

had persistently allowed the Navy to decay. They were the work of individuals among the people, pursuing individual advantage with business intelligence and energy. The superior effectiveness of the national cruisers, already stated, only emphasized, by their inadequate numbers, the shortcomings of the administration, glaringly manifested by sea as by land. Despite many favorable conditions at the opening, the war was already lost, as regarded its avowed objects. While the *Wasp* and *Peacock*, and their volunteer associates among the privateers, were wasting the British channels, the Secretary of State was instructing the Peace Commissioners in Europe to abandon the demand against impressment; the one high and honorable motive on which the Government had avowed its determined stand. "On mature consideration it has been decided that, under all the circumstances above alluded to, incident to a prosecution

of the war, you may omit any stipulation on the subject of impressment, if found indispensably necessary to terminate it. You will, of course, not recur to this expedient until all your efforts to adjust the controversy in a more satisfactory manner have failed." The phraseology disposes completely of the specious partisan plea, that the subject was dropped because no longer a live issue; the maritime war of Europe being ended. It was dropped because it had to be dropped; because the opportunities of 1812 and 1813 had been lost by the incompetency of the National Government, distributed over nearly a dozen years of idle, verbal argumentation; because at the date of this instruction—June 27, 1814—there stood between the nation and disastrous reverse, with probable loss of territory in the north, only the resolution and professional skill of a yet unrecognized seaman on the neglected waters of Lake Champlain.

(To be concluded.)

## THE VOYAGERS

By George Buchanan Fife

ILLUSTRATIONS BY WILLIAM HURD LAWRENCE



ES, it has been a dear, happy day."

Alicia laid her hand in impulsive caress upon her breast, and I knew it was her own heart she had answered. And, feeling that I had simply overheard, I did not speak. Alicia's gentle eyes were upon the roses which bent toward her from the bowl between us, but presently she glanced up and smiled at me as if she had suddenly found me there, a companion to her heart.

It had been a happy day, the third anniversary of our wedding day, and now the whole world had dwindled to the circle of a table with four candles beaming like satellites above it. The familiar things beyond, the walls themselves, had receded into shadow, and the dim curtain which had fallen about us set all other worlds apart from ours and left us gloriously alone. The

only sound in our silence was the beating of Father Time's heart in the tall clock, and I pitied it that it knew no quickening.

In the day we had just spent we had chosen to act a merry make-believe and speed backward even past our own three years into the radiant season of our engagement. With the early forenoon my violets were at her door to bear a note studiously addressed to "Miss Wildrick," begging that she would ride with me at eleven. And, a few minutes afterward, her maid had ceremoniously delivered to me an acceptance with a blossom between the pages and a postscript—which had nothing to do with riding. When we returned I was archly informed that if I presented myself promptly in an hour I might have the pleasure of luncheon with "Miss Wildrick," also that as there was to be no one else at home we should have the entire house to ourselves.

In grateful acknowledgment I raised her hand to my lips. At the same moment Frieda made an unexpected entrance upon the scene and Alicia, with admirably feigned confusion, drew her hand from mine and ran laughing up the stairway.

After luncheon we went shopping, not shopping as Alicia understands it, but a pilgrimage to the musty bazaar of "Old Mr. Peter," dealer in the *lares et penates* of the long deceased and a gatherer of strange things from the least known workshops of the world. There we squeezed ourselves in and out among the dusty pieces of furniture—four-posters, high-boys, and a clutter of tables and chairs—to the improvement of their polish, and explored dark corners under "Old Mr. Peter's" eager, fluttering guidance and his reiterated assurance that he had "something very fine" hidden there from the eyes of unappreciative, lesser mortals. Never by any chance did the old man find what he sought in the first black nook, rarely in the second, and not frequently in the third, but we followed him about industriously, commiserated with him in his perturbation, and hastened to agree that someone had surely profaned the venerable arrangement of his establishment.

