlet, and being within ten miles of Jupiter, we ran into a heavy swell setting from

the northeast, and at once knew that Jupiter Bar was impassable. We could already hear the thunder of the surf on the beach, and see the line of white breakers on our lee beam. The wind all the time was increasing, so we now close-reefed the mainsail and stowed the jib. For a craft of her size the *Minnehaha* was doing right well, but it was trying work. She was shipping water, and I could see Skipper was anxious. I must confess I felt the same. It was no use disguising the fact, we were "regularly caught on a lee shore," and cut off from gaining any harbor. However, we remem-

to be kept going without intermission. At last a dim light appeared on the eastern horizon, and the white crests of the waves to windward seemed more distinct; then, as the stars began to pale, a gray light came stealing over the water, and soon it was bright enough for us to distinguish the white beach with its darker background; and to our great relief a dark blurred mass appeared about two points away on our lee bow. This quickly took a definite shape, and proved to be the buildings of the United States life-saving station at Jupiter. But to leeward, as far as the eye could distinguish to the north



DRAWN BY CARLTON T. CHAPMAN.

CROSSING JUPITER BAR.

ENGRAVED BY GEO. P. BARTLE.

bered the life-saving station at Jupiter; if we could manage to gain it, I knew I could depend on the captain and crew to do all in their power to save us. We spoke but little, for all were aware of the danger we were in; but we drove the sloop to the best of her powers, and longed for daylight.

About four o'clock we caught sight of Jupiter Light, the bright flash of which sent a ray of hope into our hearts, for it seemed like an old friend, and told us we should soon be within reach of assistance. Would the night ever pass away? The *Minnehaha* was pounding and smashing into the short lop on the long, heavy swell, sending the spray flying all over us; but we were making headway, and gradually "clawing off" the shore. The little craft, however, was straining and leaking badly, and the pumps had

and south, ran several lines of furious breakers, the spray from which rose in sheets of vapor enveloping the sand-hills in clouds of mist. It was anything but a pleasant sight, and then I think we all realized the peril we were in, and the small chance we had of gaining the shore, if, as a last resource, we should try to beach the boat.

We were now within a mile of the station, and about half a mile from the beach. There was no time to lose, so I ordered Skipper to hoist the ensign "union down," and to half-mast our private signal, which was flying at the topmast-head. The moment had arrived to "lay the boat to." Would she do it? Skipper said, "No"; but try it we must. We watched for "a smooth," and eased down the helm. She came up nearly head to the wind; then, gather-

ing sternway, fell off in the trough of the sea. The next moment a crest struck her amidships, and sent the water flying half-way up the mainsail. Then she came up to the wind, only to fall off again. It was no use; she would not "lay to." But we had still one resource left before trying to run her through the breakers. "Get the anchor ready!" was the order. "She 'll never hold on; she will go clean under," declared Skipper, a bit scared. "Do as I tell you; see everything clear, and let go." It was no easy matter to get forward, but at last he managed to reach the bow, and, cutting the lashings, hove the "mud-hook" overboard, paying out the cable to the last inch. "Will it hold?" we involuntarily asked ourselves, and some moments of intense anxiety elapsed, as heaving and tossing on the heavy swell she drifted astern, the mainsail flapping and banging from side to side.

Suddenly she stopped, and drove her bowsprit clean under, trembling from stem to stern with the heavy jerk, and then swung head to the sea. She was holding on, but would she be able to ride in such a sea? "She 'll go bows under," said Skipper; "better chance it, and try to beach her; the cable will never stand." "Lower and stow the mainsail," was the next order, and this was quickly executed.

She did make some wild plunges, at times going bows under, right into the mast, sending the water flying into the cockpit; but she held on, and if the cable should not part or the sea become heavier, there seemed still a chance of saving her. We went forward, and, watching for an opportunity, secured the end of the cable to the mast, and served it round with a bit of small rope to prevent it from chafing on the bows, at the same time seeing everything clear, in case it should part, for setting the jib, as in that case the sole chance of saving our lives would be to run her ashore.

