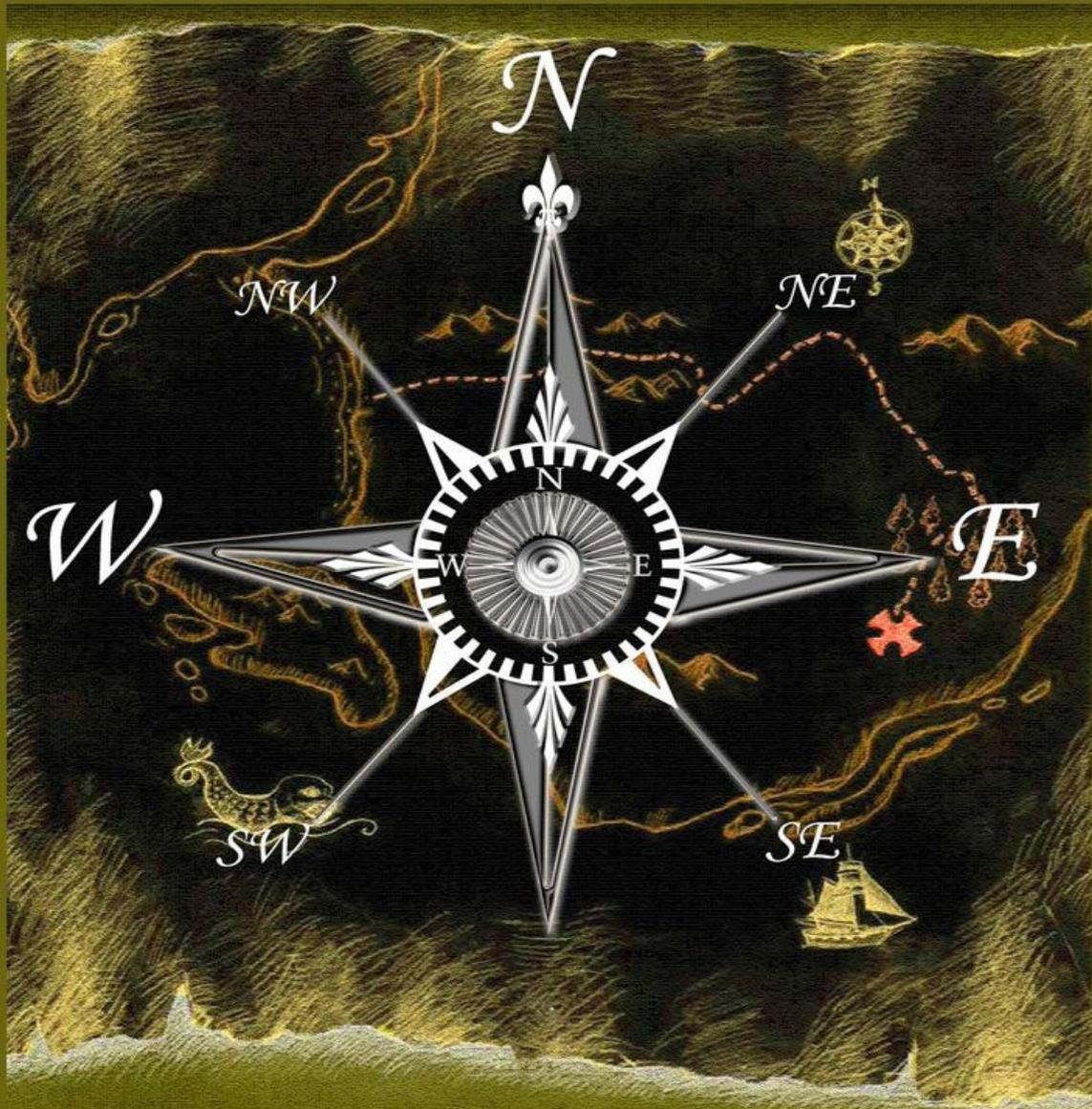


JULES VERNE



MISTRESS  
BRANICAN

ILLUSTRATED EDITION

# **Mistress Branican**

**Jules Verne**

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## **Jules Verne - A Biographical Primer**