Upon the first anniversary of our wedding-day we had gone to "Old Mr. Peter's" shop in search of something to be borne away and set up in our household as a token of our first voyage. And after another twelve months of sailing over gentle seas we had put in again at this quaint port of a hundred ports and chosen a second token to be reared beside the first. So when the third voyage had ended, and we were joyfully ready to unmoor ship for the fourth, we went to rummage again among the old man's wares. First it had been a Dutch clock, then a table, Russian, and romantic, if we chose to believe the letter from his St. Petersburg commissioner which the old man gave us with its dark hints in diminutive handwriting about spendthrifts and fair adventuresses, high play and tragedy. This day we had carried off a mirror with gilt sconces, and I think we rather disappointed "Old Mr. Peter" with the abruptness of our decision. He was elbow-deep in a drawerful of laces which were evidently very dear to him when we came upon the mirror, and I noted

the reluctance with which he permitted the filmy, yellowed things to drip from his wrinkled fingers, especially as he had striven to arouse Alicia's interest in the flounce of a wonderful gown in which someone had danced at the ball of Governor So-and-So in seventeen hundred and something.

After leaving the old man we had drifted about down-town as on many of the other afternoons when the things in the shops were beginning to be of more interest to us, some for their newly perceived household value, others as happily personal and perhaps not to be commented upon too pointedly. It was a day's little journey which brimmed with reminiscence, and as we picked up the landmarks one by one we forgot our three years' familiarity with them and sighted them as after a long, watchful run. Here was a wide stone doorway, with an endless flow of women over its sill, beside which I had once been bidden to stand "until called for," and had kept my vigil for two mortal hours, provoked and disappointed—and learned afterward that I had gone to the wrong place. There was the mysterious looking shop, with its window display of bonnets and hats suggesting lopped-off heads impaled on spears, into which I had been "dared" one day after an unlucky admission of curiosity as to the head-hunters within. There, too, was the benevolent persuasive old woman with the basketful of rabbits and kittens before whom I had once stopped and, with exaggerated insistence upon imaginary "points," selected for Alicia the kitten which eventually thrived into the gay little cat, Peto, who has made the three voyages with us, standing the mouse-watch occasionally and dividing the remainder of his time between the pleasures of the cabin and the profits of the galley.

Soon the lights began to sparkle along the shore line of stores on each hand, and from the increasing cold we sought a brief refuge in one of our well-remembered havens, the one in which, over her tea, Alicia had listened to many hopeful things from the skipper with whom afterward she went to sea. We had tea, of course, and at the self-same table, and Alicia even asked me how many lumps of sugar I wished. For nearly an hour we sat there, turning back the pages of our log-books, laughing over

the entries of violent storms which had burst from the sunshine and of sudden clearings when everything had been made secure, aloft and aloft, for the oncoming gale. Those were the days in which anyone's seamanship would have been taxed to its utmost.

When we arose to leave Paul stood beside us bobbing, and he bobbed us all the way out to the limit of his gracefulness and the evident wonder of the boy in buttons at the door. Night had fallen, so I halted a cruising hansom and we were borne swiftly homeward in right royal contentment with our day.

Thus it was, with an echo in my heart, that I understood Alicia when she smiled at me across the world and said, "Yes, it has been a dear, happy day." It reminded me of the heroine's epilogue in an old-fashioned play. I watched her awhile in the silence of understanding, and I saw the other smile, the one of merriment, dawn in her eyes. She leaned forward and gave a gentle, encouraging little nudge to a rose which dropped over the rim of the silver bowl.

"The skipper's wife is wondering," she said slowly, "whether there is an omen in her selection to-day of a mirror when there were so many other things at Old Mr. Peter's."

"First tell me in what spirit the skipper's wife selected it," I replied with fine wisdom.

"Ah, a tentative thrust at my vanity!"

Silence, and a little stage-business with my coffee cup; Alicia's expression is one, I am sure, she wished I might see, but I did not so much as glance at her. I knew she was thinking.

