

Marx Hardy Machiavelli Joyce Austen
Defoe Abbot Melville Montaigne Cooper Emerson Hugo
Stoker Wilde Christie Maupassant Haggard Chesterton Molière Eliot Grimm
Garnett Engels Byron Schiller
Goethe Hawthorne Smith Kafka
Cotton Dostoyevsky Hall
Baum Henry Kipling Doyle Willis
Leslie Dumas Flaubert Nietzsche Turgenev Balzac
Stockton Vatsyayana Crane
Burroughs Verne
Curtis Tocqueville Gogol Busch
Homer Tolstoy Whitman Twain
Darwin Zola Lawrence Dickens Plato
Potter Freud Jowett Stevenson Andersen Burton Harte
Kant London Descartes Cervantes Voltaire Hesse
Poe Aristotle Wells Bunner Shakespeare Cooke
Hale James Hastings Richter Chambers Irving
Doré Chekhov da Shaw Benedict Alcott
Swift Dante Pushkin Newton
Wodehouse



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**The Strange Adventures of
Captain Dangerous, Vol. 3 Who
was a sailor, a soldier, a merchant,
a spy, a slave among the moors...**

George Augustus Sala

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THE STRANGE ADVENTURES

OF

CAPTAIN DANGEROUS:

WHO WAS A SOLDIER, A SAILOR, A MER-
CHANT, A SPY, A SLAVE
AMONG THE MOORS, A BASHAW IN THE
SERVICE
OF THE GRAND TURK,

AND

Died at last in his own House in Hanover Square.

A NARRATIVE IN OLD-FASHIONED ENGLISH.

ATTEMPTED BY

GEORGE AUGUSTUS SALA.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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[iii]

THE STRANGE ADVENTURES

OF

CAPTAIN DANGEROUS.

A Narrative in Old fashioned English.

CHAPTER THE FIRST.

I SEE MUCH OF THE INSIDE OF THE WORLD, AND THEN GO RIGHT ROUND IT.

1748. I was not yet Forty years of age, Hale and Stout, Comely enough,—so said Mistress Prue and many other damsels,—with a Military Education, an approved reputation for Valour, and very little else besides. A gentleman at large, with a purse well-nigh as slender as an ell-wand, and as wobegone as a dried eel-skin. But I was never one that wanted many Superfluities; and having no Friends in the world, was of a most Contented Disposition. [2]

Some trouble, indeed, must I have with that luckless Mistress Prue, the Waiting-Maid—sure, I did the girl no Harm, beyond whispering a little soft nonsense in her ear now and then. But she must needs have a succession of Hysterical Fits after my departure from the Tower, and write me many scores of Letters couched in the most Lamentable Rigmarole, threatening to throw herself into Rosamond's Pond in St. James's Park (then a favourite Drowning-Place for Disconsolate Lovers), with many other nonsensical Menaces. But I was firm to my Determination to do her no harm, and therefore carefully abstained from answering any of her letters. She did not break her heart; but (being resolved to wed one that wore the King's cloth) she married Miles Bandolier about three months after my Departure, and broke his head, ere the Honeymoon was over, with a Bed-staff. A most frivolous Quean this, and I well rid of her.

Coming out of the Tower, I took lodgings for a season in Great Ryder Street, St. [3] James's, and set up for a Person of Pleasure.

There were many Military Officers of my Acquaintance who honoured me with their company over a Bottle, for even as a Tower Warder I had been a kind of a Gentleman, and there was no treating me as one of base Degree. They laughed somewhat at my Brevet rank of Captain, and sometimes twitted me as to what Regiment I was in; but I let them laugh, so long as they did not go too far, when I would most assuredly have shown them, by the length of my Blade, not only what Regiment I belonged to, but what Mettle I was of. By favour of some of my Martial Friends, I was introduced to a favourite Coffee-House, the "Ramilies," in Jermyn Street ('tis Slaughter's, in St. Martin's Lane, now, that the Soldier-Officers do most use); and there we had many a pleasant Carouse, and, moreover, many a good game at cards; at the which, thanks to the tuition of Mr. Hodge, when I was in Mr. Pinchin's service, I was a passable adept, being able to hold my own and More, in almost every Game that is to [4] be found in Hoyle. And so our card-playing did result, not only to mutual pleasure, but to my especial Profit; for I was very lucky. But I declare that I always played fair; and if any man doubted the strict probity of my proceeding, there was then, as there is now, my Sword to vindicate my Honour.

