WINDJAMMERS AND BLUE-NOSE SAILORS

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LITTLE windjammers—small fry of the seas—living laborious and hazardous lives, carried on until the beginning of the century the bulk of the commerce of Eastern Canada with the West Indies, the Brazils, and the Mediterranean countries from Spain to the Isles of Greece. They were of various rigs—brigs and brigantines, small barks and barkentines, tern schooners and topsail schooners, ranging from 40-odd to 400 tons burthen. But mostly they were brigantines of from 199 to 350 tons, handsome, rakish-looking craft, able seaboats, and as swift as anything of their size afloat upon the seas. In summer they braved the awful wrath of the tropical hurricanes and the wild and sudden fury of white squalls; in winter they dared the blind rage of howling blizzards in the grim ordeal of coming on the coast, until the weight of white ice forming upon their decks and rigging, turning them into fantastic fabrics of crystal, obliged their weary and frost-bitten crews to put them before the wind and let them run off to the warm waters of the Gulf Stream.

A hard life and a hazardous! Every year the fleets of small windjammers paid tribute to the sea. In one year, out of the port of Yarmouth alone, thirteen vessels and two score men engaged in the West Indian trade were lost. Yarmouth's total toll in that year was thirty-one sailing vessels and 106 lives, the ships including several big clippers famous in their day. And for every ship that gave up the ghost in struggle with hurricane, blizzard, or the bright and bitter cold fury of nor'westers, there were half a dozen or so that only survived by the skin of their teeth as it were, by grace of the honest workmanship put into their sturdy hulls—survived, battered and crippled, to limp into port under jury rig.

After the opening of the Suez Canal in the eighties the larger bluenose sailing ships, the clipper breed, began to dwindle rapidly, as on the one hand their construction slowed down and on the other the older craft were sold to foreign flag owners or converted into hulks. But the small fry carried on a losing fight with steamers for some time longer, and at the turn of the century there were

still quite a number of ports boasting fine fleets of them. But thereafter they passed swiftly, almost mysteriously. And to-day, of the long succession of little ships of wood and canvass that drew the breath of their boisterous lives from the winds of heaven, there survives only a handful of sturdy tern schooners, gleaning lean livelihoods from the unconsidered trifles of the West Indian trade.

In the name of progress, steel and steam have superseded wood and sail. The palatial "Lady" liners, of the Canadian National Steamships Ltd., steam their arrogant way along the routes that once swarmed with sails, each of them doing the cargo-carrying work of sixty or more of the little brigantine that were the typical West Indiaman a few decades ago. Speed, efficiency and safety have been served. Instead of the annual tribute of ships and lives, there is a levy upon the federal treasury, with now and then a bill to be met by the underwriters. But something more than the romance of sail has gone out of the life of the sea-board provinces. For the little old windjammers were an integral part of the existence of the communities they served, communities whose major enterprises were the production of fish and lumber and their transport to foreign markets. The building of them gave employment to a large number of men, a great diversity of skilled craftsmen. The sailing of them produced and maintained a hardy breed of sailors noted for their competency and powers of endurance. They enabled the people of their communities to keep in their own hands much of the profits and employment of the work of distribution as well as of production. And for the youth of their communities they typified the spirit of adventure.

Outward-bound, the brigantines carried fish and lumber in their holds and lumber piled high on their decks. Returning, some brought molasses, or sugar or rum or cocoanuts from the West Indies—coffee from the Brazils—salt from Italy or Turks' Island—direct to eastern Canadian ports. Others carried cargoes of West Indian products, or of mahogany from the Mosquito coast of Central America, to United States ports and then loaded hard coal, or oil or flour and other provisions for Canadian ports. In season many of them were chartered to carry West Indian fruits to Baltimore, Philadelphia or New York. And being speedy craft with masters who carried sail till things turned blue, they usually delivered their cargoes of fruit in as good condition as the steamers of the period. Not only when they carried perishable cargoes, but at all times they were hard driven, flying stunsails, ring-tails and water-sails to the last—being probably the last of square-riggers to flaunt such folderoll.