"Very well," she said, folding her hands, perhaps to show her scorn of weapons. "Accepting it as such, is it at all remarkable that the skipper's wife should seek a mirror at the *end* of a voyage? Do you imagine that even Mrs. Noah ventured ashore on faith alone?"

"My intimacy with the Noahs," I said gravely, "ended when I was very young, but as I recall her I feel quite sure she did. Indeed, there was precious little by which to distinguish her from Mr. Noah, and the children were—well, chips of the old block. I might add that Mrs. Noah could scarcely have expected meeting anyone."

"She knew that her *husband* would see

her." Alicia inclined her head toward me ever so slightly and sank slowly backward in her chair.

"My sword," I said, drawing a rose from the bowl and extending it toward her.

"I am glad to see that it blushes for your thrust," Alicia replied, laying the glowing bloom against her cheek.

"I prefer to thank it for confusion at its sudden good fortune," I said with a studied Romeo and Juliet intonation. Alicia's conception of her part just then was distinctly modern. First she said "Um-m!"—a sort of verbal receipt, I imagine, and then added, "Now that I have the sword *and* the mirror I think it high time we set sail."

"Do you intend using the mirror as a compass?" I inquired interestedly.

"No, as a means of finding an amiable companion in—bad weather. It will give me someone with whom to discuss the peculiarities of the skipper."

"Oh! I'm to remain skipper, am I? I thought *you* had decided to take over the command."

"No, I accepted the sword as a token of allegiance, not of surrender—but we'd better sail before I change my mind."

As the half of seamanship is promptness, I arose at once, bowed with grave ceremony, and said, "The skipper presents his compliments and begs to announce his readiness to unmoor ship."

I felt that this was something new in seamanship, a sort of fragment from a "Drawing-Room Manual of Deep-Sea Practice," but I was determined to get under way cautiously and courteously. But before we could proceed with the nautical amenities there was a distant whirring tinkle, a summons to the starboard gangway.

"Some one coming aboard," I said. "Cupid, perhaps."

"Then, for mercy's sake, wait, don't let's sail without him!" Alicia pleaded. And, of a truth, our visitor confirmed my hazard in part, at least, for, as the door latched, a small voice, with a decided shiver in it, piped out, "Gee, it's cold!" The next moment Frieda came in with a telegram.

"For you, Alicia," I said, adding slowly, with a nod toward the door: "Better send a wrap out to him. We can't take him—that way, you know."

The corners of Alicia's lips deepened as



WILLIAM HURD LAWRENCE.  
1904

*Drawn by William Hurd Lawrence.*

Commiserated with him in his perturbation.—Page 615.

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she glanced quickly from me to the unfolded message in her hand.

"Oh, it's from Uncle Dick, for both of us," she exclaimed.

"I know why it rains here to-day. You have all the sunshine. Bless you, my children!"

"Isn't he a dear old soul?"

"He wants to know if there's any answer," I heard Frieda say in her low voice, which always diminished to a whisper. In an instant this simple inquiry had whisked my thoughts to the little waiting figure in the hall with its protest against the gaining cold. Even in that brief space before Alicia replied a great many things had flashed through my mind, and all of them against the background of warmth and comfort and happiness, of soft light and flowers, the background which Fate had vouchsafed us, Alicia and me, this night—and always. And then when Alicia said, "Tell him there is no answer," an idea, an impulse, perhaps a very foolish one, entered my head. I accepted it without the slightest questioning. "Wait, Frieda," I said, and I saw Alicia, who was reading the telegram again, lower it and regard me curiously. The maid stopped and turned and I went past her out of the room.

In a moment I returned with the smallest messenger boy I had ever seen. He was absurdly small. As I had my hand on his shoulder I felt him hesitate at the threshold, but I drew him along with me gently toward the fireplace. He had his cap clutched like a shield across his vitals and he advanced with the utmost caution. His expression was fixed in a small grin which changed only slightly when he sniffed. Through this grin shone the sum of juvenile wisdom.

