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SYNOPSIS.

CHAPTER I.—Captain Phineas P. Scraggs has grown up around the docks of San Francisco, and from mess boy on a river steamer...

CHAPTER II.—With this motley crew and his ancient vessel, Captain Scraggs is engaged in freighting a cargo...

CHAPTER III.

In the office of the Red Stack Tug Boat company Captain Dan Hicks, master of the tug Aphrodite, met Jack Flaherty, master of the Bodega...



The American Steamer Yankee Prince is Ashore Half a Mile Below the Cliff House.

er Yankee Prince is ashore half a mile below the Cliff house. She's a big tramp with a valuable cargo from Hong Kong...

The Aphrodite forged slowly ahead, taking in the slack of the hawser. Twenty minutes later, after much backing and swearing and heaving of lines the Bodega's hawser was also put aboard the Maggie...

ner skipper on the trial trip. She's a long, narrow-gutted craft, with engines aft, like a lake steamer.

"We'll play safe," Tierman decided. "Go to it—both of you, and may the best man win. She'll belong to you, Jack, if she's thirteen hundred net and you get your line aboard first. If she's as big as Dan says she is, you'll be equal partners."

But he was talking to himself. Down the docks Hicks and Flaherty were racing for the respective commands, each shouting to his night watchman to pipe all hands on deck.

"Quick! Hurry!" Scraggs entreated as he disappeared through the little engine-room hatch, for the tide was now at the tip of the flood and the Maggie was bumping wickedly and driving further up the beach...

"Sounds like she has the pip," Jack Flaherty remarked to his mate. "Must have taken on some of that dirty Astoria water. Dan Hicks soliloquized, 'and now her tubes have gone to glory.'"

Immediately both tubes kicked ahead under a dead swell, gulped by a series of toothy briefs as Mr. Gibney could make them, and presently both tug boilers reported breakers dead ahead.

Dan Hicks sent a man forward to heave the lead under the nose of the Aphrodite, which was edging in gingerly toward the voice. He had a searchlight, but he did not attempt to use it, knowing full well that in such a fog it would be of no avail.

the beach and placed distance between the Maggie and two soon-to-be-furious tugboat skippers.

CHAPTER IV.

The crews of the Aphrodite and the Bodega slept late, for they were weary and, fortunately, no calls for a tug came into the office of the Red Stack company all morning.

"I never went so far as to say I'd been aboard her on trial trip, though—and did cut down her tonnage, showing I got the fragments of a conscience left," Hicks defended himself.

"I believe it is, McGuffey," he announced. "Say, I hear the chief of the Aphrodite's going to take a three months' layoff to get straight of his rheumatism."

"Well, say, I'd like to have a chance to substitute for him. You know my capabilities, Hicks, an' if it would be agreeable to you to have me for your chief your recommendation would go a long way toward landin' me the job. I'd sure make them engines behave."

"I been with that freshwater scavenger, Scraggs, in the Maggie for most a year."

"He fired me," McGuffey replied honestly. "If he hadn't I'd have quit, so it's a toss-up. Comin' in from Halfmoon bay last night we got in the fog an' piled up on the beach just below the Cliff house."

"This is interesting," Jack Flaherty murmured. "You say she walked ashore on you, McGuffey? Well, I'll be shot!"

"She did, Scraggs blamed it on me, Flaherty. He said I didn't obey the signals from the bridge, one word led to another, an' he went dancin' mad an' ordered me off his ship. Well, it's his ship—or it was his ship, for I'll bet a dollar she's ground to powder by now—so all I could do was obey. I hopped overboard an' waded ashore. I suppose all my clothes an' things is gone by now. I left everything aboard an' had to borrow this outfit from Scab Johnny." He grinned pathetically.

"So I guess you understand, Captain Hicks, just how bad I need that job. I snob about a minute ago."

"I'll think it over, Mac, an' let you know," Hicks replied evasively.

Mr. McGuffey, sensing his defeat, retired forthwith to hide his embarrassment and distress; as the door closed behind him, Hicks and Flaherty faced each other.

"Jack," quoth Dan Hicks, "can two towboat men, holdin' down two hundred-dollar jobs an' presumed to have been out of their swaddlin' clothes for at least thirty years, afford to be laughed off the San Francisco waterfront?"

"I know one of them that can't, Dan. At the same time, can a rat like Phineas P. Scraggs and a beechcomber like his mate Gibney make a pair of star-spangled monkeys out of said two towboat men and get away with it?"

"They did that last night. Still, I've known monkeys that would fight an' was human enough to settle a grudge. Follow me, Jack."