'Tis ill-living, however, on Gambling. Somehow or another the Money you win at Cards—I would never touch Dice, which are too chancy, liable to be Sophisticated, and, besides, sure to lead to Brawling, Stabbing, and cracking of Crowns—this Money, gotten over Old Nick's back, I say, never seems to do a Man any Good. 'Tis light come, and light go; and the Store of Gold Pieces that glitter so bravely when you sweep them off the green cloth seems, in a couple of days afterwards, to have turned to dry leaves, like the Magician's in the Fairy Tale. Excepting Major Panton, who built the Street and the Square which bear his name out of One Night's Profit at the Pharoah table, can [5] you tell me of one habitual Gambler who has been able to realise anything substantial out of his Winnings? No, no; a Hand at Cards is all very well, and 'tis pleasant to win enough to pay one's Reckoning, give a Supper to the Loser, and have a Frisk upon Town afterwards; but I do abhor your steady, systematic Gamblers, with their restless eyes, quivering lips, hair bristling under their wigs, and twitching fingers, as they watch the Game. Of course, when Cards are played, you must play for Money. As to

playing for Love, I would as soon play for nutshells or cheese-parings. But the whole business is too feverish and exciting for a Man of warm temperament. 'Tis killing work when your Bed and Raiment, your Dinner and your Flask, depend on the turn up of a card. And so I very speedily abandoned this line of life.

'Twas necessary, nevertheless, for something to be done to bring Grist to the Mill. About this time it was a very common practice for Great Noblemen—notably those who were in any way addicted to pleasure, [6] and ours was a mighty Gay Nobility thirty or forty years since—to entertain Men of Honour, Daring, and Ability, cunning in the use of their Swords, and exceedingly discreet in their conversations, to attend them upon their private affairs, and render to them Services of a kind that required Secrecy as well as Courage. One or two Duels in Hyde Park and behind Montagu House, in which I had the honour to be concerned as Second,—and in one of which I engaged the Second of my Patron's Adversary, and succeeded, by two dexterous side slices, in Quincing his face as neatly as a housewife would slice Fruit for a Devonshire Squab Pie,—gained me the notice of some of the Highest Nobility, to whom I was otherwise recommended by the easiness of my Manners, and the amenity of my Language. The young Earl of Modesley did in particular affect me, and I was of Service to his Lordship on many most momentous and delicate Occasions. For upwards of Six Months I was sumptuously entertained in his Lordship's Mansion in Red Lion Square; [7] —a Kind of Hospitality, indeed, which he was most profuse in the dispensation of:—there being at the same time in the House a French Dancing-Master, an Italian Singer, a Newmarket Horse-Jockey, and a Domestic Chaplain, that had been unfrocked for too much fighting of Cocks and drinking of Cider with clowns at his Vicarage; but to whom the Earl of Modesley was always a fast friend. Unfortunate Young Nobleman! He died of a malignant Fever at Avignon, just before attaining his Thirtieth Year! His intentions towards me were of the most Bounteous Description; and he even, being pleased to say that I was a good-looking Fellow enough, and come to an Age when it behoved me to be settled in Life, proposed that I should enter in the bonds of Wedlock with one Miss Jenny Lightfoot, that had formerly been a Milliner in Liquor-pond Street, but who, when his Lordship introduced me to her,