"Alicia," I said, "this is——" I bent inquiringly over the urchin, whose round face suddenly flashed up to mine.

"Fourteen-nin'y eight, O'Connor," he chirped, displaying with an automatic jerk the blue number plate on his cap.

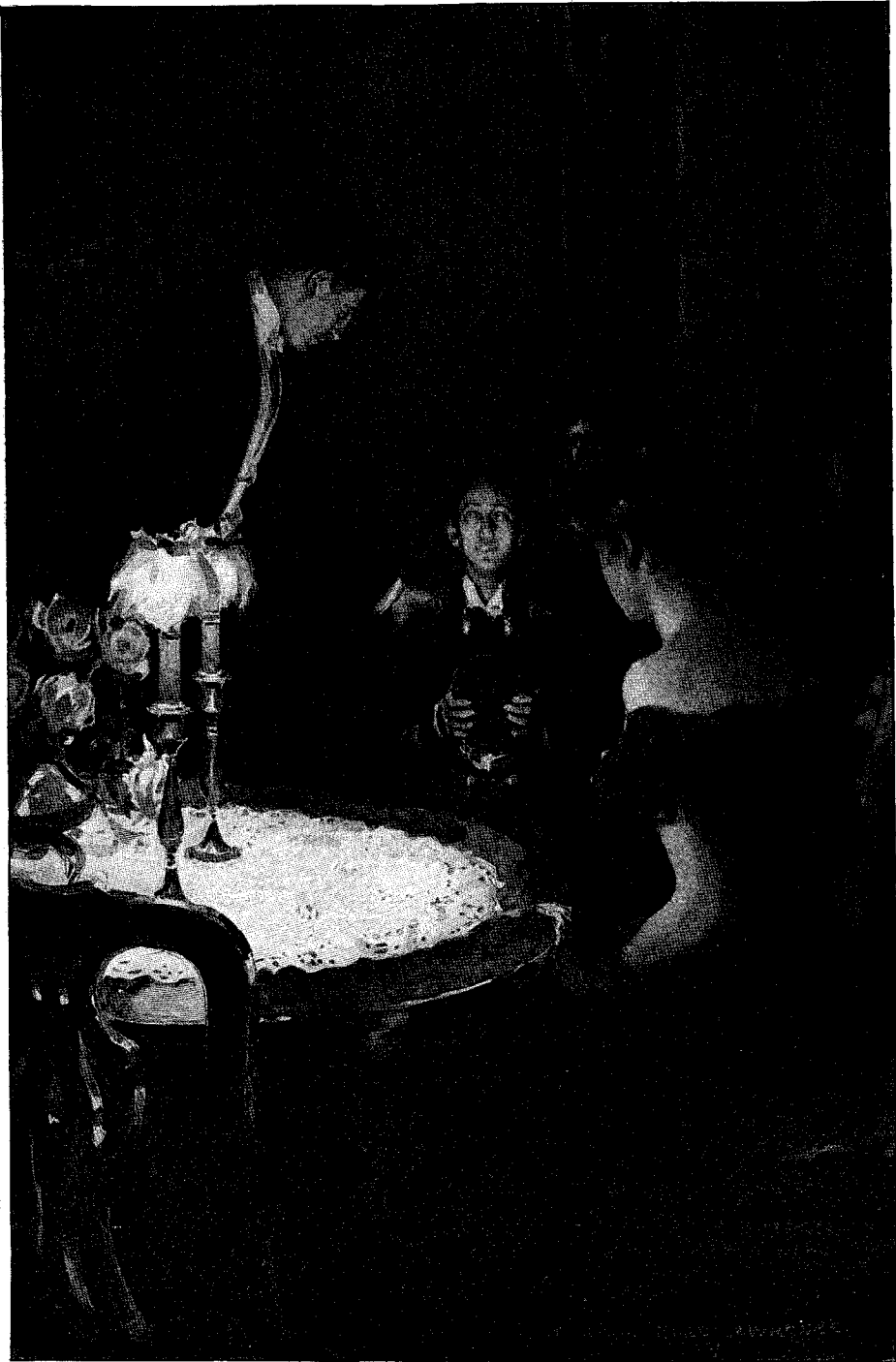
"Thank you, sir," I went on, "Mr. O'Connor, whom I have asked to come in and see us off." The grin wavered a trifle and the boy glanced uncomprehendingly from me to Alicia. He began to turn his cap around and around over his stomach. I saw by the gentle mirth in Alicia's eyes that at last she understood.

