

Stratemeyer Edward

Fighting in Cuban Waters: or, Under Schley on the Brooklyn



Edward Stratemeyer

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«Public Domain»

Stratemeyer E.

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PREFACE

"Fighting in Cuban Waters," although a complete story in itself, forms the third volume of the "Old Glory Series," tales depicting the various campaigns in our late war with Spain.

In "Under Dewey at Manila" we followed Larry Russell's adventures on board of the flagship *Olympia* during the memorable contest off Cavite; in "A Young Volunteer in Cuba" we marched and fought with Ben Russell in that notable campaign leading up to the surrender of Santiago; and in the present volume are narrated the haps and mishaps of Walter Russell, who joins Commodore Schley's flagship, the *Brooklyn*, and sails with the Flying Squadron from Hampton Roads to Key West, thence to Cienfuegos, and at last succeeds in "bottling up" Admiral Cervera's fleet in Santiago Bay. The long blockade and the various bombardments are described, and then follow the particulars of that masterly battle on the part of the North Atlantic Squadron which led to the total destruction of the Spanish warships.

Walter Russell's bravery may seem overdrawn, but such is far from being a fact. That our sailors were heroes in those days we have but to remember the sinking of the *Merrimac*, the *Winslow* affair, and a score of deeds of equal daring. "The hour makes the man," and the opportunity likewise makes the hero. Walter was brave, but he was no more so than hundreds of others who stood ready to lay down their lives in the cause of humanity and for the honor of Old Glory. Like his two brothers, his religious belief was of the practical kind, and he went into battle convinced that so long as he did his duty according to the dictates of his conscience, an all-wise and all-powerful Providence would guide him and watch over him.

The author cannot refrain from saying a word about the historical portions of the present work. They have been gleaned from the best available authorities, including the reports of Admiral Sampson, Commodore Schley, and a number of captains who took part in the contest; also the personal narratives of one man who was on board the *Merrimac* at the time that craft was sunk, and of a number who have made the *Brooklyn* their home for several years past, and who will probably remain on the pride of the Flying Squadron for some time to come.

In presenting this third volume, the author begs to thank both critics and the public for the cordial reception accorded to the previous volumes, and trusts that the present story will meet with equal commendation.

EDWARD STRATEMEYER.

Newark, N.J.,

March 1, 1899.

CHAPTER I

WALTER DETERMINES TO ENTER THE NAVY

"Well, Walter, I suppose the newspapers are going like hot cakes this morning."

"They are, Mr. Newell. Everybody wants the news. I ran out of 'Globes' and 'Heralds' before seven o'clock, and sent Dan down for fifty more of each."

"That was right. It's a windfall for us newsdealers, as well as a glorious victory to match. It makes me think of my old war days, when I was aboard of the *Carondelet* under Captain Walke. We didn't sink so many ships as Dewey has at Manila, but we sank some, and smashed many a shore battery in the bargain, along the banks of the Mississippi. What does that extra have to say?" and Phil Newell, the one-legged civil-war naval veteran, who was also proprietor of the news-stand, took the sheet which Walter Russell, his clerk, handed out.

"There is not much additional news as yet," answered Walter. "One of the sensational papers has it that Dewey is now bombarding Manila, but the news is not confirmed. But it is true that our squadron sunk every one of the Spanish warships, – and that, I reckon, is enough for one victory."

"True, my lad, true; but there is nothing like keeping at 'em, when you have 'em on the run. That is the way we did down South. Perhaps Dewey is waiting for additional instructions from Washington. I hope he didn't suffer much of a loss. Some papers say he came off scot free, but that seems too good to be true."

"The news makes me feel more than ever like enlisting," continued the boy, after a pause, during which he served out half a dozen newspapers to as many customers. "What a glorious thing it must be to fight like that and come out on top!"

"Glorious doesn't express it, Walter. Why, if it wasn't for this game leg of mine, and my age being against me, I'd go over to the navy-yard to-day and reënlister, keelhaul me if I wouldn't!"

"But what of the stand?"

"The stand could take care of itself – until the Dons were given the thrashing they deserve for making the Cubans suffer beyond all reason." Phil Newell threw back his head and gave a laugh. "That puts me in mind of something that happened when the Civil War started. A young lawyer in New York locked up his office and pasted a notice on his door: 'Gone to the front. Will be back when the war is over.' I'd have to put up something similar, wouldn't I?"

"I wish you and I could go together, Mr. Newell."

"So do I, Walter, but I'm over sixty now, and they want young blood. By the way, what of that brother of yours down in New York?"

"Ben has joined the militia of that State, and is now at Camp Black waiting to be sworn into the United States service. I wish he had come on to Boston."

"Well, Uncle Sam wants soldiers as well as sailors, or he wouldn't call for a hundred and twenty-five thousand volunteers. But give me the deck or gun-room of a warship every time. Nothing finer in the world. I served for nearly ten years, and I know."

Walter smiled, and then waited on several additional customers. "My youngest brother, Larry, takes to the ocean," he answered. "He is out on the Pacific now, somewhere between the Hawaiian Islands and Hong Kong. He was always crazy for a boat when we were at home in Buffalo together, and spent all his spare time on Lake Erie."

"Going to Hong Kong, eh? That's not so far from the Philippines. It is a pity he is not with Commodore Dewey. It would be a feather in his cap when he got home."

A steady stream of customers for five minutes broke off the conversation at this point, and throwing down his newspaper, Phil Newell – he never wanted to be called Philip – entered the

stand to help his young assistant. The stand was situated in the heart of Boston, just outside of one of the leading hotels, and trade at this hour in the morning, eight o'clock, was always brisk.

When there came a lull later on, Walter turned again to his employer. "Mr. Newell, what if I do enlist? Can you spare me?" he questioned.

"What! do you really mean it, Walter?"

"I do, sir. As you know, I've been thinking the matter over ever since this war with Spain started."

"But you've got to have your guardian's consent, or they won't take you."

"I've got it in my pocket now. I wrote to him last week, and he answered that, as Ben had already joined the soldiers, I could do as I pleased, but I mustn't blame him if I was killed."

"Which you wouldn't be likely to do, if you were killed dead, so to speak," laughed Phil Newell. Then he slapped Walter on the back, for twenty odd years on land had not taken his "sea-dog" manners from him. "Enlist, my lad, enlist by all means, if you feel it your duty. Of course I don't like to lose such a handy clerk, but Uncle Sam can have you and welcome."

"Didn't you say there was a young man named Gimpwell looking for this position?"

"Yes, and he wants it badly, for he has a sick sister to support."

"Has he any experience?"

"Oh, yes; he tended a railroad stand for several years."

"Then, perhaps you could break him in without much trouble – if I went away."

"Do you want to go at once?"

"If I am to enlist, then it seems to me the quicker the better. I see by the papers that some of our warships are still at Hampton Roads and Key West, but there is no telling when they will start for Cuban waters. Besides, I've been thinking that if I could manage it, I should like to get aboard of the *Brooklyn*, the flagship of Commodore Schley's Flying Squadron, which is now at Hampton Roads awaiting orders."

"It's not so easy to pick your ship, my lad. However, if you wish, you can go over to the navy-yard this afternoon and see what you can do, – and I'll go along and leave Dan in charge here," concluded Phil Newell.

Walter Russell was one of three brothers, of whom Ben was the eldest and Larry the youngest. Their home had been in Buffalo, where at the death of their mother, a widow, they had been turned over to the care of their step-uncle, Mr. Job Dowling, an eccentric old bachelor, whose prime object in life was to hoard up money.

In the two volumes previous to this, entitled respectively, "Under Dewey at Manila," and "A Young Volunteer in Cuba," I related how the boys found it impossible to remain under Job Dowling's roof, and how they ran away, each to seek fortune as he might find it. Larry drifted first to San Francisco and then to Honolulu, the principal city of the Hawaiian Islands, where he shipped on a vessel bound for Hong Kong. From this ship he was cast overboard with a Yankee friend named Luke Striker, and both were picked up by the flagship *Olympia* of the Asiatic Squadron and taken to Manila Bay, there to serve most gallantly under the naval commander whose name has since become a household word everywhere. As Walter had intimated, Larry was a sailor by nature, and it was likely that he would follow the sea as long as he lived.

Ben and Walter had gone eastward, but at Middletown, in New York State, they had separated, Walter to drift to Boston, and Ben to make his way to New York. At the latter city the eldest of the Russell brothers had secured employment in a hardware establishment, but this place was burned out, and then Ben enlisted in the 71st Regiment of New York, while his intimate friend, Gilbert Pennington, joined Roosevelt's Rough Riders, and both went to Cuba, there to fight valorously in that campaign which led to the surrender of Santiago and caused Spain to sue for peace.

