

### The World as It Is.

This world is not so bad a world  
As some would like to make it;  
Though whether good or whether bad;  
Depends on how we take it.  
For if we could but fret all day,  
From dawn till dusk till even;  
This world will never afford to man  
A freer life of heaven.

This world is truth's as good a world  
As ever was known to any,  
Who have not seen another yet,  
And there are very many.  
And if the men and women too;  
Have plenty of employment,  
These surely must be hard to please  
Who cannot find enjoyment.

This world is quite a clever world,  
In sin or pleasant weather,  
If people would but learn to live  
In harmony together.  
Nor seek to burn the kindly bond  
By love and peace cemented,  
And learn that best of lessons yet,  
Always to be contented.

Then were the world a pleasant world,  
And pleasant folks were in it;  
The day would pass most pleasantly  
To those who thus begin it;  
And all the needless grievances  
Brought on by borrowed troubles,  
Would prove as certainly they are,  
A mass of empty bubbles!

### The Kennebec Sloop and the English Cruisers.

A TALE OF THE LAST WAR.

BY FRANK J. H. DORRANCE.

The river Kennebec, in Maine, is without a rival in New England, either for its historic associations, or the beauty of its natural scenery. It rises among the pines of the Highlands that form the northeast boundary line between the U. States and Canada, and after flowing through a romantic region for many leagues, enters a valley of surpassing beauty, through which it meanders between level intervals of the richest verdure. The waters of this river are remarkable for their limpid transparency, while in a body their appearance is nearly black. The hills that rise on either shore are bold and nobly wooded; and here and there frown above the silently gliding wave, dark granite precipices, clad with moss and the graceful wreaths of the mountain vine whose beauty is ever verdant. Falls and rapids, characterized by wildness and even sublimity, at intervals break the dark rolling tide of this beautiful river, and with their roar awaken the echoes of the forest-clad hills.

At the period of our story, which was near the close of the last war, two British armed vessels had been cruising off the mouth of the river for some days, occasionally running close in with the fort so as to draw its fire and then tacking and standing seaward again. One of these vessels was a sloop-of-war, and the other a brig of sixteen guns. They were effectually blockading the river, and for some time no vessel had either come in or gone out. Every thing was brought to, even to the small fishing boat, and the strictest vigilance was maintained from the very first day of their arrival on the coast.

One morning in June, just as the sun was rising from the sea, flinging his fiery spears far across the sparkling waves, kindling up every object on which they lit, the two English vessels were seen standing in toward the mouth of the river, under topgallant sails, with the wind free on the starboard quarter. They were about half a mile apart, their courses converging to a point. This point was a small Kennebec sloop, hugging the land and endeavoring to make the entrance of the river. Her broad main-sail was flung to the wind like a great white wing, and she was sweeping along across the water like a gull flying before a storm. She had been discovered by the cruisers only a few minutes before, when they tacked together and pressed after her to intercept her, making sail as they went. Fifteen minutes more of the obscurity of morning and the adventurous sloop would have got into the river, and under the guns of the fort unseen, or seen too late to be cut off.

It was a beautiful sight to behold three vessels in motion; one small, unarmed, and with but three sails to help her flight, bounding along close under the land; the others tall, frowning with batteries and covered with canvass from deck to truck.

The sloop was two miles in shore of the cruisers, and about the same distance westward of the mouth of the harbor, being, when discovered, just stealing around Cape Small Point. She had, therefore, the same distance

to run to gain shelter, that her pursuers had to come up with her present position.

The cruisers stood on for about five minutes after tacking in the same converging lines, when the corvette signaled the brig, which immediately luffed and bore up four points to the eastward, while the former kept her first course. The object had in view by this manoeuvre of the brig, it was plainly evident to the fishermen who, from the rocks on which their huts were perched, were watching with interest the pursuing and pursued, was to intercept her; for they had quickly discovered that a direct chase would be ineffectual as the sloop showed herself to be a very fast sailer. So the brig stood straight towards the mouth, hoping to reach it in advance of the sloop, while the sloop-of-war kept on to capture her if she should turn back and attempt to run into Harpswell or Portland.

"We shall be tuk, darned if we won't Deacon," coolly remarked a tall, ungainly youth of nineteen, who, with a dipper fastened to a ten foot handle, was bailing up water from the sea and throwing it over the main-sail of the sloop, to swell the threads of the canvass and make it better hold the wind.

As he spoke he paused in his work, leaned upon his long dipper handle, and shutting one eye, took a deliberate survey of the two cruisers.

"Not so long as two timbers of the Polly Ann hold together," said 'Siah,' responded the Deacon, who grasped the helm, and who with one eye ahead and the other watching the enemy, directed the course of his little vessel toward the shelter he sought. "If we'd only had another ten minnits afore sunup, we'd got in. But the day ain't goin' to stop for any man, an' I don't spect it to. All we must do is to keep the Polly out o' the hands of the Britishers, now they've got their eye on us. Wet the sails, 'Siah! keep wettin' 'em!"