"And we are very glad to have him," she said. "We thought at first it was someone else," this with a sidelong look at me.

"Yes, until we realized that *he* was already aboard," I interposed, rescuing the youngster's cap and piloting him into a chair which I drew to the table between us. The grin had entirely vanished, so now had most of the boy. He was all wonderment and very still save for his darting, bird-like eyes. The bird idea was further borne out by a feathery topknot which sprang from his reddish crown.

Alicia glanced at me and said quickly, "I am quite sure little Mr. O'Connor would like"—the fluttering eyes alighted hopefully upon her—"something sweet"—they flew to me, then back again. The small grin, too, returned, seeming to widen suddenly in all directions from the snub nose. He uttered no sound; it was as if he feared that any noise from him would shatter to fragments this fragile thing which was taking form before him. It did take decidedly tangible form when Frieda came in with a heaped plate and set it before him. Now for a moment I left him in Alicia's care, and she provided him with a spoon and with a napkin, which he tucked so tightly in his collar that he must have swallowed with difficulty. When he had quite arranged the napkin he looked like an Irish cherub peering over the rim of a cloud. A terrestrial "There, sir!" from Alicia was all the encouragement he required to fall to. His method was extremely simple: he promptly reduced the distance between his mouth and the plate to two or three inches and plied the spoon across this gap with astonishing skill. Conversation under such conditions would have been a feat. For this reason I long forebore to complicate the situation with irrelevancies. Alicia, who was looking on incredulously, evidently decided at last that No. 1498 really owed it to himself to breathe, as she said, "It's cold out to-night, isn't it?"

"Yesum," was the reply, through the spoon apparently, although he did look up. The face that beamed from the table's edge was as red as an apple. It was either health or the napkin. He had his mouth full when Alicia unfortunately asked him where he lived, so we never learned this. But inquiry concerning his parents was surprisingly successful.



*Drawn by William Hurd Lawrence.*

"Mr. O'Connor, whom I have asked to come in and see us off."—Page 618.

"Me father's just got fifty dollars f' bein' rund over in th' street," he said, with prideful jubilation as for a fairy godmother's visit. Although each of us proffered commiseration, O'Connor persisted in grinning. "He tried to git two hundred," he went on, suddenly grave, "but they said his legs wasn't broke bad enough."

"How long was he out of work?" I asked, knowing this to be the real catastrophe.

"He don't work," the boy answered quickly. "He's blind." Then, as if he seemed to think that the O'Connors needed rehabilitation, he said, "Me muther works," and drew his hand across his mouth. The plate was empty. Suddenly he looked up and asked, "When you goin' away?" Back came the grin.

I had almost forgotten. "We are going now," I said, with sudden inspiration.

Perplexity shadowed an instant across the youngster's face. "Where?" he asked. Alicia leaned back in her chair and regarded me intently, amusement spicing the inquiry of her look. I had not expected to be catechized.

"Going to sea," I replied. "You see, I'm the captain of a ship." The boy's

eyes widened. Alicia smiled and let her hand fall upon the solitary rose before her. "I've been captain for"—she pushed the rose toward me—"for three years——"

"What kind of a ship?"

"A—a treasure ship, I should say."

"What's that?"