Together they repaired to Jackson street bulkhead. Sure enough, there lay the Maggie, rubbing her blistered sides against the bulkhead. Captain Scraggs was nowhere in sight, but Mr. Gibney was at the winch, swinging ashore the crates of vegetables which the Squarehead and three longshoremen loaded into the cargo net.

"We're outnumbered," Jack Flaherty whispered. "Let's wait until she's unloaded an' Gibney an' Scraggs are aboard alone."

They retired without having attracted the attention of Mr. Gibney. Promptly at twelve o'clock the longshoremen knocked off work for the lunch hour and Nells Halvorsen drifted across the street to cool his parched throat with steam beer.

While waiting for Scraggs to come up out of the engine room, and take him to luncheon, Mr. Gibney sauntered aft and was standing gazing reflectively upon a spot on the Maggie's stern where the hawsers had chafed away the paint, when suddenly his forebodings of evil returned to him a thousand fold stronger than they had been since Scraggs' return to the little ship.



Scraggs, He Bawled, 'Scraggy-y-y! Help! Murder! It's Hicks and Flaherty! Bring an Ax!'

He flung Dan Hicks at Jack Flaherty; as they collided he rushed in and dealt each of them a powerful poke. However, Messrs. Hicks and Flaherty were sizeable persons and while, individually, they were no match for the tremendous Gibney, nevertheless what they lacked in horsepower they made up in pugnacity—and the salt sea seldom breeds a craven.

Backward and forward the tide of battle surged. For nearly three minutes all Scraggs saw was an indistinct tangle of legs and arms; then suddenly the combatants disengaged themselves and Scraggs beheld Mr. Gibney prone upon the deck with a gory face upturned to the foggy skies.

When he essayed to rise and continue the contest, Flaherty kicked him in the ribs and Hicks cursed him; so Mr. Gibney, realizing that all was over, beat the deck with his hand in token of surrender. Hicks and Flaherty waited until the fallen gladiator had recovered sufficient breath to sit up; then they pounced upon him, lifted him to the rail, and dropped him overboard. Captain Scraggs shrieked in protest at this added touch of barbarity, and Dan Hicks, turning, beheld Scraggs's white face at the hatch.

"You're next, Scraggs," he called cheerfully, and turned to peer over the rail. Mr. Gibney had emerged on the surface and was swimming slowly away toward an adjacent float where small boats landed. He glimbed wearily up on the float and sat there, gazing across at Hicks and Flaherty without animus, for to his way of thinking he had gotten off lightly, considering the enormity of his offense.

The least he had anticipated was three months in hospital, and so grateful was he to Hicks and Flaherty for their forbearance that he strangled a resolve to "lay" for Hicks and Flaherty and thrash them individually—something he was fully able to do—and forgot his aches and pains in a lively interest as to the fate of Captain Scraggs at the hands of the towboat men. He was aware that Captain Scraggs had failed ignominiously to rally to the Gibney appeal to rebel boarders, and in his own expressive terminology he hoped that what the enemy would do to the dastard would be a plenty."

The enemy, meanwhile, had turned their attention upon Scraggs, who had dodged below like a frightened rabbit and sought shelter in the shaft alley. He had sufficient presence of mind, as he dashed through the engine room, to snatch a large monkey wrench off the tool rack on the wall, and kneeling just inside the alley entrance he turned at bay and threatened the invaders with his weapon. Thereupon Hicks and Flaherty pelted him with lumps of coal, but the sole result of this assault was to force Scraggs further back into the shaft alley and out of range.

The towboat men held a council of war and decided to drown Scraggs out. Dan Hicks ran up on deck and returned dragging the deck fire hose behind him. He thrust the brass nozzle into the shaft-alley entrance and invited Scraggs to surrender unconditionally or be drowned like a kitten. Scraggs, knowing his own fire hose, defied them, so Dan Hicks started the pump while Flaherty turned on the water. Instantly the hose burst up on deck and Scraggs' jeers of triumph filled the engine room. The enemy was about to draw lots to see which one of the two should crawl into the shaft alley and throw a cupful of chloride of lime (for they found a can of this in the engine room) in Captain Scraggs' face, when a shadow darkened the hatch and Mr. Bartholomew McGuffey demanded belligerently: "What's goin' on down there? Who the devil's takin' liberties in my engine room?"

Dan Hicks explained the situation and the just cause for drastic action which they held against the fugitive in the shaft alley. Mr. McGuffey considered a few moments and made his decision.