"I guess they know what we've got aboard, Deacon," said 'Siah, as he cast a shower of spray over the mainsail. "They seem to take all fired trouble to ketch us. See how Polly jumps! The way she tosses water with her bows, I won't have to wet her jib; she does that herself! If we don't get in the river, and them chaps overhaul us, what in natur's to be done, Deacon?"

"It won't do to let 'em capture the six big guns, an' two barrels o' powder, an' tun o' shot that we've got for the fort, that's a fact," 'Siah,' said, very decidedly, Captain, or rather "Deacon" Paul Butterfield, who both owned and commanded the Polly, which had been a few days before engaged by the government agent in Boston to convey armament and amunition to Fort Hunnewell.—This enterprize the Deacon—for he was a lawful Deacon in his own town, which was Hallowell, forty miles up the river—had cheerfully undertaken, assuring the agent he could get the Polly Ann into the river safely, in spite of the cruisers. Shrewd, bold and cool, the Deacon saw that by running only in the night, and hugging the shore he should probably be able to get into the Kennebec undiscovered, especially as the cruisers used to stand off shore at night a league or two for an offing, and run in again at sunrise. The agent felt that a small vessel, with so skillful a captain as Deacon Butterfield, would be as likely to get into the river as a large one, if not more so, and gave him the commission. For the sum of two hundred and fifty dollars, the deacon had bargained to take the cannon and the munitions to the Kennebec, and also he bound himself, if there were danger of his being captured, to scuttle the sloop and sink her. We now see him thus far in the progress of his enterprize.

The cannon were long battery thirty-two's, six in number, and were laid athwart ships, side by side, upon deck. The shot were piled forward, and in the fore-castle was stowed the powder, in casks, and securely protected under canvass; tarpaulins also covered the guns.

"If we can only hold out ten minutes more," 'Siah,' said the Deacon to his mate, "I don't fear them are two cruisers a stick! One or 'em you see has luffed to try and cut us o'. If 'twant for this plaguey heavy iron we've got in her, I'd show the enemy how to make a keel cut blue water through! But we must get in Lot," he added, turning to a rugged old man, who looked like a weather-beaten fisherman, who comprised all his crew, and was now engaged in tending the main-sheet, the slack of which he held in his iron

flat. "It's got in safely, Deacon, answered Lot Bissel, gruffly, "and got two hundred and fifty dollars, or it's sink the sloop, and no insurance!"

"That's a fact, Mr. Bissel," responded the Yankee skipper, with emphasis; and shifting his tobacco from his larboard to his starboard cheek, he glanced under the main-boom to see how the fort and shore lay, and then hove his eye to windward and took with it deliberate inspection of the enemy.

"Give a small pull aft on the main sheet, Mr. Bissel. 'Siah, haul aft the jib a bit!" "The Britisher is smoking his pipe!" added the skipper, quietly, as he saw a jet of smoke belched from the bow of the sloop-of-war.—He had hardly got the words out of his mouth, when the boom of a gun reached his ears, and simultaneously a shot passed whizzing over their heads.

"Don't stand that are!" said 'Siah, in a very determined tone, which singularly contrasted with his awkward rustic exterior.—"Give me leave, Deacon and I'll give 'em a shot back: darn me if I don't!"

"Your gun won't scare 'em, 'Siah. Ease off the main sheet, Lot. Be ready to dodge, for I guess ther'll be another one o' them junks o' iron this way. They ain't no pilot, or they wouldn't keep so near porpoise rock ledge!"

Cool and steady the skipper stood at his post, and directed the course of his little craft. All at once he gave a loud hurrah! The sloop-of-war had struck, under full sail, upon a rock, bare at low water, known as porpoise ledge, and every thing was taken aback, while her main-royal mast and yard went over the side.

"That's for not taking a pilot on a strange coast," said the skipper, dryly, while his keen little eyes fairly glistened with pleasure; but he made no further demonstrations of joy; for after taking a second glance at the sloop-of-war, and seeing that matters on board of her were in too much confusion for them to trouble themselves further about him, he gave his whole attention to the brig, which was about a mile and a half from him in a straight line, and about equally distant from the entrance to the river.

Upon seeing the accident that had occurred to her consort, she bore down a little and hoisted a signal. It was responded to on board the sloop, when the brig resumed her course.

"The sloop-of-war, I suppose, says she don't want any aid; so the brig is left at liberty to intercept us," said the skipper.

"It looks, too, as if she would be likely to get to the entrance as soon as the Polly; and then I guess its all up with us. But I don't give up so long as a timber hangs to her, or I can have a limb to hold on to the tiller by! But what in natur' are you doin' there, 'Siah?"

Well might the Deacon ask this question. The ambitious young Kennebecer had brought from the fore-castle a keg of powder, knocked in the head with a handspike, and was now tying some half peck of it up in a bandanna handkerchief, which he had taken from his neck.