As Walter had written to Larry, the recital of the former's adventures in getting from Middletown to Boston would fill a volume. He had stolen a ride on the cars from Middletown to

Albany, and during this wild trip his hat blew off and was not recovered. He was put off the train just outside of the capital city; and, stopping at a farmhouse to inquire the way, had his clothing torn by a bull-dog that was more than anxious to get at what was beneath the garments. Walter hardly knew what to do, when a tramp put in an appearance, and sent a well-directed stone at the dog's head, causing the beast to slink away. The tramp introduced himself as Raymond Cass, a bricklayer, out of luck, and bound for Boston on foot. He proposed that they journey together, and Walter rather hesitatingly consented. They moved eastward in company for two days, when, on awakening one morning, Walter found Raymond Cass missing. The boy's coat was also gone, and with it his entire capital, – forty-seven cents.

The pair had made their bed in the haymow of a large barn, and while Walter was searching for the tramp, the owner of the place came up and demanded to know what the youth was doing on his premises. Walter's tale was soon told, and Farmer Hardell agreed to give him a week's work in his dairy, one of the dairymen being sick. For this Walter received four dollars, and an old hat and a coat in addition.

Leaving Cornberry, the name of the hamlet, Walter had struck out once more for Boston, but this time steering clear of all tramps, of the Raymond Cass type or otherwise. He was sparing of his money, and the first day out earned his dinner and a packed-up lunch for supper, by putting in two panes of glass for an old lady who had waited for a week for a travelling glazier to come around and do the job. In addition to this, the lad worked for two days at a village blacksmith's establishment during the absence of the regular helper who had gone to his aunt's funeral in another place, and also found a regular position with a florist, who had a number of large greenhouses up the Charles River. Walter was not used to working where there was so much glass, and on the third day he allowed a step-ladder he was using to slip. The ladder crashed through several hot-bed frames, and poor Walter was discharged on the spot, without a cent of pay.

The boy's next move had been to the river, where he had obtained a position on a freight steamboat. His duty was to truck freight on and off, and the work blistered his hands and gave him many a backache. But he stuck to it for two weeks, thereby earning fourteen dollars, and with this capital entered Boston.

Walter had not expected an easy time finding a situation in the Hub, but neither had he anticipated the repeated failures that one after another stared him in the face. For over a week he tramped up and down, without so much as a "smell of an opening," as he afterwards wrote to his brothers. In the meanwhile his money diminished rapidly, until more than two-thirds of it was gone.

A deed of kindness had obtained for him the position with Phil Newell. Chancing to walk along School Street one afternoon, he had seen two boys beating a small boy unmercifully. The small boy had turned into Province Street, and the big boys had followed, and here they had thrown the little fellow down, and were on the point of kicking him, when Walter rushed up and flung both back. "You brutes, to attack such a small boy!" he had cried. "Clear out, or I'll call a policeman, and have you both locked up."

"We told him to keep back at de newspaper office," growled one of the big fellows. "Do it again, Dan Brown, and we'll give it to you worse," and then as Walter advanced once more, both took to their heels and disappeared.

Dan Brown had been very grateful, and questionings had elicited the information that the lad worked for Phil Newell, as a paper carrier and to do errands. "His regular clerk, Dick Borden, left yesterday," Dan had continued; "perhaps you can get the job." And Walter had lost no time in following the small youth to Newell's place of business. Here Dan's story was told, and the lad put in a good word for Walter, with the result that the youth was taken for a week on trial. How well Walter pleased the old naval veteran we have already seen. He had now occupied the place as head clerk for nearly two months, and his salary had been increased from four dollars a week

to six. He boarded with Dan's mother, in a little suite of rooms on a modest side street, not a great distance from the Common.

It must not be supposed that Job Dowling, who held a good deal of money in trust for the boys, had allowed them to run off without making an effort to bring them back. Larry was out of his reach, but Ben and Walter were not, and the miserly man had descended upon Ben in New York and tried his best to "make things warm," as Ben had mentioned in a letter to Larry. But Job Dowling had overreached himself by attempting to sell a watch and some jewelry which had belonged originally to Mr. and Mrs. Russell, heirlooms which were not to be disposed of under any circumstances. On his trip to New York after Ben, the articles had been stolen from him at the Post-office – something that had so frightened Job Dowling that he had consented to Ben's enlisting in the army with scarcely a murmur, fearful the youth might otherwise have him brought to book for what had happened. A vigorous search had been made for the thief, but he was not found. Later on, when Ben was in the army, Job Dowling received information that caused him to reach the conclusion that the thief had gone to Boston. The miserly guardian of the boys returned to his home in Buffalo and, as much worried as ever, wrote to Walter to keep an eye open for the missing property. Walter did as requested, but in such a large place as the Hub the youth had little hope of ever seeing the precious heirlooms again.

CHAPTER II

A VISIT TO THE NAVY-YARD

There was a rush of business at the news-stand between twelve and one o'clock, but shortly after one this died away, and inside of half an hour Phil Newell told Walter that they might be on their way – "If you are bound to enlist in Uncle Sam's service," he added.

Walter made sure that the paper containing Job Dowling's permission for him to enter the navy was safe in his coat pocket, and then announced his readiness to depart. The owner of the stand called up Dan Brown and gave him a few directions, and in another minute Newell and Walter had boarded a Charlestown car and were off.

"I haven't been over to the navy-yard for several years," remarked Phil Newell, as they rode along. "I used to know several of the boys that were there, but they've grown too old for the service. I reckon the yard is a busy place these days."

And a busy place it proved to be as they turned into Chelsea Street, and moved along the solid granite wall which separates the yard from the public thoroughfare. From beyond came the creaking of hoists, and the ringing of countless hammers and anvils, for the government employees were hard at work, fitting out a warship or two and converting several private vessels into naval craft.

"I don't know if I'm just right about this," went on Phil Newell, as they headed for one of the numerous buildings near the wall, after being passed by a guard. "It may be that they want to keep strangers out, now the war is on, and you'll have to go elsewhere to sign articles. But I know old Caleb Walton is here, and he'll tell me all he can, and set us straight."

Walter's heart beat violently, for he began to realize that the step he was about to take was a serious one. Who knew but that, after getting into the navy, he might be sent to the Philippines or to the coast of Spain? Already there was some talk of carrying the war into the enemy's home waters.

"But I don't care," he said to himself. "If Larry can ship for Hong Kong, I guess I'm safe in shipping to anywhere. But I do hope I can get on the *Brooklyn*, or on some other ship of the Flying Squadron."

"Hi, there, Phil Newell! What brought you here, you old landlubber?" came a cry from their left, and Phil Newell turned as swiftly as his wooden leg permitted, to find himself confronted by the very individual he had started out to find.

"Caleb Walton!" he ejaculated joyfully, and held out his bronzed hand. "I just came in to see you. Here is a young friend of mine who wants to sign articles under Uncle Sam. Do you think you can take him in?"

"Take him in?" Caleb Walton held out his hand, brown and as tough as a piece of leather. "Sure we can take him in, if he's sound, – and glad to get him." He gave Walter's hand a grip that made every bone crack. "So you want to enlist, eh? Go right over to yonder office, and they'll soon put you through a course of sprouts," and he laughed good-naturedly.

"But, hold on, Caleb," interposed Newell, as the seaman was about to show Walter the way. "He don't want to sign articles and go just anywhere. He would like to get aboard the *Brooklyn*."

"That is what half of all who come here want," answered Caleb Walton. "I reckon they think Commodore Schley's Flying Squadron is going to settle the whole war by going after that Spanish fleet said to be at Cadiz, or thereabouts. Well, the lad better come with me. I belong to the *Brooklyn* now."

"You!" came from both Phil Newell and Walter simultaneously.

"I thought you were stationed here?" continued the wooden-legged man.

"I was, but I've just received orders to join the *Brooklyn* and bring at least fifteen men with me. It seems they are short-handed and can't get the men at Norfolk. If this lad wants to go with me, now is his chance. What's his handle?"

"My name is Walter Russell, sir. But – but are you going to join the *Brooklyn* at once?" stammered Walter, never having dreamed that he would be taken away on the spot.

"Uncle Sam doesn't wait long when he picks his man," replied the old gunner, for such Caleb Walton was. "Orders were to leave Boston to-night, but I fancy we'll be kept until to-morrow night, for we are shy three men, not counting you. Come on." And he led the way to the building he had previously pointed out.

"He's all right, and you're in luck," whispered Phil Newell, when he got the chance. "Cotton to Caleb Walton, and you'll have a friend worth the making." How true were Newell's words the chapters to follow will prove.

The building to which Caleb Walton led them was one in which were situated the main business offices of the yard. This was now a busy place, and they had to fairly push their way through the crowd of seamen, officers, and workmen, who kept coming and going, on one errand or another. Several telephones were ringing, and from a corner came the steady click-click of a telegraph sounder.

"Uncle Sam has his shirt sleeves rolled up and is pitching in," whispered Caleb Walton. "Here we are. Captain Line, here is another man for my party."

"He's rather a boy," rejoined Captain Line, as he gave Walter a searching glance. "Is your father with you?"

"My father is dead," answered Walter, softly. "Here is my guardian's consent." And he handed over the sheet.