We now turned our attention to what they were doing at the station, and saw the United States ensign flying in answer to our signals, and the life-boat on the beach with the crew about her. They made a gallant effort to launch her, but the breakers proved too heavy, and to our great disappointment they desisted from making any further attempts. We afterward learned that the boat had swamped. The crew remained on the beach, standing by the boat, watching for a chance to come to us.

We still held on, but were in a very critical position. At any moment the cable might part, as a portion of the rope of which it was composed was, according to Skipper, "old and untrustworthy." This information was not likely to raise our spirits much, so we prepared for the worst.

We had no life-buoys, or anything on board

that would float, except the oars of the skiff and the setting-poles, which would n't have been of much account; and, to add to my anxiety, two of our ship's company, my wife and the steward, were unable to swim. The danger in beaching the sloop was very great, as there was an outer line of breakers, with deep water between them and the shore. If we were swamped in crossing it, we should sink before we could reach the beach, and there was the additional risk of encountering sharks, several of which were actually visible. We emptied the water-casks and improvised a couple of life-buoys by slinging and attaching to them becketts for life-lines. Then we could do no more but await developments.

The swell was now very heavy, but the wind was not increasing, evidencing a strong blow somewhere up the coast, which was sending this big sea down to us. We were anchored in four fathoms of water, about half a mile from the shore, and within two hundred yards to leeward, in a depth of eighteen feet, the swell was topping and breaking.

The *Minnehaha* was making much better weather of it than we had expected, but now and again she would almost stand on end when an unusually steep sea rolled in, and then, sliding down the opposite slope, would bury herself to the mast, sending green water over the fore end of the deck-house. Still, if the sea became no worse and the cable held, we stood a good chance; on the other hand, we were literally "hanging by a thread," and at any moment might be fighting for our lives.

Skipper had lost all heart, and was seasick into the bargain, poor fellow. The sloop was pretty nearly all he owned in the world, and I think he had made up his mind that he was going to lose her. Our feelings were not enviable, for even if we escaped with our lives, we were nearly certain to lose everything else. It was, however, reassuring to see the crew of the life-saving station standing about their boat, watching us, and we knew that every man of them would risk his life to save us. They had hoisted a signal at the flagstaff, but, having no signal-book on board, we were unable to ascertain its meaning.

Toward noon there was a decided lull, and we saw the crew gather round the boat, and run her down the beach. They were going to make another attempt to launch her. Would they succeed? It was about as anxious a five minutes as ever I spent, for when they got near the water's edge they were hidden from our sight by the heavy rollers. We could not speak, but we watched with mingled feelings of hope and almost breathless anxiety. Even poor Skipper, who was utterly prostrated, raised his head. Five minutes elapsed,—less perhaps,—but to us



DRAWN BY CARLTON T. CHAPMAN.

CAMP AT JUPITER INLET.

ENGRAVED BY R. C. COLLINS.

it seemed an hour; then, tossed high on the crest of a great sea, appeared the boat with her gallant crew. They were clear of the beach, and the boat was coming over the breakers like a sea-gull.

The feeling of relief was intense; our dangerous position was forgotten, and soon Captain Carlin and his boys were within hail. They approached cautiously, and the bowmen, laying in their oars, flung a grapnel to us, which was quickly made fast; then, hauling up alongside, Carlin and two of the crew sprang on board. A warm grasp of the hand, and then to business. We had no need to explain the situation; a few hurried words settled everything. "Carlin, you must take my wife and the steward ashore, for they can't swim. Lend us an anchor and cable, and a couple of cork life-jackets, and I think we can hold on. We want, if possible, to save the boat and gear. What do you say?" "All right; we'll manage it for you. We had a hard job to get out; the surf on the beach is the heaviest we have had for a year. Look alive there, boys, with an anchor and line. Pull well out to windward, and let go." This was quickly accomplished; then Carlin and a couple of his hands went forward and re-secured the cables.