"Well, it's a ship which——"

"Which has a weatherwise skipper,"

Alicia interposed alertly, although I had thought her concentrated upon the lines she was drawing in the tablecloth. This was, certainly, finis to my story. O'Connor looked as if he had been suddenly robbed. He waited a moment to see whether anyone intended to speak, and then said venturesomely, "I'm going to be a sailor, some day."

"I sincerely hope so," I replied, which was also answer to Alicia.

"I know a feller that's got an anchor on his arm." Again the grin.

"Well, have a heart put on yours," was the only answer I felt it proper to make, and after that I escorted him to the gangway. There he stopped a moment, screwed his cap tight upon his head, and said, "Hope y'ave a good time," and ran down into the dark.



# THE HAND OF PETRARCH

By T. R. Sullivan



MESSER ENRICO CAPRA, the goldsmith of Bergamo, was in the year 1374, as certain veracious chronicles of his day instruct us, a famous man, justly admired and respected through all the neighboring country-side. His reputation for good workmanship had extended, on the one hand, far up the valleys of the Brembo and the Serio, those tributaries of the River Adda which encircle his native stronghold; and, on the other, it had travelled eastward at least as far as Brescia, where a fine crucifix from his hand stood in the old cathedral. If his name and fame had not spread abroad over the Lombard plain to its great capital of Milan, and, thence, with ever-widening vibrations to the horizon's verge, why, that, according to his fellow-citizens, was entirely his own fault. For, while they could praise without reserve the excellent art which had brought him ease and wealth in middle life, they were compelled, with the same breath, to deplore its abrupt, ineffectual end. He had chosen to hide his talent in the earth at the moment of its perfection. And that, unhappily, was long ago; for fifteen years and more this talent had proved unfruitful. In art, not to produce incessantly is to cease to exist; and Messer Enrico Capra, at the age of sixty-three, still vigorous, intelligent, and lovable, had become, so far as art recognized him, a creature of the past; for present shortcomings, irresistibly compared by his friends and kindred to the unprofitable servant who was cast into outer darkness at the divine command.

Though he had remained a bachelor and lived alone, except for a houseful of servants, there was little of the recluse about him. The house stood upon a narrow street near the workshop, which had passed long since into other hands; outwardly, it was a modest abode, unadorned and unpretentious; within, it showed no lack of comfort. At the back, a sunny little garden, sloping to the southwest near an angle of the bastions, had a wide prospect

over hill and plain; so wide that the guests, who were often entertained there unceremoniously, but sufficiently, could discern on a clear day the towers of three cities—Monza, Treviglio, and Milan. It was the last, undoubtedly, which suggested a byword, first whispered among these few, to pass current afterward in the town—the byword, namely, that Messer Enrico, the famous goldsmith, could walk in his own garden and look beyond his fame.

Messer Enrico, himself, hardly knew how often he had looked beyond it to those same distant towers of the Lombard capital. For beneath them had once lived for many years the man who, unwittingly at first, then despite his own urgent remonstrance, had been the sole cause of the goldsmith's strange cessation from artistic labor; the man who was the foremost scholar of his time, the leader of thought so distinguished that he burst all bonds of hampering tradition and freed the world of letters from the shackles of theology; no less a man than the great Petrarch—poet, philosopher, and historian, friend and counsellor of princes, hermit of Vaucluse and Arquà, sage of Venice and Padua, as well as of Milan, where, humblest if not least among his admirers, the worthy goldsmith of Bergamo was first admitted to his presence.

That the establishment of a personal relation with the master should have been to this devotee a difficult task is not surprising. The age was marked by a genuine interest in literature; Dante had but lately died, and Boccaccio's star had risen. Between the two shone Petrarch, whose transcendent lustre constituted him the supreme arbiter, to whom all literary craftsmen of any pretension appealed as a matter of course. And these competitors for the laurel were innumerable, even as the sands of the sea. For it was not only an age of great promise and performance, but also one of futile attempt and deadly imitation. The mania of authorship had grown into a malignant disorder, from which there seemed to be no immunity for