"Doin'?" I'm goin to give 'em a gun, darn'd if I ain't. If these here guns is got to go to Davy's locker, I'll get one fire out on 'em first, I guess!"

As 'Siah spoke, he threw down a moveable section of the bulwark amidships, leaving an open space to the sea, before the muzzle of one of them, began to ram it down with a handspike.

"What on airth is the critter at?" cried the Deacon.

'Siah made no reply; but having ramed the cartridge home, he rolled a thirty-two pound shot towards it, and giving it a lift, shoved it into the muzzle after the powder.

"Now for primin' her; and then I guess if I don't give 'em a Fourth o' July salute, they never heard one!"

As he spoke, he poured a handful of powder upon the vent, and then jumping to the caboose, caught up a lighted pine knot, and waiving it to keep it bright, approached the gun.

"Stop 'Siah, stop!" shouted the skipper at the top of his voice; "you'll blow the Polly Ann to Jerico if you fire that are gun aboard on her?"

"I don't calculate I'll be tuk pris'ner by the Britishers, Deacon, and be put in Dartmoor, I guess. I dont mean to fire jist yet, but take a chance for a good aim, and then give 'em saltpetre!"

"It'll shake ev'ry bone out o' the Polly!" said the captain in alarm.

As he spoke, the brig, now within a mile distance, fired a shot across her bows.

"That means leave to, Lot," said the skipper, 'Siah, put cut that pine knot!"

"I mean to, by'm by, Deacon! Wait till I git a shot at 'em! I ain't a feared o' hurtin' the sloop a bit! You just yaw a little bit and bring the muzzle o' my artillery piece right against the brig, and if I don't show 'em how a Yankee gun can speak, I don't never want to see the inside o' Kennebec river agin!"

A second gun came from the brig, and the shot passed within ten feet of the Deacon's head, made a rent a fathom long in his mainsail, and the shock caused his peak halcyons to part, and let the peak of his mainsail down. This caused the sloop to fall off a point or two, and while the skipper, unflinching and with a quiet look, was trying to bring her to the wind again, 'Siah, taking advantage of a moment as she swung, in which his loaded gun bore upon the brig, instantly applied the torch to the vent. The roar, the flame, and concussion were terrific.

The little vessel reeled under the recoil of the vast gun, till the waves poured in over her bows and stern. The skipper and Lot were laid flat upon the deck, while 'Siah found himself hanging by the heels in the lee shrouds.

For a few moments the Deacon thought his vessel would go down, she wallowed and plunged so—but she soon steadied herself, though with her deck flooded, her jibs blown away, and her windlass unshipped.

"I guess if they got the shot, it'll settle 'em," said 'Siah, as he dropped feet first off the rigging, into which he had been blown, upon deck, and tried to see through the smoke.

"You ought to be settled, you 'tarnal critter!" cried the Deacon, enraged; "you like to have sunk her, darn ye!"

"Don't swear, Deacon! I want to see if the brig got it!"

"Got it, you fool! I guess you'll get it if I ever see shore agin!"

As the smoke slowly rolled away, the brig was discovered, no longer standing but knocking about at the mercy of the waves and winds, her foremast gone by the board, and dragging over the side with all its yards and sails. The shot had cut off her mast within ten feet of the deck!

'Siah was perfectly confounded; but manifested no surprise, while the Deacon and Lot set up a loud hurrah of triumph.

"Why, what is the matter? Why don't you hallo?" said the Deacon, taking breath.

"Coz 'tain't nothin' more'n I meant to do!" replied 'Siah, with inimitable sang froid; "I ain't surprised, if you be, Deacon."

In twenty minutes more, the sloop, with her valuable cargo, was safely sheltered under the guns of Fort Hunnewell. The sloop-of-war lay upon the rock till the next tide, and the brig lay by her rigging a jury-mast. Before sunset, both vessels made sail and steered eastward, on the way towards Halifax, to repair damages. Thus the blockade was raised, greatly to the relief of the commerce of the river.

'Siah' is now one of the most popular of our Eastern steamboat captains.

**HARD WORK.**—It's hard work to go up hill without leaning forward—and it's hard work for a 'neutral' editor to speak of politics without leaning one way or the other.

It's hard work to make a dinner of grape shot, unless they are well boiled; and it's hard work to digest a fool's argument unless it be soaked in something like reason.

It's hard work to look at the sun without winking; and it's hard work to look at some girls without feeling inclined to wink.

It's hard work to do nothing, and have much of it on hand; and it's hard work to collect a debt of one who says, 'I'll pay it to-morrow.'

It's hard work to squeeze cider out of a brickbat; and it's hard work to scratch out ideas for a paragraph after being on a spree for twenty-four hours.

It's hard work to hold lightning by the tail; and it's hard work to stem the torrent of a woman's will.

It's hard work to refuse a good offer; and it's harder still to be compelled to accept a bad one.

It's hard work for many people to live; and doubly hard for some to die.