lived in most splendid Lodgings under the Piazza, Covent Garden, and gave the handsomest Chocolate Parties to the Young Nobility [8] that ever were seen. So Boundless was his Lordship's generosity that he offered to bestow a portion of Five Hundred Pounds on Miss Lightfoot if she would become Madame Dangerous—said portion to be at my absolute disposal—and to give me besides a long Lease at a Peppercorn Rent of a Farm of his in Wiltshire. The Match, however, came to nothing. I was not yet disposed to surrender my Liberty; and, indeed, the Behaviour of Miss Lightfoot, while the Treaty of Alliance between us was being discussed, did not augur very favourably for our felicity in the Matrimonial State. Indeed, she was pleased to call me Rogue, Gambler, Bully, Led Captain, and many other uncivil names. She snapped off the silver hilt of my dress-sword (presented to me after I had fought the Second in Hyde Park), and obstinately refused to restore that gewgaw to me, telling me that she had given it to her Landlady (one Mother Bishopsbib, a monstrous Fat Woman, that was afterwards Carted, and stood in the Pillory in Spring [9] Gardens, for evil practices) in part payment for rent-owing. Moreover, she wilfully spoilt my best periwig by overturning a Chocolate Mill thereupon; and otherwise so misconducted herself that I bade her a respectful Farewell,—she leaving the marks of her Nails on my face as a parting Gift,—and told my Lord Modesley that I would as lief wed a Roaring Dragon as this Termagant of the Piazza. This Refusal brought about a Rupture between myself and my Lord. He was imprudent enough to talk about my Ingratitude, to tell me that the very coat on my back was bought and paid for with his Money, and to threaten to have me kicked out of doors by two of his Tall Lacqueys. But I speedily let him have a piece of my Mind. "My Lord," says I, going up to him, and thrusting my face full in his, "you will be pleased to know that I am a Gentleman, whose ancestors were ennobled centuries before your rascally grandfather got his peerage for turning against the true King."

He began to murmur something (as many [10] have done before when my blood was up, and I have mentioned Royalty) about my being "a Jacobite."

"I'll Jacobite your jacket for you, you Jackadandy!" I retorted. "You have most foully insulted me. I know your Lordship's ways well. If

I sent you a cartel, you and your whippersnapper Friends would sneer at it, because I am poor, and fling Led Captain in my teeth. You won't fight with a poor Gentleman of the Sword. I am too much of a Man of Honour to waylay you at night, and give you the private Stab, as you deserve; but so sure as you are your father's son, if you don't make me this instant a Handsome Apology, I will cudgel you till there is not a whole bone in your body."

The young Ruffian—he was not such a coward as Squire Pinchin, but rather murderous—makes no more do, but draws upon me. I caught up a quarter-staff that lay handy (for we were always exercising ourselves at athletic amusements), struck the weapon from his grasp, and hit him a sounding [11] thwack across the shins that brought him down upon his marrow-bones.

"Below the Belt!" he cries out, holding up his hands. "Foul! foul!"

"Foul be hanged!" I answered. "I'm not going to fight, but to Beat You;" and I rushed upon him, shortening the Staff, and would have belaboured him Soundly, but that he saw it was no use contending against John Dangerous, and very humbly craved a parley. He Apologised as I had Demanded, and lent me Twenty Guineas, and we parted on the most friendly terms.

This Lord essayed, notwithstanding, to do me much harm in Town, saying that I had used him with black Cruelty, had requited his many favours with gross Treachery, and the like Falsehoods, until I was obliged to send him a Message to this purport: that unless he desisted, I should be obliged to keep my promise as to the Cudgel. Upon which he presently surceased. So much meanness had he, even, as to fudge up a pretended debt of nineteen [12] guineas against me as for money lent, for the which I was arrested by bailiffs and conveyed—being taken at Jonathan's—to a vile spunging-house in Little Bell Alley, Moorfields; but the keeper of the House stood my friend, and procured a Bail for me in the shape of an Honest Gentleman, who was to be seen every day about Westminster Hall with a straw in his shoe, and for a crown and a dinner at the eating-house would suddenly become worth five hundred a year, or at least swear himself black in the face that such was his estate:—which was all that was required. And when it came to justifying of Bail before the Judges, what so easy as to hire a suit

