

THE CRUISE O' THE WOCK

By HARVEY F. THEW

ILLUSTRATED

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"An' he soon forgets as we three had come abaft for some heavy schemin'."

Of the leak in the vessel's starboard plate, which was stopped by the work of the Truthful Mate, and whose cleverness brought the good ship Wock to the Diamond Shoals and a berth in dock.

T WAS while we was ridin' off Fryin' Pan, in the Equinoctial bluster, that the Captain an' me an' the Shanghaied Man as was sittin' around like a seaman can, thinks up this bright an' original plan for a Mexican filibuster. For funds was low on the good ship Wock, an' whales they was out o' season; an' all o' us sees as it's time to stock the hold with some sort o' a payin' rock, or the first we knows we will be in hock—wich statement is simple reason.

"The Captain says, an' he says it straight, 'It's a terrible thing we're facin'. An' unless you fellers originate some sort o' a scheme to increase our freight we stan's a chance that we'll vegetate for a year in the Erie Basin.' Wich doesn't appeal to a rovin' mate as has sailed in each direction. For after fetchin' Macassar Strait, an' nearly wrecked in the River Plate, there's nothin' so apt to humiliate as to end in the Brooklyn section.

"Now, lest there is some as incline to doubt the truth o' this simple statement, I'll tell you the facts as they come about, how the two o' us figgers this whole thing out—for I am a well as the truth does spout, most constant, with out abatement.

"We was standin' aft by the taff rail log a-tryin' our hands at thinkin', an' the Cap'n allows as a little grog might be o' some use to clear the fog wich often envelops an old sea dog, an' soon we was gently drinkin'. Now the Shanghaied Man had a great control, though sometimes actin' drastic; an' everything as he took abou' he does with a vim an' a hearty soul, whether workin' the sheet or the flowin' bowl—so he drinks enthusiastically.

"An' he soon forgets as we three had come abaft for some heavy schemin', an' the way he licks up the Captain's rum was a startlin' vision to me, his chin, an' started the Captain to lookin' glum, an' right on the verge o' screamin'. Soon the Shanghaied Chap, as was far from stout, was pitchin' aroun' an' dippin'; with

his storm's out like a tattered clout, then he'd haul his wind an' would come about, an' suddenly jibe as his sheet runs out, with his anchor slowly slippin'.

"Then he straightens up like he'd took a brace, an' at once he stops his yawin'; an' the next we knows, with a stately grace, he is runnin' free with nary trace o' the fore sheet hauls as had just took place, an' with all his canvas drawin'. An' over the starboard rail he trips, with a heavy an' certain motion; an' he tries in vain for to catch the strips as hung from the davits, an' down he slips till the whole o' his Shanghaied carcass dips itself in the rollin' ocean.

"An' just as I sees him a-goin' down, an' a-yellin' undelightful, a fish as would weigh two hundred pound come dashin' up an' a-lashin' roun', while he grinds his teeth with a crashin' goun' that scares me somethin' frightful. For I sees as the fish was a swordfish beast, as was tryin' hard to grab him. An' he waves his tail an' he never ceased to churn the waves to a frothy yeast with his sword, as was four feet long, at least, an' with which he tries to stab him.

"So I lowers myself from the after deck, an' at once begins a grabbin'; an' I managed to rescue that Shanghaied speck from the fish, as comes like a railroad wreck, an' 'tves his sword an' a hot o' neck through the walls o' the Captain's cabin. When I gets him aboard he was drippin' wet, an' a-headin' close to sober. So I modest bows like I thought I'd get three hearty cheers for 'e mark I'd set, but the Cap's remark: 'I will not forget if I lives till next October.

"For the Skipper's face, wich at first was red, gets purple an' congested, an' he stamped an' roared, an' wagged his head, an' swore in a manner that's most ill-bred; an' if I related one-half he said I could easy become arrested. "Now, there ain't a seaman I recollect but can take a joke an' snicker, but in spite o' that, why, yer might expect as a skipper's temper would be a wreck when a Shanghaied chap with a scrawny neck has drunk up his private liquor. Wich the same was the Captain's present state an' he adds to his former speakin' some words pertainin' to me, the mate

as had saved the chap from a righteous fate, an' allowed the fish for to perforate the ship, which begins to leakin'. "An' he says to me, 'Since you've been the soul o' this herolike seafarin' you can go below when she starts to roll an' hold your hand in the gapin' hole till we gets the vessel to Diamond Shoal an' we does some small repairin'. An', furthermore, since you've been so strong, an' has saved this useless

Sat singing to a star; In the shadow of his bungalow He strummed his low guitar. And he sang of eyes Where the love light lies Like hazy night in the summer skies; Where the blood runs red And hearts are free. Ah, woe is me! Ah, me! "A lover's lane is Mexico, And bright eyes roam afar;

Ah, woe is me! Ah, me! "Wich song, . . . was beautiful, sad an' low, it starts my thoughts to flowin'; an' I sees at once we could gain the dough for to last us a couple years or so, by fittin' a voyage to Mexico—wich the same it was bright an' knowin'. When I tells my scheme to the Shanghaied Man he at once becomes effusive, an' he drops his banjo an' grabs my han' an'

the case—but my arms is somewhat scrawny." "So I looks him o'er from top to toe, an' I sees as I can't deny it; but I says to him, careful an' straight an' slow:—'Go doubt,' says I, 'what you say is so, but since you are willin' to check the flow I'm eager to let you try it.' Then he takes my seat an' up I stan', after three whole days o' settin'. An' I stretches my legs an' I rubs my han', an' remarks to myself 'twas a clever plan to allow the detestable Shanghaied Man to come in for a little wettin'.

