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THE STAR SPANGLED BANNER.

Its History and the Song.

In the month of August, 1814, the country hung on the verge of ruin. Our army, led by Dearborn, Hull, and Winder, was diminishing under a succession of deplorable reverses. In the midst of the general gloom Lord Cockburn enters the Chesapeake with a fleet of twenty sail, and makes quick advance on Washington. He enters the Capitol, ascends the Speaker's chair, and puts the question to his soldiers: "Shall this harbor of Yankee democracy be burned?" "Yes! Yes!" cry a thousand voices and flames rise all over the city and the Capitol is in ruins. Cockburn now turns his course on Baltimore, and prepares for the bombardment of the fort. Meantime, a little vessel, guided by a brave young man, and bearing a white flag of truce, shoots out from underneath the guns of Fort M'Henry, and glides like a bird down the broad bay directly to the flag ship of the enemy's squadron. That man is Francis Scott Key. He goes to intercede for the deliverance of his dear old friend Dr. Barnes. Cockburn detains him. The squadron forming a vast semi-circle, moves as if to grasp and crush the silent fort. Key's boat is kept astern the flagship of the admiral, himself a prisoner, and he hears the booming of the cannonading on the shore. He sees the lingering sunbeams on the 13th of September fade away beneath the forests in the west; he sees the heavy clouds come rolling over the waters of the bay, and he marks the mighty preparations for the onset on which hangs the destiny of our nation. Ah, look! and now the globes of fire cast lurid gleams upon the iuky clouds above—the waves are flashing in the flames below! All through the thundering crash of that long, horrid night Key stands in his light skiff, gazing at the floods of fire, shaken by the tempest to the very verge of doom. At last the fire-balls cease to flame across the bay; all is dark and still once more. Has the fort struck her flag? Oh, what an hour of agony! With straining eyes Key waits and watches for the first gleam of breaking day. Now the clouds roll by, the dawn is trembling on the headlands, the mist is clearing, and there, just rising dimly from the ramparts, through the gray veil of morning, Key discerns the dear old stripes and stars still waving! Snatching an old letter from his pocket, he lays it on a barrel head, and while the flag is in his eye, the fiery tides of liberty coursing through his soul, he writes the song—bold, warlike, and majestic:

Oh! say, can you see, by the dawn's early light,
What so proudly we hail'd at the twilight's last gleaming?
Whose broad stripes and bright stars, through the perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watch'd, were so gallantly streaming?
And the rocket's red glare, the bombs bursting in air,
Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there,
Oh! say, does the star spangled banner still wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?

On the shore, dimly seen through the mists of the deep,
Where the foe's haughty host in dread silence reposes,
What is that which the breeze doth unveil and display,
As it fitsly blows, half conceal'd from the enemy?
Now it catches the gleam of the morning's first beam,
In full glory reflected, now shines on the stream,
'Tis the star spangled banner, oh, long may it wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.

And where is the band who so vauntingly swore
That the havoc of war and the battle's confusion
A home and a country would leave us no more?
Their blood has wash'd out their foul footsteps' pollution.
No refuge could save the hireling and slave
From the terror of flight or the gloom of the grave;
And the star spangled banner in triumph doth wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.

Oh! thus be it ever when freemen shall stand
Between their lov'd homes and war's desolation;
Bless'd with vict'ry and peace, may the heaven rescued land
Praise the Power that has made and preserved us a Nation.
Then conquer we must, when our cause is just,
And this be our motto—"In God is our trust!"
And the star spangled banner in triumph shall wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.

A SEA STORY.

It was in the year 1779. The red sun had just come up out of the Atlantic, and now brightened the slightly rippled waters of Salem harbor. The sails of the Tyrannicide, privateer, Captain Seawaif, had been loosed, her cable hove short, and she only waited for the change of the tide to commence her cruise.

She was, for that era, astonishingly clipperish, raking in sparks, sharp in hull, and calculated for carrying an astonishing quantity of canvas. Her rig was that of a two-top-sail schooner, her lower masts being very long and heavy, so as to carry large fore-and-aft sails. Her burden appeared to be about 300 tons. She was pierced for eight twenty-four-pound cannonades on a side; a long brass thirty-two pounder, working on a pivot, shone bright as gold between her masts, mounted high enough to work her hammock nettings. Around her masts could be seen the gleam of boarding pikes and battle-axes. At her main-mast a blood-red flag floated out, bearing the motto, "Death to Tyrants!" At the main-truck another red flag bore the name of the schooner, "The Tyrannicide." Her figurehead was a serpent striking his fang into the heart of a man who wore a crown. Taking her altogether she was indeed a dangerous and saucy-looking craft, calculated to both sail and fight well. Upon her deck many men could be seen, showing that, if she had "teeth," she had also strength to use them.