Their small crews led lives of hard labour. A captain, mate, four sailors and a cook who was also steward, made up their usual complement, though some of the larger craft carried a second mate. This meant two sailors to watch—a two-hour trick at the wheel, and then by day two hours' work in the rigging or about decks, and by night straight from the wheel two hours on the lookout. There was no chance for a nap in fine weather in one's watch on deck at night, as in larger ships carrying several to a watch. In fair weather there was seldom or never an afternoon watch below. Any sort of sailing vessel always required constant care and labour to keep her shipshape and Bristol fashion, and if the mates were not usually given to godliness, they made an exacting fetish of the next virtue—cleanliness. On the outward voyage there were masts to scrape and slush, yards to scour with sand and canvass till they shone bright and then oil or varnish, rigging to repair and tar down, blocks to paint—and jobs of real sailorizing, requiring skill, deft fingers, keen eyes, and giving a sense of artistic accomplishment, work that an experienced seaman delighted to do.

Homeward, the ship being without a deckload, there were hardwood rails and stanchions to scrape bright and varnish, decks to holystone and oil, painting to be done outside suspended on flimsy stages over the water rushing by, intricate knots to be made to adorn some part of the ship's gear... A thousand and one jobs... All that the ship might come to her home port, looking natty, bright and clean—a spectacle for the admiration of the share-owners and long-shore loafers, and a testimony to the efficiency and loving care of the mate.

Sixteen hours on deck one day and fourteen the next. And that was not all. Making and taking in the heavier sails was an all-hands' job. If a sail blew away in the middle of the night, there was no waiting till daylight to bend a new one. It was all hands to rout out a new sail, hoist it aloft, and bend it as soon as possible—often a long and laborious and dangerous job with the ship pitching and rolling, the men on the swinging, shaking yard-arms, working in blind darkness, passing the lashings of the earings, reeving bunt and clew-lines stopping the head of the sail to the jack-yard, by the touch of fingers painfully sensitive because perhaps worn to the quick.

In heavy weather there was often something, the running or even the standing rigging, carrying away aloft to call all hands on deck to undertake in haste and sometimes in fear an emergency job. And in heavy weather too, the labouring hulls opened their seams to drink more than enough water to keep their limbers sweet,

and then there would be long spells at the pumps, the hardest, most back-breaking, most disheartening labour of the seas.

But life aboard these little windjammers was not without compensations. Outward-bound there was the sense of adventure, the lure of strange ports. At the outset there was often awe and wonder at the blustering might of the west wind and the insensate wrath of the sea. And then as the ship sped away to the south-east, and the crew found their sea-legs and an easy stomach, spirits rose in anticipation of the fine weather to the southward. But first there was the crossing of the Gulf Stream which, south of Nova Scotia, is the trysting place of frequent and violent storms. Windjammers rarely made the crossing without a boat with Gulf Stream weather—hard squalls of wind and streaming rain swooping down from a heaven-filling wrack of gloomy, low-hung clouds. And they were lucky if the vicious seas of this region did not sweep away their deckloads.

But presently that ship would leave behind her the boisterous realm of the west wind, and entered the region of calms, light, variable winds and occasional squalls of rain. Here the braces had to be manned every few minutes to trim the sails to catch a breath of vagrant air, and as there was usually enough rain to keep the ropes hard and harsh, hands worn raw in the Gulf Stream weather developed painful sores. At intervals the Bermuda squalls would come along—immense grey-black curtains extending from the clouds to sea, bringing one knew not what menace of wind. One captain, summoned on deck under the shadow of an approaching squall, always, as if he needed to jack up his memory, chanted:

> When the rain's before the wind,
> Halyards, sheets and braces mind:
> When the wind's before the rain,
> Soon you may make sail again.

If the rain came before the wind, there would be a period of frantic activity, shortening sail; and sometimes, after the mountain range of driving rain had rolled over the ship, enveloping her in a sinister gloom, a fierce gust of wind would take a hand in the work of getting rid of sail. But if the wind came first, the watch merely stood by the halyards waiting for orders; and the rain when it came fell straight downward in amazing volume as though from a cloudburst. Then the dark mass would roll away to leeward, and the sun would shine brightly upon the sea again. And the sailors, wringing wet with sweat, feeling as if they had been through a bath of steam, would cast off their oilskins.