"That seems to be correct. Walton, take him over to the examination room. And hurry up, for I must catch the four-fifty train for New York."

The "course of sprouts" had begun, and almost before he knew it, Walter had been passed upon as able-bodied. Time was pressing, and in a quarter of an hour the youth received a slip of paper signed and sealed by Captain Line.

"That is good for your passage to Fortress Monroe," he said. "You will make the journey in company with Walton and a number of others. When you get there you will report to Lieutenant Lee, who will have you transferred to the *Brooklyn*, – unless the flagship has already sailed, in which case you will be assigned to some other ship."

"And when do I start, sir?"

"Walton will have the orders inside of the next hour. Go with him, and he will tell you what to do." Then came a bang of the curtain to a roller-top desk, a shoving back of a revolving chair, and in a twinkling Captain Line had disappeared from view. Truly, Uncle Sam and all under him were rushing things.

Walter wished very much to visit the dry dock and the great west basin, filled as both were with vessels in various stages of construction, alteration, or repair, but he felt if he was to leave that night he must be getting back to Boston and to his boarding-house, to pack his "ditty box," as Phil Newell had dubbed his valise, for all such receptacles are called ditty boxes in the navy.

"All right, Walter, you go ahead," said Newell. "I'll stay with Caleb and let you know just when you are to leave, so you won't be left behind." And in a moment more the youth had run out of the navy-yard and was on board of another car. He made one transfer, and in less than half an hour entered Mrs. Brown's home.

"Why, Mr. Russell, what brings you?" queried Dan's mother, surprised at his appearance, for he rarely showed himself during the day excepting at the dinner and the supper hours.

"I've enlisted, Mrs. Brown, and I'm to get off to-night or to-morrow," he answered. "You can let Mr. Keefe have my room now. I'm glad that it won't be left empty on your hands."

"So am I, Mr. Russell, for a poor widow can't afford to have a room vacant long," replied Mrs. Brown, with a faint smile. "So you have really entered the navy? Well, I wish you all the luck in the world, and I hope you will come out of the war a – a – commodore, or something like that." And she wrung his hand.

Walter's belongings were few, and soon packed away in his valise. Then he ran downstairs again and bid Mrs. Brown good-by and settled up with her. "I'll write to you and Dan some time," he said, on parting.

"Well, did you make it?" was Dan's question, when Walter appeared at the news-stand.

"I did, Dan." And the protégé of Uncle Sam told his youthful friend the particulars.

"I'm glad you got on the *Brooklyn*," said Dan, with a shake of his curly head. "She's going to lick the Spaniards out of their boots, see if she ain't!" And his earnestness made Walter laugh. Dan was but eleven, yet he read the newspapers as closely as do many grown folks.

The afternoon papers were now coming in and trade picked up, so that Walter had to help behind the counter. While he was at work a tall, thin boy sauntered up and gazed at him doubtfully.

"That's George Gimpwell," whispered Dan. "Didn't the boss say something about hiring him?"

"He did, Dan. Call him over."

The errand boy did so. "Russell wants to see you," he explained.

"I believe you were speaking to Mr. Newell about this situation," began Walter.

"Well – er – I asked him if he had any opening. I want work the worst way," sighed George Gimpwell. "Of course, I don't want to do you out of your job."

"That's all right; I've just enlisted in the navy," replied Walter, and he could not help but feel proud over the words. "So if you want this situation, you had best remain around here until Mr. Newell gets back."

"I will." George Gimpwell's face brightened. "So you've enlisted? I wanted to do that, but I was too tall for my weight, so they told me."

"So you've enlisted?" broke in a gentleman standing by. "Glad to hear it, young man; it does you credit." And buying a magazine, he caught Walter by the hand and wished him well. Soon it became noised around on the block that Newell's clerk was going to join the *Brooklyn*, and half a dozen, including the clerk of the hotel, came out to see him about it. In those days, anybody connected with our army or navy was quite a hero, and somebody to be looked up to, people unconsciously told themselves.

It was after seven o'clock, and Walter was wondering if anything unusual had delayed his employer, when Phil Newell hove into appearance. "It's all right, my lad, don't worry," he said at once. "You don't leave until to-morrow noon. You are to meet Caleb Walton at the New York and New England railroad depot at exactly eleven o'clock, and all of the others of the crowd are to be there too. The government wants to get you down to Norfolk as soon as it can, and will, consequently, send you by rail instead of by water."

"Hurrah! that will make a jolly trip," cried Walter. "If only I could stop off at New York, take a run out to Camp Black, and see Ben."

"I doubt if you'll be given time to stop anywhere, time seems to be so precious. Caleb Walton thinks the Flying Squadron will up anchors before another week is out."

"Well, I don't care how quickly they leave – after I am on board," laughed the youth, much relieved that nothing had occurred whereby he had been left behind.

George Gimpwell now came up again, and soon he was engaged to take Walter's place. Phil Newell promised him five dollars weekly, and as Walter had gotten six, the good-hearted newsdealer put the extra dollar on Dan's salary, much to that lad's delight.

Eight o'clock found Walter at the stand alone, and it was then that he penned the letter mailed to Ben, as mentioned in a previous volume, stating he had enlisted and was making a strong "pull"

to get on the *Brooklyn*. "I won't say I am on her until it's a fact," he thought, as he sealed up the communication, stamped it, and placed it in the corner letter-box.

The stand was located in a niche of the hotel, and was open only in the front, above the counter. At night this space was closed by letting down two large shutters attached to several hinges and ropes.

"I reckon this is the last time I'll put these shutters down," thought Walter, as he brought one down on the run. He was about to drop the second, when a burly man, rather shabbily dressed, sauntered up, and asked for one of the weekly sporting papers.

"I'm thinking of going to the theatre," he said, somewhat unsteadily, and now Walter learned by a whiff of his breath that he had been drinking. "What's the best variety show in town?"

"I'll give it up," said the youth, laughingly. "I haven't been to a show since I came to Boston, and that's a number of weeks ago."

"Humph! What do you do with yourself nights?"

"I'm here up to eight or half past, and after that I either go home or to one of the public reading rooms, or to the Young Men's Christian Association Hall."

"Humph! that must be dead slow." The man lurched heavily against the counter. "What time is it now?"

"About half past eight. I haven't any watch, so I can't tell you exactly."

"I've got a watch right here," mumbled the newcomer, still leaning heavily on the counter. "Here it is. But your light is so low I can't see the hands. Turn it up."

Walter obligingly complied, and the fellow tried again to see the time, but failed. "Strike a match," he went on; "I ain't going to no theatre if it's as late as you say it is."

Walter did not like the man's manner, but not caring to enter into any dispute, he lit a match as requested, and held it down close to the timepiece, which lay in the man's open palm.

"Only eight-twenty," grumbled the fellow, slowly. "I knew you was off. You don't – What's up?" And suddenly he straightened himself and stared at Walter.

"I want to know where you got that watch," demanded the youth, excitedly.

"That watch?" The man fell back a pace. "What do you – ahem – why do you ask that question, boy?"

"Because I know that watch," was Walter's ready reply. "It was stolen from my uncle in New York only a few weeks ago!"

"Was it?" The man's face changed color. "You – you're mistaken, boy," he faltered, and fell back still further, and then, as Walter leaped over the counter, he took to his heels and started down the half-deserted street at the best speed at his command.

CHAPTER III

A CHASE AND ITS RESULT

Walter knew that watch, which had belonged first to his father and then his mother, quite well, but if there was anything needed to convince him that there was no mistake in the identification, it was furnished by the hasty and unceremonious manner in which the partly intoxicated wearer was endeavoring to quit the scene.

"If he was honest, he wouldn't run!" thought the youth. "Ten to one he's the thief who took the grip from Uncle Job." He started after the fleeing one. "Come back here!" he shouted. "Stop, thief!"

But the man did not stop; instead, he tried to run the faster. But he did not turn any corners, and consequently, aided by the electric lights, Walter could see him for quite a distance ahead.

The youth ran but a few yards, then turned and clashed back to the stand. Bang! the second shutter came down with a crash, and in a trice he had the padlock secured. Then off he set, satisfied that a form in the distance was the one he wanted to overtake.

"What's the matter?" questioned a policeman on the second corner, as he clutched Walter by the arm. "What are you running for?"

"Didn't I call out to catch the thief?" answered the youth, sharply. "Let me go. If you weren't so dead slow, you'd be doing something, instead of standing there looking at the moon." And on he went again, the officer shaking his fist after him, half of the opinion that Walter was trying to joke him.

At this hour of the evening the street was far from crowded, and Walter kept the man ahead in sight with comparative ease. Four blocks were covered, when the fellow paused and looked back. Seeing he was being followed, he turned and darted into a small side street. Here were a number of warehouses and several tenements. The door to one of the latter stood open, and he lost no time in seeking the shelter of the dark hallway.

"That's the time I made a bad break," he muttered thickly. "When I came up to Boston with that stuff I reckoned I was safe. I wonder if he'll follow me to here? He had better not, unless he wants a broken head."