By this time my wife, who was very unwilling to leave, was persuaded to go, as her presence

on board only added to my anxiety; and, taking with her a few valuables, including "Cherokee Kate" and another coon which had been given to us a few days before, she and the steward were quickly put on board the life-boat, and cork life-jackets fastened round them. Then Carlin tossed two to us, and, saying they would keep a watch on us, and show a light during the night to mark the best place to run ashore, gave the order to let go. In a few minutes the boat was among the breakers. We watched her shooting on the crests of the rollers, losing sight of her in the hollows, and at last, to my great joy, I saw her run up on the beach, and all hands land in safety.

The sea had now moderated, and the sloop was riding easier. Having a second anchor down made us more hopeful, for we now had "two strings to our bow," and I began to feel more cheerful, and as if I could eat and drink something, having had nothing for nearly twenty-four hours. I rummaged about, and finding the "ribs and trucks" of a ham, a box of sardines, and a box of crackers, made a good meal; but Skipper, who was lying prostrate in the cockpit, could n't touch anything. It was the roughest sea he had ever been in.

Standing on the deck-house, I took a survey of our surroundings. Away to the north and west, distant about a mile, was Jupiter Inlet,

across which a furious sea was breaking. The rollers on the bar wildly tossed their great white crests, as they curled and broke in a smother of foam, and a smoke-like mist hung over the coast, rendering its outline almost invisible. Inside the line of breakers I could see the placid waters of Indian River, "the haven where we would be," and the tall, symmetrical tower of Jupiter Light on its wooded bluff. Wistfully I gazed at it, and longed to be safely moored in the smooth waters that it overshadowed. Abreast of us was the life-saving station, and I could see the life-boat on its carriage, all ready for launching, and some of the crew on watch. To seaward the weather looked fine; the swell had unmistakably decreased, and the wind was dropping and veering to the southeast.

Telling Skipper to rouse up and keep a lookout, I lay down and took a nap; but in an hour or so was awakened by an unusually heavy plunge, and found that both wind and sea had increased, and things were not looking very rosy. The flood-tide was making, and the *Minnehaha* would not lie head to the sea; she was shipping water, taking it green over the deck-house. I felt anxious again, and Skipper was in decidedly low spirits, and called my attention to a twelve-foot shark which was slowly cruising to and fro. I admitted that he would not be a desirable companion if we had to swim for it, and remarked: "We are not going to get to it this time. Cheer, oh!" But Skipper would not be comforted, and "wished to goodness we had gone into New River."

We took another look at the cables to see that they were not being chafed, got our anchor-light ready, and before dark saw everything clear for making sail. About eight o'clock the weather became finer, and the wind fell, and hauled more to the south. We could see the light on the beach, and knew that our friends were keeping an eye on us; then, being thoroughly tired and wet, we lay down, both of us falling so soundly asleep that it was daylight before we awoke.

During the night the wind moderated, and shifted to the westward of south, with heavy rain-showers, which put down the sea considerably; but at daylight of March 27 there was still a big ground-swell, and the surf on the beach and the breakers on the bar looked very formidable, and Skipper agreed with me in thinking the bar was impassable. However, all immediate danger was past; for, barring the long ground-swell, the water was smooth and the wind inclined to come off the land. So, lighting the stove, we put on the coffee-pot, and started breakfast. Skipper seemed to be quite himself again, and had forgotten all the perils and dangers he had been through since

leaving New River. At 8:30 A. M., Carlin and his crew mustered on the beach in front of the station, and hoisted a flag; then, waving to us and pointing in the direction of the inlet, they all walked toward it, evidently meaning that we should attempt to "take the bar." I must confess that I did not like the look of it, but having implicit confidence in Captain Carlin's judgment, we got under way and prepared to run in. Then, stripping off everything with the exception of our trousers, we clad ourselves in the cork jackets, and steered for the bar. On nearing it, the skiff, which was towing astern, swamped, and as she was much strained, and would have been a hindrance to us, we cut her adrift, and never saw her again.