At last the windjammer would come to the well-ordered dominion of the east wind, and, picking up the "trades", would prance along through the white-capped, scintillant waves like a dolphin at play, spreading wide flounces of foam from her eager forefoot, and flinging high over her knightheads sheets of fine spray that the refraction of the rays of the sun clothed with the beauty of miniature rainbows dancing attendance upon the progress of the ship. "On the trail of rapture in the wonder of the sea". In this region, where the trade winds blowing briskly over thousands of miles of clean and wholesome sea acquire a freshness and tang as exhilarating as wine, the sailors had a spell of surcease from heavy labour and of relaxation, on the one hand, from the strain of the relentless vigilance which the treacherous weather of northern waters imposes, and, on the other, from the subtle oppression of the glaring brilliance and stifling heat that, in the heart of the tropics, tries the soul and saps the strength of men from northern climes. The genial bustle of the trades mellowed the warmth of the sunshine, and the serene blue of the sky, across which fleecy white clouds sailed like fleets of stately galleons, held the promise of continuing fine weather. In the morning the sun arose in an unclouded sky of stainless blue, and in the evening it set serenely in a pageant of rose and gold. Only at long intervals was it necessary to take a pull at halyards, sheets and braces, and hands raw with water sores had a chance to heal and grow new flesh.

After days of pleasant sailing, the windjammer would come to her destination, and her sailors feasted their eyes upon the sights of a tropical city, the fascination of which is ever new to men coming from the sea. Mostly the tropical cities in the days of sail glowed with colour, the bright red of low sloping roofs and the rose hues of their walls contrasting with the vivid green of the foliage in which they were embowered. They had the charm of the picturesque, and in the dazzling glare of the sunlight or the mystical light of the moon they had the attraction of beautiful sirens promising revelations of mysterious delights. But the glamor held only during the first evening of exploration ashore.

In land-locked, windless ports of the tropics the nights aboard ship were endless hours of misery. Under the awnings mosquitoes swarmed in clouds; sailors usually could not learn to sleep under mosquito nets—found them stifling, and discarded them. Anyhow, they were no protection from the tiny sand-flies, whose sting was as painful as the bite of a mosquito and itched more. After a period of torment under the awnings, the sailors would go aloft, loose the lower topsail, and stretch themselves in the bight of it as

though in a great hammock. Usually the mosquitoes and sand-flies did not cruise so high, and the men might fall into a doze—only to be rudely awakened by the deluge of a tropical downpour. Streaming wet, they would scramble below to the shelter of the awnings, where the mosquitoes were thicker and more vicious than ever. After the rain passed the men would go aloft again, and again in an hour or less another downpour would drive them below. And so the night passed in exasperation and torment.

In the morning the faces of the men were masses of ugly red lumps, with the flesh about their eyes so puffed up that they could hardly see for an hour or so, or until the rays of the hot sun evaporated the venom of the insects and the swellings went down. But whether they could hardly see or not, the day's labour began at six o'clock, and with the intervals of a half hour for breakfast and an hour for dinner continued until six in the evening. Windjammer sailors then handled cargo in tropical ports, and the long hours of back-bending toil under a gruelling sun, succeeding long nights in which men found surcease from the torment of insects only when they sank exhausted into brief periods of stupor, made them realize why the gods who cannot enjoy that priceless boon of humanity, sleep, are mad. And they learned too the absolute necessity of preserving their vitality without flaw in order to keep their health and carry on.

In those days science had not conquered malaria, the germs of which carried by mosquitoes got into the blood of men, racking them with alternate fevers and chills, making some of them mad, clinging to others for long years and making their lives a misery. And there was Yellow Jack, the dread disease that struck at the strongest and laid them low in death with a swiftness that was like an intolerable affront to the dignity of life. But it must be said that the men who formed crews on little Canadian windjammers, being either young or well-seasoned and mostly abstemious with the bottle, enjoyed a surprising immunity from tropical diseases; and the number of men who died of disease was very small as compared with the numbers that were lost in battle with the storms of the sea—or perished of hunger and thirst as the wreck of their ship drifted upon an empty waste of waters.