In the meantime, Walter had reached the corner of the side street and come to a halt. The narrow thoroughfare was but dimly lighted, and not a soul was in sight.

"He turned in here, – I am certain of that," said the boy to himself. "More than likely he is in hiding in some dark corner. I wonder if I hadn't better call an officer?"

With this intention he gazed around, but no policeman was in view, and he did not think it advisable to go back for the guardian of the peace before encountered. He entered the side street slowly and cautiously, peering into every nook and corner, and behind every bill-board, box, and barrel as he moved along.

He had just passed the tenement where the man was in hiding when the sounds of muffled voices broke upon his ears, and the front door was thrown back with a bang.

"Who are you, and what are you doing in here?" came in an unmistakable Irish voice.

"Excuse me – I – I made a mistake," was the answer; and now Walter recognized the tones of the fellow who had the watch. "I am looking for a man named Harris."

"Well, he doesn't live here, – so you had better get out."

"Will you – er – tell me who lives next door?" asked the man Walter was after, in a lower tone, evidently wishing to gain time ere leaving the building.

"A man named Casey and another named Barton live there. There ain't a Harris on the block. If you – "

"Hold him, please," burst in Walter, mounting the tenement steps. "He has a watch that was stolen from my uncle."

"Shut up, boy!" answered the man fiercely. "My watch is my own, and this is all a mistake."

"There is no mistake. Hold him, will you?"

"I've got him," came from the gloom of the hallway. "I thought he was a sneak or something by the way he was tip-toeing around here."

"You are both of you crazy. I never stole a thing in my life. Let go, both of you!" And then the man began to struggle fiercely, finally pushing the party in the hallway backward, and almost sending Walter headlong as he darted down the tenement steps and continued his flight along the side street.

As Walter went down, he made a clutch at the man's watch-chain, or rather the chain which belonged among the Russell heirlooms. He caught the top guard and the chain parted, one half remaining in the boy's hand, and the other fast to the timepiece.

"Help me catch him!" gasped the youth, as soon as he could get up. His breast had struck the edge of one of the steps, and he was momentarily winded.

"I will," answered the man who lived in the tenement. "Stop there!" he called out, and set off in pursuit, with Walter beside him. But the Irishman was old and rheumatic, and soon felt compelled to give up the chase. "I can't match ye!" he puffed, and sank down on a step to rest; and once again Walter continued the chase alone.

Had the thief, Deck Mumpers, been perfectly sober, he might have escaped with ease, for he was a good runner, and at this hour of the evening hiding-places in such a city as Boston, with its many crooked thoroughfares, were numerous. But the liquor he had imbibed had made him hazy in his mind, and he ran on and on, with hardly any object in view excepting to put distance between himself and his pursuer.

He was heading eastward, and presently reached a wharf facing the harbor and not a great distance from the Congress Street bridge. Here there was a high board fence and a slatted gate, which for some reason stood partly open. Without a second thought, he slipped through the gateway, slid the gate shut, and snapped the hanging padlock into place.

"Now he'll have a job following me," he chuckled. "I wonder what sort of a place I've struck?" And he continued on his way, among huge piles of merchandise covered with tarpaulins.

Walter had come up at his best speed and was less than a hundred feet away when the gate was closed and locked.

"You rascal!" he shouted, but Deck Mumpers paid no attention to his words. "Now what's to do?" the boy asked himself, dismally.

He came up to the gate and examined it. It was all of nine feet high, and the palings were pointed at the top. Could he scale such a barrier?

"I must do it!" he muttered, and thrust one hand through to a cross brace. He ascended with difficulty, and once slipped and ran a splinter into his wrist. But undaunted he kept on until the top was gained, then dropped to the planking of the wharf beyond.

Several arc lights, high overhead, lit up the wharf, and he ran from one pile of merchandise to another. Half the wharf was thus covered, when he suddenly came face to face with Deck Mumpers. The thief had picked up a thick bale stick, and without warning he raised this on high and brought it down with all force upon Walter's head. The boy gave a groan, threw up both hands, and dropped like a lump of lead, senseless.

"Phew! I wonder if I've finished him?" muttered the man, anxiously. "Didn't mean to hit him quite so hard. But it was his own fault – he had no right to follow me." He bent over Walter and made a hasty examination. "He's breathing, that's certain. I must get away before a watchman shows up."

He started to go, then paused and bent over Walter again. With a dexterity acquired by long practice in his peculiar profession, he turned out one pocket after another, transferring the cash and

other articles to his own clothing. Then, as Walter gave a long, deep sigh, as if about to awaken, he took to his heels once more. He was in no condition to climb the wharf fence as Walter had done, but helped himself over by the use of several boxes; and was soon a long distance away.

When Walter came to his senses and opened his eyes, the glare from a bull's-eye lantern struck him, and he saw a wharf watchman eyeing him curiously.

"What are you doing here, young fellow?" were the watchman's words.

"I – I – where is he?" questioned the youth, weakly.

"He? Who?"

"The thief – the man who struck me down?"

"I haven't seen anybody but you around here."

"A thief who has my uncle's watch came in here, and I followed him, and he struck me down with a club. When – how long is it since you found me here?"

"Several minutes ago. I thought you were drunk at first, and was going to hand you over to an officer."

"I don't drink." Walter essayed to stand up, but found himself too weak. "Gracious, my head is spinning around like a top!" he groaned.

"You must have got a pretty good rap to be knocked out like this," commented the watchman kindly. "So the man was a thief? It's a pity he wasn't the one to be knocked down. Do you know the fellow?"

"I would know him – if we ever meet again. But I fancy he won't let the grass grow under his feet, after attacking me like this."

"I'll take a run around the wharf and see if I can spot any stranger," concluded the watchman, and hurried off. Another watchman was aroused, and both made a thorough investigation, but, of course, nobody was brought to light.

By the time the search was ended, Walter felt something like himself, and arose slowly and allowed the watchmen to conduct him to their shanty at one side of the wharf. Here he bathed his face, picked the splinter from his wrist, and brushed up generally. A cup of hot coffee from one of the watchmen's cans braced him up still further.

"It must be ten o'clock, isn't it?" he asked.

"Ten o'clock!" came from the man who had found him. "I reckon that clip on the head has muddled you. It's about three o'clock in the morning."

"Three o'clock in the morning!" repeated Walter. "Then I must have been lying out there for several hours. That thief has escaped long ago." And his face fell.

"Yes, he's had plenty of time, if he did the deed as long ago as that. Did he have anything else besides your uncle's watch?"

"I don't know, but it's likely. You see my uncle came to New York from Buffalo to sell some heirlooms which were left to my brothers and myself when our folks died. The heirlooms were in a travelling-bag, and consisted of the watch and chain, two gold wedding rings, and a diamond that a grandfather of mine once picked up in Australia. My uncle left his bag standing in the post-office for a few minutes, and when he got back the grip was gone. The police hunted everywhere for the thief, but all that could be discovered was that it looked as if the rascal had come to Boston. To-night – or rather, last evening – a man came up and showed the watch, which I know only too well, as it has a little horseshoe painted on the dial plate. I tried to collar the fellow, but he ran away, and after stopping in a tenement house, he came here. Now I suppose he is miles away – perhaps out of the city altogether."

"That's so, yet there is no telling, lad. The best thing you can do is to report to the police without delay – if you are able to do it."

"Yes, I guess I am able, although my head aches a good bit, I can tell you that. I am much obliged for what you have done for me."

"Oh, that's all right – hope you get your belongings," replied the watchman, and led the way to the gate, which he unlocked. Soon Walter was on the street, and walking as rapidly as his condition permitted to the police station.

At this hour of the night he found only a sergeant and several roundsmen in charge. The sergeant listened with interest to what he had to say.

"I remember that case – it was reported to here from New York some time ago. The pawnshops were ransacked for the jewelry and the watch, but nothing was found. So you are certain you would recognize the man again if you saw him?"

"I am – unless he altered his appearance a good deal. He had a small, dark moustache, but otherwise he was clean-shaven."

"Come into the rear office and look over our album of pickpockets and sneak-thieves. That is what this fellow most likely is – and a peculiar one too. No first-class criminal would do this job as he is doing it."

"He drinks heavily – he was partly intoxicated when I met him," said Walter, as he followed the station official into a rear office.

"Then that accounts for it. A man can't be a really successful criminal unless he keeps his wits about him. Here is the album. Look it over carefully, and let me know if you see anybody that looks like your man." And he left Walter to himself and reentered the outer office, to hear the reports of the roundsmen coming in.

The book given to Walter was a thick one, filled with cards, photos, and tin-types of criminals. Under each picture was written a name, usually accompanied by several aliases, and also a number, to correspond with the same number in the criminal register.

"Gracious, but they keep pretty good track of them," thought Walter, as he turned over page after page. "Who would think all these good-looking men were wrong-doers? Some of them look a good deal more like ministers."

Walter had gone through half the book, and the photographs were beginning to confuse his already aching head, when a certain picture arrested his attention. "I've found him!" he cried out. "That's the fellow, although he is minus that moustache of his!"