of clothes in Monmouth Street, and send him into court fully equipped as a reputable gentleman? However, there was no occasion for this, for on the very night of my enlargement I won fifty guineas at the tables; and walking very Bold to my Lord's House, sends up the nineteen guineas to my Lord with a note, asking to what lawyer I should pay the cost of suit, and whether I should wait [13] upon him at his Levee for a receipt. On the which he, still with the fear of a cudgelling before his eyes, sends me down a Receipt in Full, *and the Money back to boot*, begging me to trouble myself in no way about the lawyer; which, I promise you, I did not. And so an end of this troublesome acquaintance,—a profitable one enough to me while it lasted. As for Miss Jenny, her Behaviour soon became as light as her name. I have heard that she got into trouble about a Spanish Merchant that was flung down stairs and nigh killed, and that but for the Favour of Justice Cogwell, who had a hankering for her, 'twould have been a Court-Job. Afterwards I learnt that she had been seen beating Hemp in Bridewell in a satin sack laced with silver; and I warrant that she was fain to cry, "Knock! oh, good Sir Robert, knock!" many a time before the Blue-coated Beadles on court day had done swingeing of her.

There are certain periods in the life even of the most fortunate man when his Luck is at a desperately low ebb,—when everything [14] seems to go amiss with him,—when nothing that he can turn his hand to prospers,—when friends desert him, and the companions of his sunshiny days chide him for not having made better use of his opportunities,—when, Do what he will, he cannot avert the Black Storm,—when Ruin seems impending, and Catastrophe is on the cards,—when he is Down, in a word, and the spiteful are getting ready to gibe at him in his Misfortune, and to administer unto him the last Kick. These times of Trial and Bitter Travail oft-times strike one who has just attained Middle age,—the Halfway-House of Life; and then, 'tis the merest chance in the world whether he will be enabled to pick himself up again, or be condemned for evermore to poverty and contumely,—to the portion of weeds and out-worn faces. I do confess that about this period of my career things went very badly with me, and that I was grievously hard-driven, not alone to make both ends meet, but to discover anything that could have its ending in a Meal of Victuals. I have heard [15]

that some of the greatest Prelates, Statesmen, Painters, Captains, and Merchants—I speak not of Poets, for it is their eternal portion, seemingly, to be born, to live, and to Die Poor—have suffered the like straits at some time or another of their lives. Many times, however, have I put it on record in these pages, that Despair and I were never Bedfellows. As for Suicide, I do condemn it, and abhor it utterly, as the most cowardly, Dishonest, and unworthy Method to which a Man can resort that he may rid himself of his Difficulties. To make a loathsome unhandsome corpse of yourself, and deny yourself Christian Burial, nay, run the risk of crowner's quest, and interment at the meeting of four cross-roads with a Stake driven through your Heart. Oh, 'tis shameful! Hang yourself, forsooth! why should you spend money in threepenny cord, when Jack Ketch, if you deserve it, will hang you for nothing, and the County find the rope? Take poison! why, you are squeamish at accepting physic from the doctor, which may possibly do you good. [16] Why, then, should you swallow a vile mess which you are *certain* must do you harm? Fall upon your sword, as Tully—I mean Brutus—or some of those old Romans, were wont to do when the Game was up! In the first place, I should like to see the man, howsoever expert a fencer, who could so tumble on his own blade and kill himself. 'Tis easier to swallow a sword than to fall upon one, and the first is quite as much a Mountebank's Trick as t'other. Blow your brains out! A mighty fine climax truly, to make a Horrible Mess all over the floor, and frighten the neighbours out of their wits, besides, as a waggish friend of mine has it, rendering yourself stone-deaf for life. If it comes to powder and ball, why, a Man of courage would much sooner blow out somebody else's Brains instead of his own.