We sailed along the outer edge of the rollers, looking out for the channel, but the breakers extended right across the inlet,—four formidable lines of them,—roaring and flinging their snowy crests in the air as they curled and broke. A surf never looks so dangerous from seaward as it is in reality, and I hesitated. Sharks were visible, plenty of them—an additional risk. But Carlin and his crew had arrived at the inlet, and were ranging themselves on the beach, with their "life-sticks and -lines" all ready to heave. I also caught sight of my wife; she too was there, standing near Carlin, and I felt more than thankful that she, at all events, was on "the right side of the hedge." Being about high water, it was the most favorable time for attempting the passage, and we had a nice steady breeze. The chief danger lay in broaching to; and as we would have to raise the center-board on account of the shoal water, the chance of doing so was thereby increased. We hove to, and reduced the after sail; then, steeling our hearts, we pointed her head for the breakers, and let her go.

The men on shore were still in line, as if on parade; suddenly it struck me that this was not merely accidental: they had been placed in range to show us the best course through the breakers. By keeping them "end on" we should strike the deepest water on the bar. We instantly altered course, and, jumping forward on the deck-house, I held on to the mast, directing Skipper how to steer. We rapidly approached the broken water, and seemed to fly. As the first roller lifted and literally hurled us forward, the water seethed and boiled in over our decks, but comparatively little of it found its way into the cockpit, as it broke ahead, expending itself in an acre of foam. We were still moving fast, but a great transparent wall of green water was rapidly coming up astern, ominously curling and hissing. I held my breath; the critical moment was at hand, for if the roller did not break before it overtook us, to a cer-

tainty we should be swamped. Skipper's teeth were hard set, and his whole weight was thrown against the tiller to keep the sloop straight. Suddenly I felt her dragging; she was touching the ground, and the roller was almost overshadowing us, when in an instant the green wall changed to a flood of milk-white foam, which, surging down on us, lifted the sloop, tossing and bearing her onward at a tremendous pace. A flood of water swept in over the stern and weather-quarter, and half filled the cockpit, nearly washing Skipper overboard, as we almost broached to; but we were safe. We had crossed the shallowest spot, and when the next breaker thundered astern of us, we shot into smooth water, and all our troubles were over.

A loud cheer went up from our friends as we ran the *Minnehaha* alongside the beach at our old camping-ground, and there securely moored her.

Indian River once more! Farewell to bars and breakers; good-by to the Gulf Stream and its clear blue sea, to coral reefs and sandy keys; henceforth smooth water and sheltered anchorages! Skipper hailed with delight the change

to landlocked waters; but for myself, knowing our delightful cruise was nearing its end, I could not help feeling sorry that it was so. We had just finished mooring the *Minnehaha* and clothing ourselves when my wife, with Carlin and his men, appeared on the scene; and after exchanging congratulations we heard all that had taken place since parting from us. They had landed without mishap, and Carlin had taken my wife to his house at Jupiter, where Mrs. Carlin showed her much hospitality and kindness. From first to last Carlin and his crew behaved admirably. The zeal and intrepidity they displayed were worthy of the service to which they belonged, and we must ever feel grateful for the assistance they rendered to us.

The coasts of Florida, from the head of Indian River on the east to Tampa Bay or Cedar Keys on the west, are about the best cruising-grounds for a small or medium-sized yacht that I am acquainted with. As for the fishing, for variety, gameness, size, and quantity of the fish, I believe it to be the best in the world. And game, both fin and feather, is more or less abundant, according as the country is more or less settled.

William Henn



"WHERE HELEN SITS."¹

WHERE Helen sits, the darkness is so deep,
No golden sunbeam strikes athwart the gloom;
No mother's smile, no glance of loving eyes,
Lightens the shadow of that lonely room.

Yet the clear whiteness of her radiant soul
Decks the dim walls, like angel vestments shewn.
The lovely light of holy innocence
Shines like a halo round her bended head,
Where Helen sits.

Where Helen sits, the stillness is so deep,
No children's laughter comes, no song of bird.
The great world storms along its noisy way,
But in this place no sound is ever heard.

Yet do her gentle thoughts make melody
Sweeter than aught from harp or viol flung;
And Love and Beauty, quiring each to each,
Sing as the stars of Eden's morning sung,
Where Helen sits.

Laura E. Richards.

¹ Helen Keller, deaf, dumb, and blind.