"Did you call?" asked the sergeant, coming to the door.

"I've found him. This is the man. His name is given as Deck Mumpers, alias Foxy Mumpers, and Swiller Deck."

"If he is called Swiller Deck, he must drink a good deal," said the sergeant, with a laugh. "You are sure of this identification?"

"I am. But he wants a moustache put on that picture."

"We take them bare-faced if we can. This photo was taken in Brooklyn." The officer turned to an official register. "Deck Mumpers, age forty-two, height five feet seven inches, weight one hundred and thirty-two pounds. Round face, big ears, broad shoulders, poor teeth. Sent to Sing Sing in 1892 for two years, for robbery of Scott diamonds. A hard drinker when flush. Now wanted for several petty crimes in New York. Came originally from South Boston, where he was in the liquor business." The sergeant turned again to Walter. "I guess you have struck your man. I'll send out the alarm. What is your address?"

"I have just joined the navy and am bound for the *Brooklyn*. But I can leave you my uncle's name and address, and he can come on to Boston from Buffalo, if it's necessary."

"That will do, then," answered the sergeant.

He brought forth a book in which to put down the details of the affair. While he was writing, Walter slipped his hand into his pocket to see if the slip of paper he had received at the navy-yard was still safe. The paper was gone.

CHAPTER IV

ON THE WAY TO THE "BROOKLYN"

"Oh, what luck!"

"What is the matter now?"

"My order for a railroad ticket from Boston to Fortress Monroe is gone!"

"Is that true? Perhaps Deck Mumpers cleaned you out after he struck you down," suggested the sergeant, quickly. "Feel in your pockets."

Walter did so, and his face blanched. "He did – everything, – my money, keys, cash, – all are missing. What in the world shall I do now?"

"How much money did you have?"

"About twenty dollars. The main thing was that railroad ticket order. If that is gone, how am I to get to Norfolk?"

"Was your name mentioned on the paper?"

"Yes, sir."

"Where was it to be presented? any particular depot?"

"Yes, the New York and New England railroad depot."

"Then the best thing to do is to ring the railroad folks up and have the bearer of the order detained, if the slip is presented," went on the police officer, and stepping to the telephone he rang up central and had the necessary connection made.

"Is this the ticket office of the New York and New England railroad depot?" he questioned.

"Yes," came the reply over the wire.

"A navy-yard order for a ticket from here to Norfolk, or Fortress Monroe, has been stolen. It is made out in the name of Walter Russell. If it is presented, hold the party having it and communicate with police headquarters."

"Is the name Walter Russell?" was the excited query, and Walter's heart began to sink as he seemed to feel what was coming.

"Yes."

"That order has already been filled. It was presented about ten o'clock last night."

"I've missed it!" groaned the youth, and dropped into a chair. "What will the navy-yard people say to this when they hear of it?"

"I don't see how they can blame you," returned the sergeant, kindly, "seeing as you were knocked senseless by the thief. Deck Mumpers has got the best of it so far."

He called through the telephone for a description of the party having the order, and soon learned it must have been Mumpers beyond a doubt.

"Can't you telegraph to Norfolk to have him arrested when he arrives?" asked Walter suddenly.

"You don't think he'll go all the way to Norfolk, do you?" smiled the police officer. Then he turned again to the telephone. "What kind of a ticket did that party get on the order?" he asked.

"First-class, with sleepers."

"He got a first-class ticket. Ten to one he'll not use it at all, but sell the pasteboard at some cut-rate ticket office right here in Boston and then buy another ticket for somewhere else."

"I see!" cried Walter. "But if the ticket was sold here, could we trace it?"

"It is not likely, for many first-class tickets are alike. We might trace the sleeping-car checks, but I doubt if Mumpers will try to do anything with those."

"But he may use the ticket," ventured Walter, hardly knowing what else to say.

"Oh, possibly. I'll have the men at the various stations keep an eye open for the rascal," concluded the sergeant, and after a few more words Walter left the station.

It must be confessed that the youth was considerably out of sorts. "I start off to recover some stolen property and end by losing more," he groaned. "I'm not fit to join the navy, or do anything." And he gave a mountainous sigh.

It was almost five o'clock, and knowing Dan would soon be on hand with Gimpwell to open the stand, he walked slowly in that direction. To keep up his courage he tried to whistle, but the effort was a dismal failure. Walter was naturally very light-hearted, but just now no one looking at his troubled face would have suspected this.

Reaching the stand, he opened the shutters and put out the light which he had forgotten to extinguish. Soon the first bundles of papers came along, and he sorted them over and arranged them for sale and for Dan's route. The work was almost done when the carrier came along, followed immediately by the new clerk.

"Hullo, I didn't know you'd be here!" cried Dan. "Why didn't you come home last night? Mother expected you to use the room, and you paid for it."

"I wish I had used the room," answered Walter, and went over his tale in a few words, for Dan must be off, to serve several men with newspapers before they themselves started off to their daily labors.

"Say, but that's too bad!" cried the errand boy. "I've got two dollars, Walter. You can have the money if it will do you any good."

"Thanks, Dan, I want to see Mr. Newell first. But it's kind of you to make the offer."

"I'd offer you something, Russell," put in the new clerk. "But the fact is I haven't even car-fare; had to tramp over from Charlestown."

Phil Newell put into appearance shortly before seven o'clock, coming a little earlier than usual, to see that Gimpwell got along all right. Calling him aside, Walter told of what had happened. He was getting sick of telling the story, but, in this case, there was no help for it.

"Douse the toplights, but you've run on a sunken rock, and no mistake, Walter," cried the old naval veteran. "So he cleaned you out completely, eh?"

"Yes, Mr. Newell. I don't care so much for the money, but that order for the railroad ticket –"

"It's too bad; too bad!" Phil Newell ran his hand through his bushy hair. "I don't believe the navy-yard authorities will issue a duplicate order."

"Neither do I."

"You see, some sailors wouldn't be none too good for to get such a paper and then sell it for what she would fetch."

"Yes, that's the worst part of it. I shouldn't want them to think I was – was getting in on them – or trying to do so."

"The best thing to do, as far as I can see, is to call on Caleb Walton and get his advice."

"Where does he live?"

"In Charlestown, only a few blocks from the Bunker Hill monument. I don't know the number, but it's on Hill Street, and I know the house."

"Will you go with me? If I haven't the number –"

"To be sure I'll go with you, just as soon as I can set the new clerk on his proper course."

"And, Mr. Newell, would you mind – that is, would you make me a – a loan –" faltered Walter.

"Out with it, my boy, how much do you want? I told you before I'd be your friend, and what Phil Newell says he means, every trip."

"You are very kind, sir. I don't know how much I want. I had twenty dollars and thirty-five cents, and Mr. Walton said that was more than enough to see me through until pay day came along."

"Then here are twenty dollars." The proprietor of the news-stand pulled a roll of small bills from his pocket and counted out the amount. "You can pay me back when you recover your money, or else out of your pay money, if they don't collar that thief. Have you had breakfast yet?"

"No, sir."

"Then you had better get a bite while I instruct Gimpwell. I'll be ready for you in quarter of an hour."

Fifteen minutes found them on the way, taking a car which took them directly over to Charlestown, along the navy-yard and up Hill Street.

"Here we are," cried Phil Newell, as he stopped the car. "And just in time, for there is Caleb Walton leaving his house now."

"What brings you up?" demanded the gunner, when confronted. "Well, this is certainly a mess," he continued, after he had been told. "No, I'm certain they won't issue a duplicate order, for Captain Line is out of the city."

"But we might try and see what we can do," insisted Phil Newell.

"To be sure; come on." And the three set off for the navy-yard. Here it looked at first as if nothing could be gained, but finally one of the higher officers took it upon his own shoulders to give Walter a new order, at the same time saying something about charging it up to the Emergency Account.

"Well, that's a big relief," murmured Walter, on coming away. "I feel as if a thousand pounds were taken from my heart." And he certainly looked it.

"I must leave you now," said Caleb Walton. "Be sure and be at the depot on time, and take care of that new order."

"It's pinned fast in my pocket," said the youth. "If it goes, so does my coat."

On returning to the news-stand, Walter procured some paper and an envelope, and in the reading-room of the hotel sat down and wrote a long letter to his uncle, Job Dowling, telling of his enlistment in the navy and of what had happened during the night. "I think you ought to come to Boston," he concluded. "If the police can't do anything, a detective ought to be set on this Deck Mumper's track. You are holding a good deal of money in trust for Ben, Larry, and me, and for my part, I would spend a good deal rather than see father's watch and his and mother's wedding rings gone forever, – not to mention grandfather's diamond, which alone is worth at least two hundred dollars. Write to me concerning this, and send the letter to the *Brooklyn*, Off Fortress Munroe, Va."

This letter was mailed without delay, and soon after Walter bade Phil Newell, Dan, and several others good-by, and, grip in hand, walked to the depot. Here he found several jackies already assembled, and soon learned that they were members of Walton's party. In a few minutes Walton himself came hurrying down Federal Street, with several green hands in tow.