"So I leaves him there on the cabin floor, where he tries for to stop the leakin'. An' I starts aloft, but just afore I manage to get to the hatchway door I hears a remarkable howl an' roar an' a most unhuman shriekin'.

"An' there was the Shanghaied chap sprawled out, with his arm through the leaky gratin', while around him I sees the water spout, an' fill his mouth when he tries to shout, as his arm was too lean by a foot about for to fill up the broken platin'.

"I has to turn back to express regret, an' assure him as seas ain't harmin', though sometim' annoy in an' often wet, an' if he desired to preserve the set o' his collar an' hat he could do it yet by stickin'

twist, in, an' a few harpoons as were used for whales, with several barrels o' iron nails, such as when they drifts in the tropic gales would start any ship to listin' "For the hole as was made by the fish's lip was right through the starboard plater; an' I says to myself, if we tilt the ship on her port beam—unds, why, this ugly rip will clear the waves an' we'll make the trip protected from all disaster.

"The same was a clever scheme as come to my mind, as was always schemin'; for though I am sometimes morose an' glum my thoughts have a habit o' goin' some, an' never allows 'em to steep in rum, like those o' the Shanghaied seaman.)

"Well, I makes ber list like a drunken wreck with the aid o' the able steward. An' the leak rose free, as I did expect, an' the water it stops its flow direct, while the floor an' the booms an' the after deck slants ten degrees to loo-ard.

"Then I hears a yell such as turned me blue, an' a terrible loud commotion; an' up through the after hatch I flew an' sees that the Captain an' all the crew had slipped from the deck, when she listed to, an' were flounderin' in the ocean. An' the Shanghaied Man an' the cook an' me we makes a noble sally, an' for half o' a mortal hour we three we struggles an' fights with the mighty sea, till the Cap'n an' crew were as safe as we an' a-dryin' 'em in the galley.

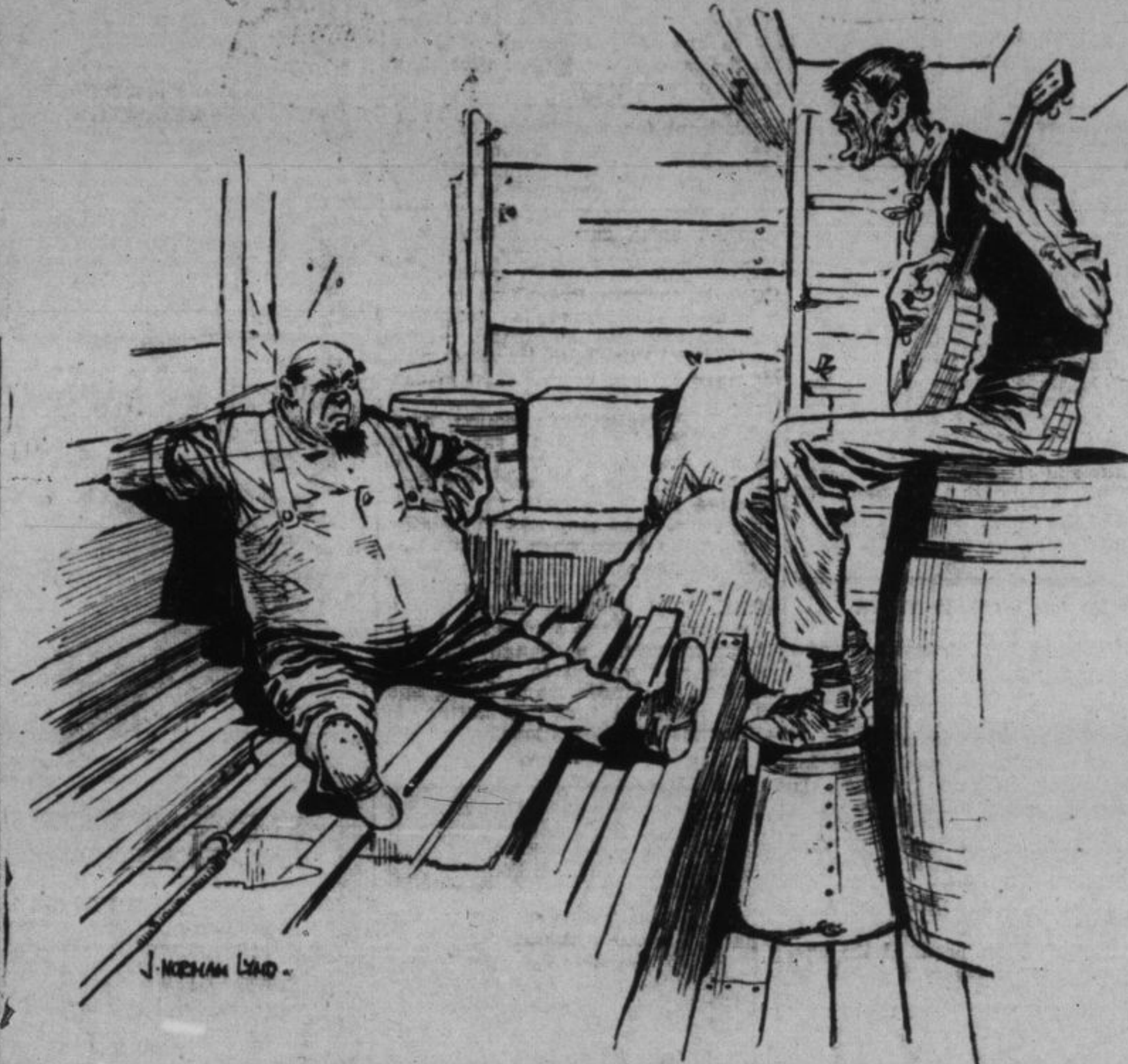
"Then we mans the ship, does we clever three—since she had no chance o' sinkin'—with the main-s'l up an' the boom a-lee an' the sheet run out, as the wind was free; an' we sideways bounds toward the quiet sea, where the Diamond light was winkin'. An' by seven bells, why, we hauls the light, where the waves was gently rockin'. An' we brings her about an' we trims her right, an' she answers her rudder so sharp an' bright that a good full hour fore the fall o' night the injured ship was dockin'.

