

bowled over occasionally when we shipped a sea, one could only be cheerful in a moderate way. Not that we had no episode. A flood of water down the fore-castle scuttle, or the stove taking its draught down the chimney instead of up, or the dinner all adrift in the cabin, would furnish us with themes for joyful contemplation and vigorous comment. Twice we sighted whalers coming down from the Arctic ocean, plunging on the majestic heave of the swell, with canvas standing crisp and pearly white against the sky. Once we had some capital cod fishing on banks frequented by the seals; and sometimes would encounter one of these curious sea people ostentatiously asleep, with flippers folded across his breast. One was killed while engaged in rubbing his eyes, and we had him, fat and fishy, for dinner.

At the end of two weeks, under a wonderfully bright, blue sky, with a fresh breeze astern, we bore down upon two gleaming, white spots, and at sundown these had grown into a large island, all snow-clad to the sea, the skyline broken with a swell of low hills. It was St. Paul's. We stood in towards nightfall toward the southwestern part, and under the lee of the land, with darkened portholes and a covered skylight. Making a tack which brought us abreast of a cove on the north side of the bay, we anchored and took in sail, leaving all slack that we might more readily get under way. From here we could descry the immense seal rookery, the stench of which came down to us on the wind, suggestive of poultry, together with a most absurd babble of bleats, screeches and dog-barks. The night was fair, and there was no surf ashore, and plenty of wind to take us out of sight of land before the day should break. The seals were there in hundreds of thousands, nay, in millions; and yet, instead of getting out the dories and taking 400 skins, worth nearly \$3,000, that night, we gathered on the poop and—*mutinied*.

The skipper had promised in Victoria that as soon as we got to sea he would furnish a written agreement that for every skin taken each man should receive a share of the proceeds. But this agreement had not been furnished when we made the Shumagin islands. One of us at that time being unhappy about the matter, and also drunk, abused the skipper upon general principles; then set himself and his baggage in one of the dories and rowed away indefinitely, with a remark that he was going "fishing." The old man made a demonstration with his rifle, but the trigger snapped twice, so that no signals were actually made, while the attempt to signalize was blandly disregarded by the gentleman in the dory. He afterwards consented to being brought back, but some hours were spent in hunting for his baggage, which he had mislaid somewhere. No document had been furnished when we

made that disastrous raid on St. George island, and our whole company was demoralized—if such a process can obtain in the absence of all morals whatsoever. No document had been furnished; and while hundreds of thousands of seals were barking and bleating and smelling all around us, while many of them came up by the side and snorted at us and curiously inspected us as a show gotten up for their amusement, the clubs were down in the coal bunker and the raiders talking on the poop. The crew might have all the documents they pleased at a bit a skin. Nay, the crew must have two bits, or go home.

The captain and mate went ashore prospecting, taking Oscar and the boy; and while they were away it was proposed that we should slip the cable and go home, the difficulties of navigation and of explaining matters afterwards being too small to mention. Finally the dories returned, having made some soundings and taken nineteen seals, which last lay snorting and dying dolefully on the deck, while we made sail and weighed and put to sea.

We thought that as the snow-clad hills and fore-shores of the land melted into the murk of the night there came a sound of many voices, sneering at us, jeering at us, with loudest mockery.

At midnight we were well at sea, and I went below for a cup of coffee. The skipper asked me if I were one of the "gang." I told him my interests were with



A CATCH OF CODFISH.

him, my sympathies with the fore-castle. I had undertaken the voyage to study sealing for the newspaper press, and now found that I could make no report, because I was under an obligation to the skipper for taking me. How could my expenses even be paid unless I shared something besides the risks and hardships of the voyage? The skipper offered me a share in the profits, and when I laid this matter before the