"All here?" he demanded, and began to "count noses." Only one man was missing, and he soon put in an appearance, and all entered the depot and procured their tickets. Then Walter asked about the stolen order, but the clerk had heard nothing new concerning it. "You were mighty lucky to get another order," he said with a grin. "Next time they may make you walk the tracks."

The train was in, and hurrying out to the long shed, they found their proper places. Soon there came a sharp jerk, the train moved off; and the long journey southward was begun.

For a seat-mate Walter had a typical Yankee lad, one from the coast of Maine, a young fellow who knew but little about warships, but who had spent several years on the rolling deep, in voyages to South America, to Nova Scotia, and elsewhere. His name was Silas Doring, and Walter found him talkative, although not objectionably so.

"Yes, I couldn't hardly wait till I got to Boston," said Si, for that was what he said all of his friends "to hum" called him. "We'll lick the Spanish out of their boots, see if we don't!"

"You are bound for the *Brooklyn*?" asked Walter.

"Thet's it, if they want me, otherwise I'm booked for the *Texas*. Putty good for a boy from Maine to go on the *Texas*, ain't it, he! he! But I don't care much. They can put me on the *San Francisco* if they want to – so long as they give me a chance at them tarnal Dons. When the *Maine* was blowed up, why, I jest jumped up an' down an' up an' down with rage. 'Si Doring,' sez I, 'Si Doring, are you a-going to let such an insult an' crime go by unnoticed? Not much!' sez I. 'I'll join the navy, an' help blow all of the Spanish to Jericho,' – an' I'm going to do it!" And the Yankee lad struck his fist into his open palm with a thump of energy.

"I wish I knew as much about ships as you do," ventured Walter. "I've been on two trips across Lake Erie, and know something, but I'm afraid I'll feel like a fish out of water when I get on a man-o'-war."

"We'll keep our eyes and ears open, and try to learn – that's the only way. I know every rope on a merchantman, kin name 'em from fore royal stay to topping lift, but that ain't the hundredth part on it. We've got to learn our vessel jest as a person has got to learn a new city and its streets, fer boats ain't built one like another, not by a jugful! And after we have learned the ship, we've got to learn the guns, and the fire-drill, and how to clear ship for action, and a lot more, not to say a word about learning how to knock out them Dons, as some calls 'em. Oh, we'll have our hands full after we get on board, don't forget it!" And Si Doring shook his head vigorously.

On and on sped the train until Hyde Park was reached. Here a brief stop was made, and several persons including a sailor got on board. The sailor came through the car as if looking for somebody and finally found Caleb Walton and shook hands.

"Yes, I'm bound for Norfolk, too," Walter and Si Doring heard him remark.

"By gum!" whispered the Yankee sailor. "I wonder if thet chap is going with us?"

"Do you know him?" asked the boy.

"Know him? jest guess I do! His name is Jim Haskett, and he used to be the mate of the *Sunflower*, a three-master from Penobscot. I sailed under him once, and he was the hardest man on shipboard I ever got next to. If he gets in the navy, he'll make everybody under him dance to his pipings, and worse."

"If that's the case, I sincerely hope he isn't assigned to my ship," was Walter's comment. "I haven't any use for a bully, big or little."

"I owe Jim Haskett many an old score; I would like to get the chance to even up," went on the Yankee. "But I've enlisted to do my duty and lick the Spanish, and if Haskett leaves me alone, I'll leave him alone. Here he comes now." And Si straightened up.

The former mate of the *Sunflower* passed down the aisle slowly. When he saw the Yankee he started and then scowled at him. "Have you enlisted?" he asked, in a voice that was far from pleasant.

"I have," returned Si. "Got any objections, Haskett?"

"Humph!" was the only answer, and the ex-mate of the *Sunflower* passed on, to drop into a vacant seat some distance behind them.

"Oh, he's a corker," whispered the Yankee, and Walter nodded to show that he agreed with him. Walter was destined to many an encounter with Jim Haskett before his first term in the navy should come to an end.

CHAPTER V

SOMETHING ABOUT WAR AND PRIZE MONEY

Commodore George Dewey's great victory over Admiral Montojo occurred on May 1, 1898, and was the first to be scored during our war with Spain.

Previous to this time, matters had moved along swiftly, but with no definite results. Following the wanton destruction of our battleship *Maine* in the harbor of Havana, in February, popular indignation arose to a fever heat against the country which had offered the American flag several insults in the past, and which was now engaged in a ruthless effort to put down the long-standing rebellion in Cuba, be the cost what it might.

For many months our President, Congress, and the people had watched, with anxious eyes, the progress of events in Cuba – had seen the Cubans doing their best to throw off the yoke of Spanish tyranny and oppression. From a little uprising here, and another there, the rebellion spread all over what was no longer "the ever-faithful isle," until rich and poor, those of Cuban-Spanish blood, and those whose ancestors had been negroes and Indians, became involved in it. At first there was no army, only bands of guerillas, who fled to the mountains whenever a regular Spanish force presented itself, but soon the conflict assumed a definite shape, a rebel army was formed, to be commanded by Generals Gomez, Antonio Maceo, Calixto Garcia, and others, and then Spain awoke to the realization that Cuba, her richest colonial possession, with the possible exception of the Philippines, was about to break away from her.

This crisis filled the rulers in Spain with alarm, for Cuba had turned into her treasury millions of *pesetas* every year, for which the island got little or nothing in return. "Cuba must, and shall be subdued," was the cry, and thousands of soldiers were transported from Spain and elsewhere, to be landed at Havana, Santiago, and other points. These soldiers immediately took possession of all the larger cities, causing those in rebellion to withdraw to the villages and to the forests and mountains.

A bloody warfare lasting between two and three years followed, and thousands of the rebels, including the noble Antonio Maceo, one of the best negro patriots that ever existed, were slain. In addition to this, millions of dollars' worth of property were destroyed, in the shape of torn-up railroads, burnt sugar and tobacco plantations, and sacked villages and towns. Every owner of property was compelled to take sides in the conflict, and if he did not side with those who waited upon him, then his property was either confiscated or destroyed.

The Spanish authorities had started out to crush the rebellion on the spot. As time went by and the rebels grew stronger and stronger, those in command saw that extreme measures must be resorted to, or the campaign would prove a failure. The majority of the Cuban men were away from their homes. At once orders were issued to drive all the defenceless women and children into the cities held by the Spanish. This was accomplished under the pretext that Spain wished to keep them from harm. Once driven into the larger places, these women and children were not fed and cared for, but were allowed to either live upon the charity of those about them, or starve. These poor people were called *reconcentrados*, and it is a matter of record that before the war closed nearly three hundred thousand of them gave up their lives through neglect and lack of food.

The people of the United States had stood by mutely and seen the war waged against the rebels who well deserved their liberty, but no one could stand by and see women, children, and helpless old men starved to death. At once it was proposed to send relief ships to Cuba, but Spain frowned at this, saying that such relief was only one way of helping those who had taken up arms against her.

At this time there were many Americans in Havana and elsewhere in Cuba, and as a matter of self-protection the battleship *Maine* was sent down to Havana harbor to see that no harm came to

them. How the battleship was blown up and over two hundred and fifty lives lost, has already been told in the previous volumes of this series. A Board of Inquiry was appointed by the President, and it was soon settled that the explosion which had wrecked the warship had come from the outside and that Spain was responsible for the loss. Spain denied the charge; and the war was practically on.

The first movement of the authorities at Washington was to blockade the city of Havana and a large portion of the coast to the east and the west of that port. This work was intrusted to Commodore (afterwards Admiral) Sampson, and he left Key West with the North Atlantic Squadron on the morning of April 22, and in a few days had a grand semicircle of warships stationed on the outside of Havana, Matanzas, Mariel, Cardenas, Bahia Honda, Cabanas, and other ports of lesser importance. Later on, other ports were likewise blockaded, and these portions of Cuba suddenly found themselves cut off from the outside world. Sampson wished to bombard Havana and bring the Spanish stationed there to terms at once, but this suggestion was overruled, as it was imagined that Spain might be brought to terms without such a great loss of life.

As soon as the blockading of the ports mentioned began, the President called for volunteers, and how nobly all our states responded we have already learned in "A Young Volunteer in Cuba." The regular army was also hurried to the south-east and concentrated at Tampa and other points, while the volunteers remained in their various state camps, waiting to be mustered into the United States service. Of the grand movement to Cuba we shall hear later.

The news of Commodore Dewey's glorious victory, as related in "Under Dewey at Manila" thrilled our people as they had not been thrilled for years. In the army and the navy were men from both the North and the South, and sectionalism was now wiped out forever, and all stood shoulder to shoulder under Old Glory, fighting for the sake of Humanity. The battle-cries were "Free Cuba!" and "Remember the *Maine*!" and certainly none could have been more inspiring.