I did not, I am thankful to say, want Bread during this my time of ill luck; and I never parted with my sword; but sure it is that Jack Dangerous was woundily pushed, and had to adopt many extraordinary shifts for a livelihood. *Item.* I engaged [17] myself to one Mr. O'Teague, an Irishman, that had been a pupil of the famous Mr. Figg, Master of the Noble Art of Self-Defence, at his Theatre of Arms, on the right hand side of the Oxford Road, near Adam and Eve Court. Mr. Figg was, as is well known, the very Atlas of the Sword; and Mr. O'Teague's body was a very Mass of Scars and Cicatrices gotten in hand-to-hand conflicts with the broadsword on the

public stage. He had once presumed to rival Mr. Figg, whence arose a cant saying of the time, "A fig for the Irish;" but having been honourably vanquished by him, even to the slicing of his nose in two pieces, the cracking of his crown in sundry places, and the scoring of his body as though it had been a Loin of Pork for the Bakehouse, he was taken into his service, and became a principal figure in all the grand gladiatorial encounters, at wages of forty shillings a week and his meat. As for Mr. Figg himself, who was as good at back-sword as at broadsword, at quarter-staff as at foil, and at fisticuffs as any one of them, — to say [18] nothing of his Cornish wrestling, — I saw him once, and shall never forget him. There was a Majesty blazed in his countenance and shone in all his actions beyond all I ever beheld. His right leg bold and firm; and his Left, which could hardly ever be disturbed, gave him the surprising advantages he so often proved, and struck his Adversary with Despair and Panic. He had that peculiar way of stepping in, in a Parry, which belongs to the Grand School alone; he knew his arm, and its just time of moving; put a firm faith in that, and never let his foe escape a parry. He was just as much as great a master as any I ever saw, as he was a greater judge of time and Measure. It was his method, when he fought in his Amphitheatre, to send round to a select number of his scholars to borrow a shirt for the ensuing combat, and seldom failed of half-a-dozen of superfine Holland from his prime Pupils. Most of the young Nobility and Gentry made it a part of their education to march under his warlike banner. Most of his Scholars were at every [19] battle, and were sure to exult at their great master's victories; every person supposing he saw the wounds his shirt received. Then Mr. Figg would take an opportunity to inform his Lenders of the charm their Linen had received, with an offer to send the garments home; but he seldom received any other answer than "Hang you, keep it." A most ingenious and courageous person, and immeasurably beyond all his competitors, such as O'Teague, Will Holmes, Felix Maguire, Broughton, Sutton, and the like.

Many good bouts with all kinds of weapons did we have at Mr. O'Teague's theatre, which was down a Stable-yard behind Newport Market, not far from Orator Henley's chapel. The shirt manœuvre we tried over and over again with varying success; but we found it in the end impossible to preserve order among our Patrons, the

greater part of whom were Butchers; and I am fain to admit that many of these unctuous sky-blue jerkins could fight as well as we. Then Mr. O'Teague was much given to drinking, and in his [20] potations quarrelsome. 'Twas all very well fighting on a stage for profit, and with the chance of applause, a clean shirt, and perchance a Right Good Supper given to us by our admirers afterwards at some neighbouring Tavern; but I never could see the humour of Swashbuckling for nothing, and without occasion; and as my Employer was somewhat too prompt to call in cold iron when his Head was so Hot, I shook hands with him, and bade him find another assistant. This was the Mr. O'Teague that was afterwards so unfortunate as to be hanged at Tyburn for devalising a gentleman at Roehampton. Great interest was made to save him, his very prosecutor (who knew not at the first his assailant, or that he had been driven to the road by hard times) heading the signatures to a petition for him. But 'twas all in vain. He made a beautiful end of it in a fine white nightcap fringed; and his funeral was attended by some of the most eminent swordsmen in town, who had a gallant set-to afterwards for the benefit of his widow. 'Tis sad to think of the [21] numbers of brave men that I have known, and how many of them are Hanged.