All of her boats had been hoisted upon the captains'

gig, and the officers were watching the tide very impatiently for its turn.

Presently Seawaif appeared at the end of the wharf. The young captain sprang into his boat amid the applause of hundreds of citizens who had gathered there to see the privateer go to sea, and in a few moments he was on board his vessel.

With a clear, bugle-like voice which needed no trumpet, the young commander shouted:

"Man the capstan bars, lads, and run the anchor up with a will. Stand by the jib and flying-jib halyards—lay the headyards aback!"

His orders were obeyed readily; and in a few moments the second officer, who stood on the fore-castle looking over the bows, cried:

"She's broken ground, sir!"

"Very well, sir, run up the jib and flying-jib, and haul the sheets to the starboard—man the top-gallant and top-sail and halyards! Round with the capstan, men, and run the anchor up the bows!"

A moment later, and the headsails up, the evering bow of the schooner proved her to be all aweigh, and then came the order:

"Sheet home, and hoist away topsail and top-gallant sails!"

This was done, and as the fore-and-aft sails, already up, filled, the schooner began to gather headway. Then as she fell off before the wind, which was far out of the harbor, her square sails filled, and she shot ahead with increased velocity. The crowd on shore, looking with delight at the splendid vessel, and gladdened, too, at the thought of her errand, rent the air with cheers.

Never was a craft in better battle trim on deck, below or aloft, than the privateer, after Seawaif had got her rigging stretched. Conscious that he was ready to meet any foe of his tonnage and weight of metal, he boldly headed off from the coast for the track of the inward-bound vessels from England.

One morning soon after, he was at breakfast in his cabin, with the first officer and the doctor—young Morly, the second officer, being in charge on deck.

But each of them bounded from the table as they heard shout, "Sail, ho!" from the lookout at the top-gallant cross-trees.

"Where away, and what does she look like?" cried young Morly, in reply.

Seawaif and his companions held their breath and listened to the answer.

"I see three sails, sir, dead ahead; they seem square-rigged, and coming right down before the wind," was the reply.

"Englishmen, and making for the coast, I'll wager my first prize-money!" said the captain, as he hurried on deck.

"John Bull's men, be gar—I shall get my instruments ready for amputation!" cried the delighted doctor, a Frenchman.

"So will I!" said Mr. Doolittle, the first officer, as he buckled on his sharp, but short cutlass, and followed his commander on deck.

The breeze was fresh, and the schooner with only her lower sails and topsail set, was going off to the eastward on a tout bowling, her top-gallant and royal yards pointed to the wind, and her larboard tacks aboard. There was quite a heavy sea rolling, and, as she pitched into and through it, she threw the snowy foam over her prow almost as high as her foretop.

"See all clear for action, fore and aft! Reef preventer stays and braces! Have the spare spars cleared away! Gunners look to your children; they may have play soon! Boarders and pikemen, see that your tools are in their places!" cried the captain, cheerfully, as he came on deck; and then he seized a spyglass, and scanned the vessels in sight.

"What do you make out, sir, if you please?" asked Mr. Doolittle, whose hopes for work and prize-money were now on the rise.

"I see six vessels; but they are too far off to make out, whether they are armed or not," was the reply.

"Shall the gunners open the magazine, sir?"

"Yes, after the galley fires are put out."

The men went to their work and their respective stations quietly, but with a cheerful look, which betokened a perfect confidence in their vessel, and especially in their officers.

An hour passed and the vessels were now hull-up-ahead, yet Capt. Seawaif gave no order either to alter her course or shorten sail.

"What about our colors, sir?" asked the lieutenant.

"You can run 'em up in rolls to their places, ready to pull when I order it, Mr. Doolittle," said the captain still keeping his glass directed toward the approaching ships.

The enemy were now rising fast, not more than four or five miles off; but the merchantman, obeying signals from the sloop-of-war, which had evidently discovered the nationality of the schooner by her rig, hauled on a wind and shortened sail, while the man-of-war held her course under a cloud of canvas.

"Take your stations for working ship!" cried Seawaif. The men bounded to the sheets and braces. "Hard up the helm—ease off the sheets and round in the weather-braces!" cried the captain.