The blockading of so long a coast line required a great many warships, and as it was not deemed advisable to place all our big vessels on this duty, the authorities lost no time in buying or leasing a number of ocean steamers and coast craft and converting them into vessels of war. These vessels required a great number of men, and the Naval Reserves were in great demand, as were also volunteers for the regular navy. This was the reason that Walter and those with him were taken on so quickly. Had he applied for enlistment into the navy during times of peace, he would have found an entrance far more difficult, for Uncle Sam is growing more and more particular every day as to the class of men he allows to tread the decks of his men-o'-war.

Shortly after Havana and its neighboring ports were blockaded, it was rumored that Spain would send over a powerful fleet to bombard New York or some other principal city along our eastern seacoast. This caused a good deal of uneasiness, and steps were immediately taken to fortify all principal points and mine many of the harbor entrances. Patrol boats were also placed on duty, to give the alarm at the first sight of an enemy. In some cases channel buoys were removed, and lighthouse lamps were left unlit, so that no Spanish vessel might creep in under cover of darkness.

Acting Rear-Admiral Sampson, as he was officially designated, was kept busy watching the blockade along the northern coast of Cuba, and in distributing his auxiliary vessels to such points as would be most advantageous. This being the case, Commodore Schley, next in command, was left at Hampton Roads, near Fortress Monroe, Virginia, with what was known as the Flying Squadron, a number of the fastest warships riding the Atlantic. The Flying Squadron was to wait until the Spanish fleet started westward, when it was to do its best toward doing as Dewey had done to Montojo's fleet, "find it and engage it"; in plain words, to fight it to the bitter end. Great things were expected of the Flying Squadron, and in this the people were not to be disappointed, as we shall see.

The trip by rail from Boston to the South proved full of interest to Walter, who loved riding on the cars. So far two transfers had been made, one at New York, and the other at Baltimore, but at neither city was any time allowed for seeing the sights. "It's a case of get there," explained Caleb

Walton. "You see, that Spanish fleet may sail for the United States at any moment, and then Schley will be bound to go out on a hunt for it in double-quick order."

"I see that the Spanish Cape Verde Squadron has joined the fleet at Cadiz, which is ready for sea," observed Walter, pointing to a morning newspaper he had purchased on the train. "There are four first-class cruisers, the *Viscaya*, the *Almirante Oquendo*, the *Infanta Maria Teresa*, and the *Cristobal Colon*, besides two or three torpedo-boat destroyers. At Cadiz there are the *Pelaya*, *Alfonso XIII.*, and several other ships. If they all come over here, it seems to me they may make matters mighty warm for us."

"We want 'em warm," interrupted Si Doring. "I wouldn't give a rap for a milk-and-water battle. Let us have it hot, say I, hot, – and knock the Spanish to kingdom come!"

"They won't dare to send all of the ships over," said Caleb Walton. "They must guard their own coast. If they don't, some of our ships may slip over there and make it interesting for them."

"Do you think we'll carry the war to Spain?" asked Walter, with deep interest.

"There is no telling, lad. Some folks have it that half of Europe will be mixed up in this muss before it's over. One thing is certain, Dewey's victory at Manila isn't going to be such a smooth thing out there, for the Filipinos are in a state of revolt and won't want us to govern them any more than they want the Spanish; and besides, Germany, France, and other nations have big interests there."

"Well, I guess the best we can do is to look out for our little end," smiled the boy. "As for the rest, the authorities at Washington must settle that."

"Well said, lad; you and I couldn't run the government if we tried. But we can do our duty, and that will be to obey orders and take what comes."

"How is it that you got Jim Haskett to enlist?" asked Si.

"Oh, that fellow is after prize money," was the gunner's reply. "He has been reading of the luck down around Havana, and he wants the chance to earn a few hundred extra. Well, maybe he'll get it."

"I've heard of prize money before, but I don't exactly know what it is," observed Walter.

"It's the money got out of a captured ship when she's sold. You see, when a ship is captured she's taken to some port and turned over to a prize court, and if she doesn't turn out a Scotch prize she is knocked down under the hammer."

"I know what you mean by knocking her down under the hammer. But why doesn't the rule apply to a Scotch vessel?"

At this query of Walter's Caleb Walton burst into a roar of laughter. "It's easy to see you're a landsman," he said. "I didn't say a Scotch vessel; I said a Scotch prize – a ship captured illegally, and one that must be given back to her owners. I don't know where that term came from, but it's what the men in the navy always use."

"I see."

"A legitimate prize is sold, and then the money is divided. If the vessel captured was the equal of that taking her, then all the prize money goes to her captain and crew; but if the captured ship is inferior, then her takers get only half of the money, and Uncle Sam keeps the balance."

"And what part would I get if my ship took a prize?" went on Walter, more interested than ever, for the question of prize money had not appealed to him before.

"You would get a share according to your regular pay – perhaps one dollar out of every five or ten thousand."

"That wouldn't be much – on a small craft."

"You are right, lad, but it would be a tidy amount on a big warship worth two or three millions. The division of the prize money is regulated according to law, so there can't be any quarrelling. The commander of a fleet gets one-twentieth, the commander of a ship one-tenth of that coming to his ship (when there are more ships than one interested in the prize), and so on, and we all get our money even if we are on temporary leave of absence."

"But what does Uncle Sam do with his share?" put in Si.

"His share is put into a fund that is used toward paying naval officers, seamen, and marines the pensions due them. These pensions are, of course, not as large as those of the army, but they are considerable."

"Well, I hope we strike a big prize, or half a dozen little ones," said Walter. "On a pay of eleven dollars a month a fellow can't expect to get very rich."

"Do your duty, lad, and you may rise before the war is over." The old gunner caught Walter by the arm. "Come with me," and Caleb Walton arose, and led the way to the smoking-car. Wondering what was meant by this movement, Walter followed.

"I want to have a quiet talk with you," went on Caleb Walton, after they were seated in a secluded corner. "Do you smoke?"

"No, sir."

"You're just as well off. But I must have my pipe." Caleb Walton drew forth a brier-root, filled it with a dark mixture of tobacco, and lit it. "Ah, that's just right. And now to business." And he threw one leg over the other. For a moment he gazed thoughtfully at Walter, and the boy wondered what was coming next. He was satisfied that it must be of more than ordinary importance, otherwise the old gunner would not have asked him to come to the smoking-car, away from their companions.

CHAPTER VI

A GLIMPSE OF THE PRESIDENT

"You see it's this way," began Caleb Walton, after gazing for a moment at Walter. "Phil Newell is your friend, isn't he?"

"Yes, indeed!" responded the boy, warmly.

"Exactly – likewise he is my friend, too. We served together for years, and I sometimes looked up to Phil as a kind of elder brother. Well, after you left us at the navy-yard he and I had a long talk about you, and he made me promise to keep my eye on you – do you understand?"

"I think I do."

"Now, keeping an eye on you is out of the question unless you are placed where I can see you."

"But aren't we both to go aboard of the *Brooklyn*?" cried Walter.

"Yes, according to the course we're steering now. But both being on the *Brooklyn* doesn't cover the bill. I expect to be in charge of one of the guns – will be if Bill Darworthy is still in the hospital. Now if you enter as a mere boy, or even as a landsman, it may be that you'll never get around to where I am. You must remember that the *Brooklyn* is a big ship, and all the men on her are divided into classes, – officers, petty officers, seamen, gunners, marines, and so on, – and one class is pretty well separated from another."

"I presume that is so, but I never thought of it before."

"Even seamen are divided into seamen gunners, apprentices and the like, and if you went on as a mere boy you might not see me once a week, unless we happened to be off duty at the same time."

"I see what you are driving at, Mr. Walton; you – "

"Avast there, Walter, no mister for me, please. I'm plain Caleb Walton."

"Well then, Walton, you want to get me attached to that gun you hope to have placed in your charge?"

"Now you've struck the bull's-eye, lad. The thing of it is, can I manage it?"

"I'm sure you must know more about that than I do. I'll like it first-rate if you could, for I – well, to be plain, I like you."

Caleb Walton held out his horny hand. "The liking is mutual, Walter, and there's my fist on it. Now I have an idee." The old gunner took several puffs at his pipe. "I know Captain Cook of the *Brooklyn* tolerably well – served under him for a short spell, and once did a little private business for him. Now, Captain Cook won't do a thing as is out of his line of duty, but still – "

"He may aid you in having me assigned to the gun you expect to have charge of?" finished Walter.

"That's it. I think I can work the deal – almost sure of it, – but you must help me."

"What must I do?"

"Say nothing and leave it all to me, and if my plan goes through, don't tell any one that you were favored. If you do, you'll only make enemies."

"I'll remember that. But what of Haskett, Doring, and the others?"

"I'd like to have Doring in my gang – he's the right sort. I don't want that scowling Jim Haskett, not after what Doring has told me of him. But he's out of it, anyway, for he enlisted as a first-class seaman, at twenty-six dollars per month."

"I wish I knew a little more about a warship," said the youth, longingly. "The more I hear, the less I seem to know."