About this time I was much with the Players, but misliked them exceedingly; and although numbers of brilliant offers were made to me, I could not be persuaded to try the sock and buskin. Hard as were the names by which my enemies would sometimes call me, I could never abide that of Rogue and Vagabond, and such, by Act of Parliament, was the player at that time. No, I said, whatever straits I am driven to, I will be a Soldier of Fortune, and Captain Dangerous to the last.

Of my Adventure with Madam Taffetas the Widow, I am not disposed to say much. Indeed, until my being finally settled, and made the Happiest Man upon earth by my union with the departed Saint who was the mother of my Liliast, it must be admitted that my commerce with the Sex was mostly of the unluckiest description. I have been used most shamefully by women; but it behoves me not to complain, seeing how much felicity I was permitted to enjoy in [22] my latter days. This much, however, I will discreetly set down. That meeting Madam Taffetas in a side box at Drury Lane play-

house, She was pleased to accept my Addresses, and to inform me that my conversation was in the highest degree tasteful to her. I entertained her very handsomely — indeed much beyond my means, for I was very heavily in debt for necessaries, and I could scarcely walk the streets without apprehensions of the grim Sergeant with his capias. Madam Taffetas was an exceedingly comely person, amazingly well dressed, and, as I was given to understand, in very prosperous circumstances. She kept an Italian Warehouse by the Sign of The two Olive Posts, in the broad part of the Strand, almost opposite to Exeter Change, and sold all sorts of Italian Silks, Lustings, Satins, Paduasoyes, Velvets, Damasks, Fans, Leghorn Hats, Flowers, Violin Strings, Books of Essences, Venice Treacle, Balsams, Florence Cordials, Oil, Olives, Anchovies, Capers, Vermicelli, Bologna Sausages, Parmesan Cheese, Naples [23] Soap, and similar delicate cates from foreign parts. All her friends put her down as a forty-thousand-pounder. In Brief, she professed to be satisfied with my gentility and Ancient Lineage, though worldly goods I had none to offer her. All congratulated me on my Good Fortune; and not wanting to make any unnecessary bustle about the affair, we took coach one fine Monday morning down to Fleet Market, and were married by a Fleet parson — none other, indeed, than my old friend Chaplain Hodge, who had taken to this way of life and found it very profitable, marrying his twenty or thirty couple a week, when Business was brisk, at fees varying from five guineas to seven-and-sixpence, and from a dozen of Burgundy to half a pint of Geneva. But 'twas a rascally business, the venerable man said, and he sorely longed for the good old days when he, and I, and Squire Pinchin, made the Grand Tour together. Alas, for that poor little man! His Reverence told me that he had gone from bad to worse; that his Mamma had married a knavish lawyer, who so bewildered [24] Mr. Pinchin with Mortgages, and Deeds of Gift, and Loans at usurious interest, that he got at last the whole of his property from him, brought him in many thousands in debt besides, and, after keeping him for three years locked up and half-starved in the Compter, was only forced to consent to his enlargement when the unhappy little man — whose head was never of the strongest, and his wits always going a wool-gathering — went stark-staring mad, and was, by the City charity, removed to Bedlam Hospital in Moorfields. There he raved for a time, imagining himself to be the Pope of Rome, with a paper-cap

for a tiara, an ell-wand for a crosier, a blanket for a rochet, and bestowing his blessings on the other Maniacs with much force and vehemence; and there, poor demented creature, he died in the year 1740.