"Tarnal thunder! you're not going to run from one sloop-of-war, are you, sir?" asked the lieutenant in agonized wonder.

"Get out and rig two spars with iron enough to sink them, for drags; drop one over each quarter, and ask no

impertinent questions, Mr. Doolittle," said the captain, quietly.

"I beg your pardon, sir, a hundred times—I thought you were going to run!" said the now delighted officer, as he hastened to obey the order.

"Double-shot with grape and canister—gunners to your stations!" cried the captain, now determinedly. "Men, make no noise when I announce it, but within an hour that sloop-of-war shall strike her flag, or we'll go down with our's flying! When she is taken the merchantmen will be easy prizes."

Had they not been cautioned, the men would have cheered so loudly as to be heard on board of the sloop-of-war.

After the drags were rigged and lowered over the side, held by stout hawsers, and not seen because sunk beneath the water, the schooner did not go more than three knots, although—under a full spread canvas—she seemed to be running away from her antagonist, which could now be seen coming up hand, over her decks crowded with men, and her ports showing a battery of twenty-four guns.

On she came, the red cross of St. George flaunting from her peak, until she was within nearly a mile of the schooner, when she fired a shot from one of her bow guns.

"Show them our colors and name!" cried the young captain, while his pale face flushed with a smile of terrible joy.

It was done in an instant; but the vessel's head was not changed nor a sail touched.

Rapidly the Englishman closed up, heading a little to leeward, so as to range under her larboard beam.

"Crouch well behind the bulwarks, men; stand by your larboard guns, but do not touch a match until the order comes from my lips; depress your guns so as to take her between wind and water! Sail-trimmers, stand to your sheets and braces, and be ready for orders."

Those orders given, Captain Seawaif, took his position on the larboard side of the quarter-deck, and with ill-concealed delight saw the Englishman range along until she was almost abreast.

"Haul down your colors, or I'll sink you! Strike, you Yankee rebel, strike!" shouted the English captain, who stood on the poop of his vessel in full uniform, steadying himself by holding on to the mizzen rigging.

"I'm just going to strike—not my colors, but you," cried Seawaif, sarcastically, instantly giving his order to pour in a whole broadside.

It was done with terrible effect, for the British had not anticipated resistance from a rebel whom they supposed to be using his best efforts to escape, and were huddled along the deck on the side next the schooner, and were cut down in fearful swaths. And as the sails were little injured the sloop-of-war shot ahead, so that she was past the schooner before she could return the broadside.

"Cut away the drags; spring to your starboard battery—throw in chain-shot as well as grape—and cut her sticks away!" cried Seawaif.

Then ordering the helm up, as the schooner's headway increased, he veered off athwart the stern of the sloop, and, as the guns came in range, delivered a raking fire, which not only swept her decks, but, cutting away her masts, crippled her completely.

He then hauled on a wind, determined to pepper her until she would "strike," and not wishing to lose any men at close quarters, if he could help it. But he had no occasion to use his guns any more; for suddenly, with a shock which shook the sea and air like an earthquake, the ill-fated craft was seen to fly in fragments, amid a cloud of smoke, into the air.

Whether by accident or design, no one could tell; but in some way the powder in the magazine had been ignited, and she was blown to atoms.

Prompted by humanity, Captain Seawaif ordered the helm up, and steered for the spot where the sloop-of-war had been, in hopes to save some surviving person of his crew.

But not a living soul could be seen. A few blackened spars and timbers only met the eye.

A DASHING young fellow was recently very attentive to a young lady who did not secretly favor his attentions, and who is blessed with an observing little brother of only a few summers' growth. The lady's admirer was visiting her a few days ago, when the little chap broke into their presence, and mounting the dashing young man's knee, said:

"Haven't you got a fine room?"

"Oh, yes!" proudly replied the dashing young fellow, whose vanity was evidently touched by the remark. Seeing, as he thought, in the circumstance an opportunity to make a favorable impression on the sister, he gave his moustache an extra twist, and reiterated his reply with emphasis:—"Oh, yes; a very fine room!"

"I thought so," said the young hopeful, musingly.

"But what made you think so?" asked the young lady's admirer, his curiosity by this time fully aroused.

"Because," was the crushing reply, "sister Maggie said she liked your room better than your company."

A self-holder for a spoon, when temporarily filled with any liquid, or for dropping medicine, may be made in the simplest manner possible, by thrusting the handle between the leaves of a shut book lying on the table. If not high enough, one book may be piled upon another. Both hands may then be used in dropping from a bottle or for making any desired mixture.