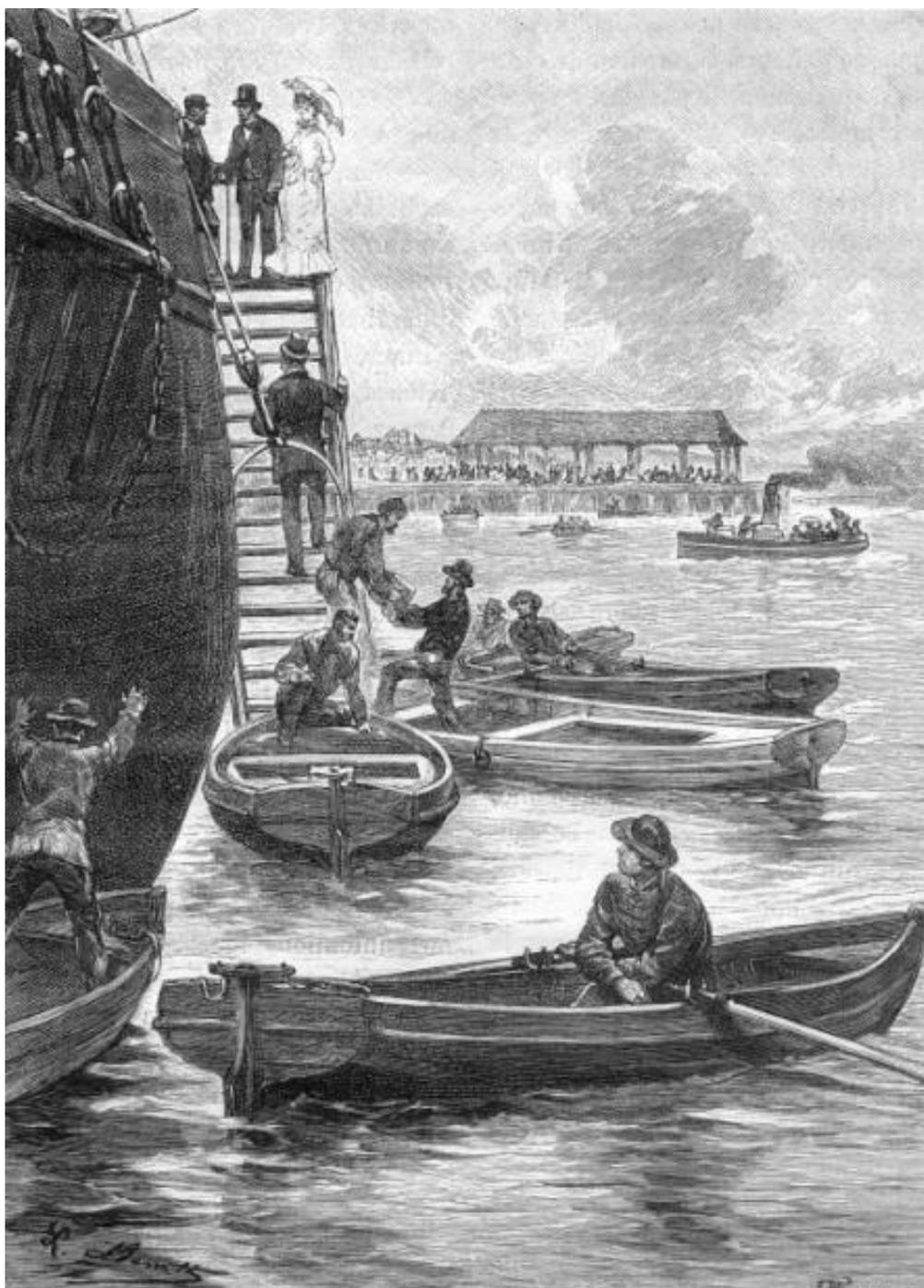
Jules Verne (1828–1905), French author, was born at Nantes on the 8th of February 1828. After completing his studies at the Nantes lycée, he went to Paris to study for the bar. About 1848, in conjunction with Michel Carré, he wrote librettos for two operettas, and in 1850 his verse comedy, *Les Pailles rompues*, in which Alexandre Dumas fils had some share, was produced at the Gymnase. For some years his interests alternated between the theatre and the bourse, but some travellers' stories which he wrote for the Musée des Familles seem to have revealed to him the true direction of his talent—the delineation, viz., of delightfully extravagant voyages and adventures to which cleverly prepared scientific and geographical details lent an air of verisimilitude. Something of the kind had been done before, after kindred methods, by Cyrano de Bergerac, by Swift and Defoe, and later by Mayne Reid. But in his own particular application of plausible scientific apparatus Verne undoubtedly struck out a department for himself in the wide literary genre of voyages imaginaires. His first success was obtained with *Cinq semaines en ballon*, which he wrote for Hetzel's *Magazin d'Éducation* in 1862, and