Much better would it have been for me, had I gone straight off my Head and had been sent to howl in Bedlam, than that I should have married that same thievish catamaran, Madam Taffetas. Surely never [25] Madman deserved a Dark House and a Whip more than I did for that most foolishly contracted union. I defy Calumny to prove that I ever used anything approaching false Representations in this matter. I told her plainly that my Hand, Sword, and Deep Devotion were all I had to offer, and that for mere vile pounds, shillings, and pence, and other Mercantile Arrangements, I must look to her. Absolutely I borrowed ten pieces, although I was then at a very Low Ebb, to defray the expenses of the wedding Treat, which was done most handsomely at the Bible and Crown, in Pope's Head Alley, Cornhill. "Now then," I said to myself, as we came home towards the Strand (for we were resolved to have no foolish honeymooning in the Country, but to remain in town and keep an eye to Business)—"now then, Jack Dangerous, thou art at last Married and Settled, and need trouble thyself no more about the cares and anxieties of money-grubbing and bread-getting. Thou art tiled-in handsomely, Jack; thatched and fenced, and girt about with Comfort and Re [26] spectability. Thy hat is on, and thy house is covered." Alas, poor fool! alas, triply distilled zany and egregiously doting idiot! No sooner did a Hackney coach set us down at the Leghorn Warehouse in the broad part of the Strand, than we found Margery the maid and Tom the shopboy in a great confusion of tears on the threshold; and immediately afterwards we heard that during our absence to get married, Bailiffs had made their entrance, and seized all the Merchandise for a bill owing by Madam Taffetas to her Factor of Seven Hundred Pounds. The false Quean that I was wedded to was hopelessly bankrupt, and with the greatest impudence in the world she calls upon me to pay the Money; the Bailiffs adding, with a grin, that to their knowledge she owed much more than their Execution stood for, and that no doubt, so soon as it was bruited abroad that I was her Husband, the Sheriff of Middlesex would have something to say to me in the way of a *capias* against

my person. In vain did I Rave and Swear, and endeavour to show that I could in no way [27] be held liable for Debts which I had never contracted. Such, I was told, was the Law; and such it remains to this day, to the Great Scandal of justice, and the detriment of Gentlemen cavaleros who may be entrapped into marrying vulgar Adventuresses whom they deem Gentlewomen of Property, and who turn out instead to be not worth two-pence-halfpenny in the world. Nor were words wanting to add dire Insult to this astounding Injury; for Madam Taffetas, now Dangerous, as I groaningly remembered, must needs call me Mercenary Rascal, Shuffling Pick-thank, Low-minded Fortune-hunter, and the like unkind names.

Madam Dangerous indeed! But I am thankful to Providence that the title she assumed very soon fell away from her, and that I was once more left free and Independent. For whilst we were in the very midst of Hot Dispute and violent Recrimination comes a great noise at the door as though some one were striving to Batter it down. And then Margery the maid and Tom the shop-lad began to howl and yelp [28] again, crying out Murder and thieves, and that they were undone, the Bailiffs smoking their Pipes and drinking their Beer meanwhile, as though they enjoyed the Humours of the Scene hugely, and my wicked wife now pretending to faint, and now making at me with the avowed Design of tearing my eyes out. Presently comes lurching and staggering into the room a Great Hulking Brute of a Man that was attired like a Sea Captain; and this Roystering Tarpaulin makes up without more ado to my Precious Partner, gives her two sounding Busses on either side of her cheeks, and salutes her as his wife.

"Your wife!" I cried, starting up; "why, she's my wife! I married her this very morning, and to my sorrow, before Parson Hodge, the Couple-Beggar, at the Fleet."

"That may be, Brother," answers the Sea Captain, with drunken gravity; "but she's my wife, for all that. You married her this morning, you say. I married her five years ago, at Horsleydown, and in the Parish church. I've got the 'Stifficate to [29] prove it; and though I say it that shouldn't, there's not a Finer woman, with a neater ankle and such a Devil of a temper, to be found 'twixt Beachy Head and Cape Horn."