"As we sets abaft in the moonlight gleam an' watches the Pleiads cluster, we notes as the Cap'n did peaceful seem, so we musters our courage an' gets up steam for to break the news o' our latest scheme, wich the same was the filibuster. An' just as sure as these words is true, an' as truth is an institution, the Captain, instead o' a cussin' blue, remarks as the plan was a good one, too, wich attitude, I may say, was due to my excellent elocution.

"But first," says he, "we must fix the boat where the fish has busted through it, for it certain is that she'll never float with a hole like this Shanghaied feller's throat; but I have no cash for to pay the note—so I'll let you fellers do it!"

"An' just as sure as my word is good (an' I can't express it stronger), the Shanghaied feller an' me we stood ashore as no honest seaman should an' dropped to the practice o' sawin' wood for seven-teen days or longer.

"Till we'd earned the cash for to fix the rail as was the hull adornin', but the manner in which we hoisted sail an' cleared for the South through the tropic gale is a different sort o' a truthful tale, as I'll tell some other mornin'."



"That Shanghaied feller stood by an' told his tuneful tales o' the brave an' bold."

person, I'll send his banjo an' him along for to fill you up with his high class song, an' mind that he musicates good an' strong, or

And the nights are filled with moon and maids. And many maids there are. But sorrows sleep

"You'll hear somethin' more than cursin'." "So there I sits in the after hold, with the wind an' rain a-stingin', for three whole days in the wet an' cold, while that Shanghaied feller stood by an' told his tuneful tales o' the brave an' bold, wich the same it was cruel singin'. But the third night out he emits this tune in a voice as was thick an' throbbin' like the wallin' voice o' an octaroon as was out on a bunt for a ripe raccoon, an' the first bit occurs to me, why, soon I was wipin' my eyes an' sobbin'— "A missing man in Mexico

Where love runs deep In tropic hearts—and life is cheap. Where hearts grow red Through jealousy. Ah, woe is me! Ah, me! The dagger's keen in Mexico And blood is quick to flow; And lovers pay in cruel way The heavy debt they owe. And none is slow To aim the blow When love is wronged—and who's to know Where love is king And law is free?

"I managed to rescue that Shanghaied speck." "I'd hit on the wery plan as he'd formed himself while the music ran, an' it made the thing conclusive. "Then we gets together an' tried to think how to tell the Captain of it, for the Shanghaied feller he seems to shrink from facin' the Cap (since he'd stole his drink), an' if I pulls out, why, the ship would sink an' the waves would close about it. 'I regrets,' says he, 'but I fear to face the Cap, who is big an' brawny, but I'm perfectly willin' to take your place an' plug the leak for a little space, while you goes aloft an' explains

his other arm in. Wich the same he does with a doleful moan, as raises my own compassion; an' to see him a-soakin' himself alone heart breaks a heart (wich was never stone), so I starts a scheme as was all my own an' was planned in master fashion. "An' while he struggled an' shivered an' shook, an' shouted in would sink an' the waves would fuge an' largo (wich words I read close about it. 'I regrets,' says he, 'but I fear to face the Cap, an' I calls the cook, as was loved who is big an' brawny, but I'm perfectly willin' to take your place an' plug the leak for a little space, while you goes aloft an' explains

heavy tr's, as had an ungainly