The chronicles of the West Indiamen are filled with tales of almost incredible endurance. There is, for instance, the story of the "Jacob and Benjamin" of Yarmouth, whose crew were on short allowance for eighty-three days—most of the time living on boiled raw hide. This craft of 104 tons left Barbados on the 8th of November for her home port, having a small consignment of hides

on top of her ballast. On December 1st, in latitude 27 north, she encountered a heavy westerly gale which drove her so far out of her course that the master put the crew on a short allowance of hard bread and water. Thereafter for 27 days and nights she experienced a succession of hard gales, while one terrific squall carried away her topsail, foresail and jib, and broke her jib-boom and main-boom. Two days after Christmas, while she was running under bare poles before a raging gale, a monster sea broke over her quarter and threw her on her beam ends.

As she lay with her spars prone on the sea, and the waves stamping over her, the captain ordered the lanyards of rigging cut. To do this the men had to work their way, hand over hand, along the rails, at risk of being swept overboard. But they accomplished it, and with the heave of the hull the masts broke off a few feet above the deck.

The vessel righted about forty-five degrees, but having shifted her ballast and cargo would not right completely. Then, lest the spars thrashing alongside in the heavy sea smash a hole in her, they cut the lee lanyards, and the wreckage drifted away. Then it was all hands into the hold to shift hides and ballast.

As if satisfied with dismasting her, the gale began to ease and the sea to go down, and the vessel slowly righted as the men trimmed ballast and cargo. She was now helpless, drifting before wind and wave, and her worn-out crew needed a spell of rest. They also needed extra rations, but the seas that hove her down had invaded both cabin and galley, spoiling much of the remaining scanty provisions.

"So you will have to go on still shorter allowance," said the captain.

Next day they set about rigging up a jury-mast with a few spars remaining aboard, and sewing raw hides together to make sails. When their clumsy sails were finally hoisted on the jury-mast, the hulk was able to make sufficient progress to obey her helm when proceeding in the general direction of the wind, and the captain let her go to the eastward, hoping to get into track of ships trading between England and the West Indies. But variable winds and calms made the going slow, and her crew were soon reduced to meals of raw hide and three gills of water every twenty-four hours. The method of preparing the hides for food was to cut off strips a few inches wide and soak them in sea water until they became soft. Then the men, with knives as sharp as they could make them, shaved off the hairs as clean as possible. Then the strips were cut in pieces small enough to swallow, and boiled in salt water for eight

hours, a few tamarinds being put in the pot at the end to sweeten the mess.

The jury-rigged hulk drifted with the changing winds over an empty sea through a wearisome procession of days and nights, and, at last, after twenty-two days of rawhide and tamarinds, the crew, weak and sick, gave up all hope and turned into their berths to wait for the release of death. But the captain, staying on deck for a last look, presently spied a sail on the horizon. And at his shout of "sail in sight", the men who had resigned themselves to death rushed on deck, "seemingly with the strength of lions"—Captain John Cann wrote in his report.

The sails of a bark rose above the horizon, standing for the wreck, and in a few hours she ranged to leeward a few cable-lengths away, and backed her maintopsail.

"Send a boat. We're starving," shouted Captain Cann.

The bark had a foreign look. A man on her poop raised a speaking trumpet and shouted back:

"Launch your own boat".

"My men are too weak," Captain Cann shouted. "We want to be taken off".

"If you want to talk to me, launch your boat", the bark shouted back. "I'll not promise to take you off. You're only sixty miles from Fayal".

Captain Cann and his men remained dumbfounded while the bark drifted out of earshot. Then, realizing that the stranger had no intention of coming to their assistance, they set about launching their own boat which, lashed bottom-up on top of the forehouse, had, as by a miracle, escaped destruction. In their weakened conditions, it was another miracle how they got into the sea. But they did, and the captain and two men rowed to the bark. A rope was thrown them, but no accommodation ladder was put over—no invitation to come aboard.

Captain Cann explained his plight and asked passage for his men, promising payment.

"I'm short of provisions myself," the stranger replies surlily. "Fayal bears S. S. E., only sixty miles away. Even with your queer rig, you ought to make it in a day or so".

Captain Cann pleaded that his men were at the end of their power of endurance. But the master of the bark was obdurate. He would not take them aboard. But finally, after further pleadings, he consented to give them a few hunks of salt junk, a tin or two of hard bread and a small beaker of water. Then he sailed away.