"A fig for both of you," bellows Madam Taffetas, who had gone into one of her Sham Faints in the arm-chair, but was now conveniently recovered again. "If I'm married to both of you—to you, you pitiless Grampus" (this was to the Sea Captain), "and to you, Ruffian, Bully, and Stabster" (this was to *me*), "I'm married to somebody else, and my real Husband is a Gentleman, who, if he were here, would quoit the pair of you into the street from Exeter Change to the Fox under the Hill."

She said this in one Scream, and then Fainted, or pretended to Faint again.

"Brother," said the Sea Captain to me, staggering a little (for he confessed to having much mixed punch under hatches), but still very grave,— "brother, I think as how it's clear that we're both of us d—d fools, and d—d lucky fellows at the same time." [30]

"Amen!" cries one of the Bailiffs, with a guffaw.

"*You* belay," remarked the Captain, turning towards the vermin of Law with profound disdain. "Brother" (turning to me), "is the Press out?"

"What do you mean?" I inquired. "You know that there's no warrant for press-gangs in this part of the Liberties of Westminster."

"Liberty be Hanged!" quoth the Sea Captain. "If there was any liberty, there couldn't be a press, for which I don't care a groat, for I'm a master mariner. This is what I mean. Is them landlubbers there part of a press-gang? Are you trapped, brother? Are you in the bilboes? Are you in any danger of being put under hatches?"

"Why," upspoke one of the Bailiffs, answering for me, "the truth is that we are Sheriff's Sergeants, and have made seizure, according to due writ of *fi. fa.* of this worthy lady's goods. We've nothing at all against the gentleman who says that he [31] married her this morning; but as you said that you married her five years ago, it's very likely that we, or some of our mates, shall have something to say to you, in the form of parchment, between this and noon to-morrow."

"Very well," answers the Strange Seaman. "You speak like a Man o' War's chaplain, some Lies and some Lingo, but all of it d—d Larned. Have you got ere a drop of rum, brother?"

"There's nothing here but some Three-Thread Swipes," responds Mr. Bailiff; "and, indeed, we were waiting until the gentleman treated us to something better."

"Then," continues the Captain, "you shall have some rum. You-ner, go and fetch these gentlemen some liquor;" and he flings a crown to the shop-lad. "You may drink your grog and blow your baccy," he went on, "as long as ever you like, and much good may it do you. And as for you, Pig-faced Nan," — in this uncivil manner did he address the false Madam Taffetas, — "you may go to bed, or to the Devil, 'zactly [32] as you choose, and settle your Business with the Bailiffs in the morning 'zactly as you like. And you and I, brother," he wound up, taking me by the arm in quite a friendly manner, "will just go and take our grog and blow our baccy in peace and quietness, and thank the Lord for it."

All this he said with great thickness and indistinctness of utterance, but with an immovable gravity of countenance. I never saw a Man who was manifestly so Drunk speak so sensibly, and behave himself in such a proper manner in my life.

As he turned on his heel to leave the parlour where all this took place, I saw one of the Bailiffs rise stealthily as if to follow us.

"Belay there!" the Captain cried, advancing his mahogany paw in a warning manner. "Hold hard, shipmates. I'm a peaceable man, and aboard they call me Billy the Lamb; but, by the Lord Harry, if I catch you sneaking about, or trying to find out where I and this noble gentleman be agoing, I'm blest if I don't split your skull [33] in two with this here speaking-trumpet." And so saying the Captain produced a very long tin tube, such as Mariners carry to make their voices heard at a distance at sea, but which they generally have aboard, and do not carry with them in their walks.

The Bailiffs were sensible men, and forbore to intermeddle with us any more. So we marched out of the House, it being now about nine o'clock at night; and, upon my word, from that moment to this, I never set eyes upon Madam Taffetas, or Dangerous, or Blokes, — for the Sea Captain's name, he afterwards told me, was Blokes, — or whatever her real name was. It is very certain that she used me most scandalously, and cruelly betrayed the trusting confidence of one that was not only a Bachelor, but an Orphan.