"If what you say is true—an' I ain't in position to dispute you, not havin' been present when you hauled the Maggie off the beach, I don't blame you for feelin' sore. What I do blame you for, though, is carryin' the war aboard the Maggie. If you wanted to wale Gib an' Scraggy you should 'a' laid 'em on the dock. Under the circumstances, you make this a personal affair, an' as a member of the crew of the Maggie I got to take a hand an' defend my skipper agin' youse two. Fact is, gentlemen, I got a date

to lick him first for what he done to me last night. Howsumever, that's a private grudge. The fact remains that you two jumped my pal Bert Gibney an' 'kicked him somethin' scandalous. Hicks, I'll take you on first. Come up out of there, you swab, and fight. Flaherty, you stay below until I send for you; if you try to climb up an' horn in on my fight with Hicks, Gibney'll brain you."

A faint cheer came from the shaft alley. "Good old Mac. At-a-boy!" "You're on, McGuffey. Nobody ever had to beg me to fight him," Dan Hicks replied cordially, and climbed to the deck. To his great surprise, Mr. McGuffey winked at him and drew him off to the stern of the Maggie.

"There'll be no fight," he declared, "although we'll thud around on deck an' yell a couple o' times to make Scraggs think we're goin' to it. He figgers that by the time I've fought you an' Flaherty I won't be fit for combat with him, even if I lick you both; he's got it all figured out that I'll wait a couple o' days before tacklin' him, an' he thinks my temper'll cool by that time an' he can argy me out o' my revenge. Savey?"

"I twig." Mr. Gibney had returned to the Maggie by this time and he now took his station at the engine-room hatch and growled at Flaherty and abused him. "Keep up your courage, Scraggy," he called, as Hicks and McGuffey pranced around the deck in simulated combat. "Mac's whalin' the whey out o' Hicks an' Hicks couldn't touch him with a buggy whip."

At the conclusion of the three minutes of horse-play, Mr. McGuffey came to the hatch again. "Up with you, Flaherty," he called loud enough for Captain Scraggs to hear, "up with you before I go down after you."

Flaherty was about to possess himself of a hatchet when the face of his confederate, Dan Hicks, appeared over McGuffey's shoulder and grinned knowingly at him. Immediately, Flaherty hurled defiance at his enemies and came up on deck, and once more to Captain Scraggs came the dull sounds of apparent conflict overhead.

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Suddenly a cheer broke from Mr. Gibney. "All off an' gone to Cooperstown, Scraggy," he shouted. "Come up an' take a look at the fallen."

Out of the shaft alley came Scraggs with a rush, tossing his wrench aside the better to climb the ladder. He was half way up when Mr. Gibney reached down a great hand, grasped him by the collar, and whisked him out on deck with a single jerk. Here, to his horror, he found himself confronted by a singularly scathless trio who grinned triumphantly at him.

"Seen 'is believin', Scraggs," Dan Hicks informed him. "That's a lesson you taught me an' Flaherty last night, but evidently you don't profit by experience. You're too miserable to heat up, but just to show you it ain't possible for a dirty bay pirate like you to skin the likes o' me an' Flaherty we purpose haulin' the seat o' your pants up around your coat collar. Face him about, Gibney."

With a quick twist, Mr. Gibney presented Captain Scraggs for his perusal; Flaherty and McGuffey followed Dan Hicks promptly and Captain Scraggs screamed at every kick. And now came Mr. Gibney's turn. "For fallin' to stand up like a man, Scraggy, an' battle Hicks an' Flaherty," he informed the culprit, and tossed him over to McGuffey to be held in position for him.

"Don't, Gib. Please don't," Scraggs wailed. "It ain't comin' to me from you. I never heard you callin' a-tail. Honest, I never. Gib. Have mercy, Adelbert. You saved the Maggie last night—an' a quarter interest in her is yours—if you don't kick me!"

Mr. Gibney paused, foot in midair; surveyed the Maggie from stern to stern, hesitated, licked his lower lip, and glanced at the common enemy. For an instant it came into his mind to call upon the valiant and able McGuffey to support him in a fierce counter-attack upon Hicks and Flaherty. Only for an instant, however; then his sense of fair play conquered.

"No, Scraggy," he replied sadly. "She ain't worth it, an' your duplicity can't be overlooked. If there's anything I hate it's duplicity. Here goes, Scraggy—and get yourself a new navigatin' officer."

Scraggs twisted and flinched instantly, and Mr. Gibney's great boot missed the mark. "Ah," he breathed, "I'll give you an extra for that."

"Don't! Please don't," Scraggs howled. "Lay off'n me an' I'll put in a new boiler an' have the compass adjusted."

The words were no sooner out of his mouth than Mr. McGuffey swung him clear of Mr. Gibney's wrath. "Swear it," he hissed. "Raise your right hand an' swear it—an' I'll protect you from Gib."

Captain Scraggs raised a trembling right hand and swore it. "I'll fix a new fire hose an' fire buckets; I'll fix

the ash hoist and run the bedbugs an' cockroaches out of her," he added.