Captain Cann returned to his hulk and set a course for Fayal, and his men, eating sparingly of the supplies grudgingly given them, recovered their courage and a little of their strength. But that night the wind came from the southeast, and all they could do was to let the hulk drift before it. And then for days and weeks they moved in an empty sea. But the rain fell to give them water, and with tough pieces of fat from the salt junk used as bait they caught an occasional fish to eke out their diet of raw hide. Somehow, they managed to exist until February 21st, when having drifted as far north as latitude 43.30, the brig "Thalia", Captain Benjamin Simpson, from Liverpool for Demerara, came along, and took them off—so weak and emaciated they had to be lifted into the boat.

One of the smallest vessels employed in the West Indian trade was the "Hibernis" of 48 tons. Leaving Yarmouth for Barbados on October 22nd, she had fair weather until the 28th, when a strong gale springing up she was hove-to. With less than three feet of free-board the little craft was soon making wicked weather of it in a heavy, swift-running sea, but there was nothing to be done about it, and leaving one man to stand by the wheel, the captain, cook and the other sailors went into the cabin. Towards midnight a bigger sea than usual broke over her, throwing her on her beam-ends, sweeping the man at the wheel into eternity. As the master, Thomas Rooker, sprang for the companion-way, the deck load of lumber breaking from its lashings went overboard, carrying away the companion and the top of the cabin. The whole lee side of the cabin was quickly filled with water, and apparently the cook was knocked senseless by a piece of wreckage or drowned. With difficulty the captain forced his way to the deck through a tangle of planks and boards, being tossed about by the heave of the sea, and helped the other sailor to get out and up to the rail. To get clear of the lumber knocking about, the captain worked his way forward along the rail. Then, the vessel still lying on her side, he cut the lanyards of the forerigging.

In a little while, the foremast snapped off at the deck, and the little craft righted. But she was now full of water, only buoyed up by her cargo of lumber, and every sea made a clean breach of her. Luckily there fell a brief lull, and the captain had an opportunity to hustle the sailor, who appeared dazed as if from a crack on the head, to the poop and hoist him on top of main-gaff, which, the mainsail having been stowed, was about five feet from the deck. But before the captain could find a rope to lash the man to the gaff, the little craft fell off in the trough, and the seas catching her

broadside on broke sheer over captain and man, washing the latter away.

Captain Tooker lashed himself to the gaff, and with the seas continually breaking over him, and the cold chilling him to the marrow of his bones, remained in that position throughout the night. At daylight the swells were still running, and all of the schooner, except the stem and a bit of the poop, was constantly under water. During the morning the gale moderated and the sea subsided, and by 10 a.m. the captain, stiff and sore and hungry, was able to quit his perch and make a search for food. He hoped to find a tin of food in the cabin, but the water filling it, surged about, keeping it in such a state that it was impossible to see into it, and though he fished with a boathook for hours he was unrewarded.

During the afternoon the sails of a vessel hove in sight, and securing a piece of canvas, he hoisted it on the mainmast, But to his great disappointment the vessel gave no sign of noticing his signal of distress, though she passed so near that she showed her hull. Toward sundown another vessel showed to windward, but she also passed without noticing his signal.

In the evening another gale blew up from the west, and the sea began to run wild again. And the west wind brought a biting edge of cold. The captain again lashed himself to the gaff, and the seas were presently stamping over the wreck, trying to wash him away. Weak from hunger, he suffered intensely from the cold—felt he would not survive the night. But, perhaps because masses of water continually falling in avalanche over him were warmer than the air, he endured the ordeal of the night. At 11 o'clock next morning, when he sighted another sail, he still had energy enough to cast himself adrift his lashing and hoist another distress signal—his first having blown away during the night. Before long the brig, the "George", Captain James Unsworth, of and for Liverpool, G. B., from St. Andrews, N. B., hove to and launched a boat. As the seas were still running too high to risk bringing it along side the wallowing wreck, it came under her stern and the captain—the only survivor—scrambled out on the projecting mainboom and dropped into it. Arrived on board the brig, he was surprised to find that his legs were swollen enormously, the result of bruises received from falling boards and planks during the scramble out of the cabin when his ship was hove down on her side.