"It will all come to you in time, and when you are on board I'll show you all I can. It would do no good to talk about guns and the like until I can point out the different parts to you, for you wouldn't know a breech-block from a priming-wire until you laid eyes on it."

"But how is a ship commanded? Won't you tell me something about that?"

"Of course you mean a warship, not a merchantman. Well, the highest officer is, of course, the captain, although the vessel may be the flagship of a commodore or an admiral."

"And what of a commodore and an admiral? You see I'm awfully green, when it comes down to the navy. My younger brother Larry is the real sailor in our family."

"You'll get there, lad; anybody will who is in for learning as you are. An admiral is the highest officer in any navy, and he commands everything that floats, from battleship to despatch tug. Next to him is the vice-admiral. In the United States navy these offices don't exist any more, having died out with the deaths of Admiral Porter and Vice-Admiral Rowan."

"But the newspapers speak of Admiral Sampson."

"He is acting rear-admiral, but holds only the office of commodore. He commands a fleet of warships, while a commodore commands only a squadron; that is, four or six, usually, although he may have more at times. His ships are generally divided into two divisions."

"I understand. Please go on."

"Well, as I said before, the captain really commands the ship. Next to him are the commander and the lieutenant-commander. The first of these takes orders from the captain and issues them to those under him. The lieutenant-commander is called the executive officer, and he's always put down as the hardest worked man on the ship. What he does would fill a book, and he rarely gets leave of absence, for nobody can spare him."

"But what does he do?"

"Well, in the first place he sees that the whole crew keeps straight, and he keeps a conduct book for reference. He hears all complaints and straightens out all difficulties. He sees to it that the ship is kept clean, and he has the say about arranging messes. He must also station the hands for the various fire, sail, and boat drills, the gun exercises, and the drills with small-arms and cutlasses. Then every night at eight o'clock he receives the reports of petty officers, to show that each department is O. K. up to that hour. And there is a lot more besides."

"Thanks, but I don't care to be an executive officer," smiled Walter. "But perhaps he gets well paid for it."

"He earns from twenty-eight hundred to three thousand dollars per year. The commander gets five hundred more than that. A commodore gets five thousand a year, and a rear-admiral six thousand, when at sea. When on shore all these figures are slightly reduced."

"Those are nice salaries."

"That is true. But don't forget that everybody on the ship in the shape of an officer must board himself. The crew does that too, but Uncle Sam makes them an allowance for that purpose."

"Don't the higher officers get anything?"

"They have a ration allowed them – that or thirty cents. Of course such a ration cuts no figure with a commander or a captain."

"I suppose that's so. But please go on. Who is next to the executive officer?"

"The junior lieutenant, and then come the ensigns and naval cadets; that is, those young fellows from Annapolis who are studying up to become higher officers."

"And after that what?"

"Then come the warrant officers, that is, those warranted by our President, and they include boatswain, gunner, carpenter, and sail-maker. And you mustn't forget the marines – the soldier-sailors."

"Gracious, what a lot! Any more?"

"We are not half through, lad, but the others will explain themselves by their titles, such as chief engineer, chief surgeon, paymaster, and chaplain. The chaplain holds the relative position to a captain or a commander, but his whole duty is to hold church and keep the men from going wrong, morally and spiritually. Besides these, we have boatswain's mate, gunner's mate, and the like. Then among the seamen the leading men are called captains; as, for instance, captain of the top, captain of the afterguard, and like that. You'll soon get to know them all, never fear."

"How will I know them – by their uniforms?"

"By their uniforms, and also by the stripes and devices they wear. Don't you see this flaming spherical shell of silver that I wear? That shows that I am a gunner and have seen over twenty years of service. If I was a gunner with less time to my credit, the shell would be of gold."

"And does everybody wear some device?"

"Everybody, from a rear-admiral with his two silver stars and anchor down to the apprentice who has his figure 8 knot. If I get to be a chief gunner, I'll wear two crossed cannons instead of this shell."

"And if you got to be a captain, what would you wear?"

"A silver spread eagle, with an anchor at each end, on my shoulders."

"That's another deal to learn. I should think a fellow would get mixed on all these stars, eagles, shells, cannons, and the rest."

"It takes time to learn, lad. Let me give you a bit of advice. If you meet another person on shipboard and you are in doubt about it, salute. You may be making a mistake, but it will be a mistake on the right side."

"I'll remember that. But I feel as if I had more than ever to learn. Can't I get some book and study it?"

"I've got such a work in my valise. I'll get it for you," concluded Caleb Walton, and he arose. "But remember about that other thing – mum is the word."

"I certainly shall remember," and Walter smiled. "I'm awfully glad I've found such a friend as you," and he squeezed the old gunner's hand.

They returned to the other car, and soon Walter was deeply interested in the volume which Caleb Walton loaned him. It was a technical work, issued by the authority of the Navy Department, and contained all that he desired to learn, and a deal besides.

"Going to learn your duty as soon as possible, eh?" observed Si Doring, as he looked over the boy's shoulder. "That's right. If you want to know anything about sails or knots, call on me."

"What's the matter with calling on me?" put in the voice of Jim Haskett, as he slid into the seat behind them, and leaned over. "I reckon I know as much as Doring about a ship, and maybe a leetle more."

At this Si Doring fired up on the instant. "See here, Haskett, I ain't under ye no longer, remember that!" he cried. "I don't want you to talk to me, or about me. I owe you one, and more, and I ain't forgetting it – remember that!"

"Oh, don't get on a high horse," growled the former mate of the *Sunflower*. "I won't talk to you if you don't want me to."

"And ye needn't talk about me, either. Think ye know a leetle more about a ship than I do, eh? Well, maybe Captain Pepperill didn't think so, when you let the *Sunflower* split her foremast in that blow off –"

"I wasn't responsible for that!" interrupted Jim Haskett, his surly face growing red. "You let the past drop, and I'll let it drop." He glared savagely at Si, then turned to Walter. "Do you want some p'int explained, Russell?"

"Thank you, but I would just as lief study this book for the present," answered Walter, coldly, and somewhat astonished to learn that Haskett knew his name.

"Maybe I can make some p'int clearer. I'm an old sea-dog, you know."

"I think Doring can explain all I wish to know," continued the boy, feeling he ought to stick up for the Yankee who had made himself so agreeable since leaving Boston.

"Don't want my advice, then?"

"I think not."

"All right, then, suit yourself. If you want to cotton to such a fellow as Doring, you can do so, but" – he lowered his voice – "I reckon you are making a mistake." And then, before either Walter or Si could answer, he bounced up, and strode down the aisle and into the smoker.

The train was approaching Washington, and shortly after this conversation it rolled into the depot at the Capitol city, and came to a standstill.

"We stop here for fifteen minutes," said the porter to Walter, when questioned on the point. "Give you sailor-boys time to stretch your shoah legs." And he grinned, having been on a warship himself once, serving as a "striker," – one who waits on the mess tables.

"Let us take a few minutes' walk; I am all cramped up," said Walter to his Yankee friend; and Si readily agreed. Caleb Walton was willing they should go, but warned them not to stay too long.

"Fifteen minutes don't mean sixteen; remember that," he called after them.

"I should like to spend a few days here," observed Walter, as he and his companion hurried on. "The Capitol, patent offices, and other buildings must be very interesting."

"I'd rather see President McKinley," returned the Yankee. "My, but he must have his hands full these days!"

"Do you want to see the President?" questioned a man who was just passing them. "If you do, he's in his carriage three blocks below here. There's a cave-in of a sewer, and his carriage just stopped."

"Then here's our chance, Si!" cried Walter, eagerly. "Come on; we can make it if we run. I wouldn't miss seeing the President for a good deal!"

"That's me!" burst out the Yankee. "Off we go!" And he started to run, his long legs giving Walter all he could do to keep up with him. The three blocks were covered, and they came to where the cave-in was located, but only some very ordinary vehicles were in sight.

"We're too late!" grumbled Si, crestfallen. "Come on back."

"Too late for phwat?" asked an Irishman standing near the sewer.

"We wanted to see the President."

"Sure an' there goes his carriage down beyant." And the Irishman pointed to a side street.

It was still less than a block away, and without stopping to think twice they made after it, and came up just as it was turning a corner. A very trim driver sat on the box of the turn-out, and on the rear seat, the sole occupant of the carriage, sat our country's chief executive.

"Hurrah!" shouted Walter, impulsively, and waved his cap, and Si did the same. Several others bowed and tipped their hats, and the President bowed and tipped his silk hat in return. Then the carriage rolled swiftly away.

"It was him all right enough," exclaimed Si, enthusiastically, and with a total disregard for grammar. "He looks jest like his pictures, only a little more care-worn. I suppose he loses lots o' sleep these nights."

"Yes, indeed. Being the President isn't the easiest berth in the world. If I – " Walter broke off short. "Our train – I'll wager a dollar we'll miss it!"

"Creation! don't say that!" gasped Si; and then both took to their heels as if running the race of their lives.

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