"You hear that, Gib?" McGuffey pleaded. "Have a heart."

"Not unless he gives her a coat of paint an' quits bickerin' about the overtime, Bert."

"I promise," Scraggs answered him. "Perivided," he added, "you an' Mac promise to stick by the ship."

"It's a shack," yelled McGuffey joyfully, and whirling, struck Dan Hicks a mighty blow on the jaw. "Off our ship, you hoodlums." He favored Jack Flaherty with a hearty thump and swung again on Dan Hicks. "At 'em, Scraggy. Here's where you prove to Gib whether you're a man—thump—or a mouse—thump—or a thump. thump—bottailed—thump—rat."

Dan Hicks had been upset, and as he sprawled on his back on deck, he appeared to Captain Scraggs to offer at least an even chance for victory. So Scraggs, mustering his courage, flew at poor Hicks' teeth and toenail. His best was not much but it served to keep Dan Hicks off Mr. McGuffey while the latter was disposing of Jack Flaherty, which he did, via the rail, even as the towboat men had disposed of Mr. Gibney. Dan Hicks followed Flaherty, and the crew of the Maggie crowded the rail as the enemy swam to the floor, crawled up on it and departed, vowing vengeance.

"All's well that ends well, gentlemen," Mr. McGuffey announced. "Scraggy's goin' to buy a drink an' the past is buried an' forgotten. Didn't old Scraggy put up a fight, Gib?"

"No, but he tried to, Mac. I'll tell the world he did," and he thrust out the hand of forgiveness to Scraggy, who, realizing he had come very handsomely out of an unlovely situation, clasped the hands of Mr. Gibney and McGuffey and burst into tears. While Mr. McGuffey thumped him between the shoulder blades and cursed him affectionately, Mr. Gibney retired to change into dry garments; when he reappeared the trio went ashore for the promised grog and a luncheon at the skipper's expense.

(To be continued next week.)

SILLO NECESSARY FOR DAIRY

Increase of 7 1/2 Per Cent Made on Missouri Farm by Feeding Cows on Silage.

No man who is milking a herd of a dozen or more cows can ever hope to make maximum returns from his herd without a silo, according to E. M. Harmon, dairy extension specialist for the Missouri College of Agriculture. This statement was proved by the Missouri Cow Testing associations during the past year, as shown in the following results:

Cows receiving silage produced an average of 5,798 pounds of milk, 266.8 pounds of fat and a profit above feed cost of \$108.00 per cow. Cows without silage averaged 5,180 pounds of milk, 252.7 pounds of fat and a profit of \$101.02 per cow. The difference was 600 pounds of milk, 13.9 pounds of fat and \$7.98 cents per cow in one year.

This means an increase of 7 1/2 per cent in profit due to the silo. The average man would go a long way to market his wheat for 7 1/2 per cent more. It is worth that much to build a silo and we must have a lot more of them before we will reach the economy we should in butterfat production.

BIG VALUE OF COW-TESTING

Some Convincing Comparisons of Best and Poorest Herd Brought Out by Experts.

(Prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture.) With figures from a Virginia cow-testing association as the basis for his calculations a representative of the United States Department of Agriculture has made some convincing comparisons of the best herd and the poorest herd, that bring out with unusual emphasis the value of testing.

There were 511 cows owned by members of the association. The best herd consisted of 16 cows, with an average of 806 pounds of butter fat in a year. The poorest herd had 93 cows, averaging 155 pounds of butter fat in a year. The first herd made an average income of \$76 per cow over the cost of feed consumed; the latter made an average return over feed cost of only 64 cents per cow.

The introduction of a few variations on these figures will help to show just how far apart were these cows in the two herds. The average cow in the best herd produced more income above



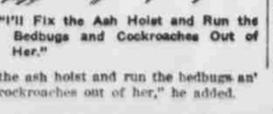
A Good Sire is the Beginning of a Good Herd; a Bad One is the End of Any Herd.

the cost of feed than all of the 94 cows in the other herd. It would require 117 cows like the average in the poor herd to equal in profit production one of the cows in the top herd. To equal the herd of 16 good cows a farmer would have to keep 1,878 animals like the average cow in this poor herd.

COWS DURING COLD WEATHER

Few Pounds of Corn Chop Will Help to Provide Body Heat and Keep Up Milk Flow.

During cold weather, dairy cows should be fed a little more grain than during milder weather. A few pounds of corn chop each day during the coldest days will help to provide much body heat and enable the cow to keep up her milk flow even in the coldest weather. It is of course necessary that the cow have shelter and not be exposed to the cold winds. On real cold days a blanket will assist in keeping the cow comfortable.



"I'll Fix the Ash Hoist and Run the Bedbugs and Cockroaches Out of Her."