The brigantine *Louisa,* 227 tons, John J. Bain master, sailed from Bridgewater, N. S., on December 20th, for Barbados, with a cargo of lumber. Her owner, Gilbert Sanderson, and a friend, John Wilson, were aboard as passengers, and besides her captain

her crew consisted of first mate Theo. S. Stewart, second mate L. R Manning, a cook and five sailors. She encountered heavy weather from the start, and on the second day out, while hove-to under storm canvass, labouring violently in a high, swift-running sea, she began to leak. That night the gale moderated a little, and the men, taking turns at the pumps, in constant danger of being swept away by mountains of water making cascades over the deck-load, managed to keep the leak from gaining on them. Next morning it blew a full gale again, and the leak gaining, the ship laboured more heavily with the growing weight of water in her hold.

In the afternoon the wind suddenly hauled from southwest to northwest, and as the ship veered with the wind, a fierce squall hove her down on her side, while a huge sea smashing over her carried her deck load of lumber into the welter of waters to leeward. As she wallowed on her side, the seas trampling over her, the lanyards of the fore-rigging were cut, and presently the foremast snapped off a dozen feet from the deck, carrying with it the maintopmast. Relieved of the heavy tophamper, the ship righted, and, as the wind now blowing athwart the run of the sea beat it down, she was soon behaving fairly well, and with renewed courage the men returned to the pumps. But the gale continued with unabated fury, a new sea got up, and soon the ship, now a dismasted wreck, pitching and rolling violently, was being swept by vicious waves. All that night the men laboured doggedly at the pumps, the passengers aiding, but the water gained in the hold.

Next morning the sun rose bright in a cloudless sky, but the gale raged with hurricane force. At last the ship having settled so low in the water that every wave was making a clean breach over her, the captain gave the word to abandon the pumps. All hands then got on top of the forehouse, lashing themselves in a huddled group to the stump of the foremast.

With the heave and roll of the hulk, the water in the hold surged about with the force of a giant catapult, smashing the stern timbers until the waters within and the waves without met and mingled. Then the deck burst up and the whole after part of the ship slowly disintegrated, and the lumber in the hold began to work out and float away on the wildly tossing seas. All the boats had gone with the deckload; making a raft was out of the question; and there was nothing the men could do except to stand huddled together around the stump of the foremast on top of the forehouse and watch the wallowing hulk breaking to pieces beneath their feet.

During the afternoon the gale moderated, and just at sundown they sighted a bark far to leeward. And for two hours of that

Christmas Eve, they strove to attract her attention by waving torches contrived of pieces of rag torn from a sailor's jacket and soaked in the oil of a lantern rescued from the fo'castle. These pitiful tapers would burn for two or three minutes at a time. But the bark gave no answering signal.

That night brought another gale and the seas broke over them, keeping them constantly wet and chilled to the bone. But next day, as if in deference to the spirit of Christmas, the west wind abated its implacable wrath somewhat, and they were able to leave the top of the house and search the store-room for something to eat. It had not been completely gutted by the sea, and they found some salt meat, some hard bread, some carrots and turnips, but, to their dismay, only a ten-quart tin of water. They decided not to eat the salted meat lest they excite their thirst unbearably, and so they made their Christmas dinner of a few bits of hard bread and raw turnips and carrots.

Days and nights passed, and despite a scanty allowance their water was soon exhausted. They watched the horizon, but no ship appeared. They turned imploring eyes to the heavens, but no cloud appeared big enough to vouchsafe the blessing of rain or snow. But luckily the wind and the sea went down, and they were able to move about the foreward part of the wreck, still held up by lumber jammed in the hold. They found that the stove in the galley in the forehouse had survived the bombardment of the waves, and starting a fire in it they kept a kettle of sea water boiling, a man standing by to lift off the cover every few minutes and hold it upside down until the steam attached thereto condensed into a drop of fresh water. In this way, out of the immensity of water around them, they secured a pitiful drinking supply—enough to allow each of the eleven men two teaspoonfuls at eve and two more in the morning.

And so they lived, enduring cold and hunger and thirst until the evening of the 27th of December, when the Anchor liner *Olympia*, from Gibraltar for New York, came along and sent a boat to their rescue. "As the boat came alongside," Captain Bain wrote in his report, "there was no hasty and selfish pressing forward for deliverance. The passenger was the first to jump from the forecastle, but taking the leap as the boat slid into the trough, he fell into the sea, from which he was plucked half-drowned by one of the sailors. The owner, who went next, and all the rest leaped with more judgment and tumbled into the boat at no greater cost than that of a few bruises. As I left, the wreck seemed to settle more deeply in the water with each sullen plunge, and as another

vicious gale raged that night I have no doubt that the hulk soon went completely to pieces, and that we were all vastly lucky to be rescued when we were. All of us were very weak and our throats were swollen with thirst, but on the liner we were given the best of care and soon recovered from the effects of our fearful experience."

The steamship *Olympia* had been blown far off her course by a succession of gales, and "her captain assured me with unction that we owed our rescue to an act of providence," Captain Bain used to say, telling that tale afterwards. And the good man—he was a jolly soul too—was so pleased with being an instrument of providence that I politely agreed with him. It never occurred to him that providence in order to reward his virtues with the opportunity of doing a good deed had treated us as very shabby sinners, deserving long and harsh punishment. But I was too grateful to him to try to disturb his self-complacency—and grateful to providence too, though I would have been better pleased if it had sent us better weather or kept more watchful eye on the building of that brigantine. For I have brought ships through worse weather than we had then, and no wooden ship of her age should have gone to pieces, if she had not been suffering from some defect of workmanship in her building, or some defect of material. The providence that matters most to the shipmaster is the honesty of the workmanship and the materials in his ship, and for the rest it is left for honesty in his own conceit of the quality of his seamanship, and of his ability to command the loyalty of his crew, to meet the challenge of wind and weather and abide the issue without quarrelling with fate. That was what I learned from that experience and from the judgment of the Wreck Court which exonerated me of blame. And I learned also that there are some ordeals which a man can remember without brooding bitterness, without a feeling that all human suffering is mere vanity, the needless and purposeless imposition of a mad world. I came out of that experience with a new respect for my fellow men, which has made me tolerant of their weaknesses and foolishness. My two passengers, the owner and his friend, were quite ordinary folk, and the sailors were, of course, only common sailors. But the way all endured that ordeal was a thing to wonder at. Though their thoughts and feelings must at times have been, like my own, on the verge of panic, they kept a stoic demeanour. At times they even showed cheery defiance to the cold, the hunger, the thirst, the menace of annihilation.

"When huddled together men helped one another to massage the cramps out of their limbs, and the annoyance and pain of being hurled into one another's ribs by a boarding sea caused no express-

ions of ill-feeling. It was as though all were bound together by a bond stronger than the lashings attaching them to the stump of the mast—the bond of a common struggle against the aggressions of mad and ruthless natural forces, and the acceptance of the common struggle as the law and condition of life.

"When a man was condensing tiny drops of drinking water, we felt that he did not need watching; that though every atom of his body was burning with the fierce fever of thirst, that though he craved with a terrible craving to cool the fire of his tongue by licking the condensing steam, he would treasure each tiny drop—that must have looked to him vaster than a lake,—for the common supply, waiting patiently for his share.

"All kept their heads—held on to their manhood—maintained the sanity, the dignity, of the human spirit in the face of the madness that ruled the waste of water around us; and I felt—I was sure—they would carry on with fortitude to the last extremity. What upheld the landsmen? I gathered from some casual remarks of the owner that in the struggle for existence against the aggressions of wild natural forces there was a dignity, a saving grace, absent from the struggles between men in society ashore. And I gathered from the other passenger that he possessed a reasoned philosophy of stoicism. As for the sailors, all they had to uphold them was their loyalty to the traditions of their calling, and a steadfast quality of soul born of austere service to the exacting fidelities sailing ships demanded of men as the price of their very lives".

A CORRECTION

In Professor H. F. Angus's article, published in last number of THE DALHOUSIE REVIEW, entitled "A Contribution to International Ill-Will", an error appears regarding the scope of the Chinese Immigration Act. It is there implied (pp. 25, 27, 31.) that under this Act Chinese merchants and university students are excluded from Canada. This error was corrected by Professor Angus himself, but unfortunately, through an editorial oversight, the correction of the proof did not reach the printer in time.

H. L. S.