thenceforward, for a quarter of a century, scarcely a year passed in which Hetzel did not publish one or more of his fantastic stories, illustrated generally by pictures of the most lurid and sensational description. The most successful of these romances include: *Voyage au centre de la terre* (1864); *De la terre à la lune* (1865); *Vingt mille lieues sous les mers* (1869); *Les Anglais au pôle nord* (1870); and *Voyage autour du monde en quatre-vingts jours*, which first appeared in *Le Temps* in 1872. The adaptation of this last (produced with success at the Porte St Martin theatre on the 8th of November 1874) and of another excellent tale, *Michael Strogoff* (at the Châtelet, 1880), both dramas being written in conjunction with Adolphe d'Ennery, proved the most acceptable of Verne's theatrical pieces. The novels were translated into the various European languages—and some even into Japanese and Arabic—and had an enormous success in England. But after 1877, when he published *Hector Servadac*, a romance of existence upon a comet, the writer's invention began to show signs of fatigue (his kingdom had been invaded in different directions and at different times times by such writers as R. M. Ballantyne, Rider Haggard and H. G. Wells), and he even committed himself, somewhat unguardedly, to very gloomy predictions as to the future of the novel. Jules Verne's own novels, however, will certainly long continue to delight readers by reason of their sparkling style, their picturesque verve—apparently inherited directly from Dumas—their amusing and good-natured national caricatures, and the ingenuity

with which the love element is either subordinated or completely excluded. M. Verne, who was always extremely popular in society, divided his time for the most part between Paris, his home at Amiens and his yacht. He was a member of the Legion of Honour, and several of his romances were crowned by the French Academy, but he was never enrolled among its members. He died at Amiens on the 24th of March 1905. His brother, Paul Verne, contributed to the Transactions of the French Alpine Club, and wrote an Ascension du Mont Blanc for his brother's collection of Voyages extraordinaires in 1874.

## **Mistress Branican**

**PART I**



## **CHAPTER I - THE *FRANKLIN***

There are two chances of never again seeing the friends we part with when starting on a long voyage; those we leave

may not be here on our return, and those who go may never come back. But little heed of these eventualities was taken by the sailors who were preparing for departure on board the *Franklin* in the morning of the 15th of March, 1875.

On that day the *Franklin*, Captain John Branican, was about to quit the port of San Diego, in California, on a voyage across the Northern Pacific.

A fine vessel of nine hundred tons was this *Franklin*—a barquentine fully canvased with gaff sails, jibs and staysails, and with topmast and top-gallant-mast on the fore.

Long and narrow in the bow, finely modeled in the quick-works, and with a good clean run, her masts gently raking and strictly parallel, her standing rigging of galvanized wire as stiff as iron bars, she was of the most modern type of those elegant clippers which the North Americans find so well adapted for their ocean trade and which compete in speed with the best steamers of their Mercantile marine.

The *Franklin* was so well built and efficiently commanded that not a man of her crew would have shipped on another vessel—even with the assurance of obtaining higher pay. All were preparing to start content in their double confidence in a good ship and a good captain.

The *Franklin* was to make her first voyage on behalf of William H. Andrew, and Co. of San Diego. She was bound to Calcutta by way of Singapore with a cargo of American goods to return with Indian products to one of the *Californian* ports.

Captain John Branican was a young man of nine and twenty, with an attractive but resolute face, his features telling of unusual energy; he possessed in the highest degree that moral courage so superior to physical courage—that “two o’clock in the morning courage,” as Napoleon called it—that is to say, the kind that faces the unexpected and is ready for action at any moment. His head had more character than beauty, with his rough hair, his eyes animated with a keen, frank look which flashed like a dart from their black pupils. It would be difficult to imagine a man of his age more robust in body or constitution. That was clear enough in the vigor of his handshakings which indicated the ardor of his blood and the strength of his muscles. But what we have particularly to note is that the spirit contained in this body of iron was a good and noble spirit, ready to sacrifice its life for its kind. John Branican was of the character of those rescuers whose coolness enables them to perform heroic acts without hesitation. He had given proof of this early in life. One day, among the broken ice of the bay on a capsized boat, he had saved children like himself; and later on he had not belied the instincts of self-sacrifice which had marked his youth.

A few years after John Branican had lost his father and his mother, he had married Dolly Starter, an orphan, belonging to one of the best families of San Diego. The girl’s dowry was a modest one, and suitable for the position, equally modest, of the young sailor, then a mate on a merchant vessel. But there was reason to think that Dolly would one day be the heiress of a very rich uncle, Edward Starter, who lived a farmer’s life in the wildest and most out-of-the-way part of Tennessee. Meanwhile it would have to be enough to live on for two, or even for three, for little Walter—Wat, by abbreviation—came into the world in the first year of the marriage. Thus John Branican—and his wife understood it—could not dream of abandoning his

profession as a sailor. In the future he would see what he could do, when the fortune came by inheritance, or by his enriching himself in Andrews' service.

Besides this, the young sailor's promotion had been unusually rapid. He had advanced quickly, and he had advanced straight. He was a captain at an age when most of his colleagues were only mates. If his abilities justified this promotion, his advance was explained by certain circumstances which had properly drawn attention to him.

In fact, John Branican was popular at San Diego, and at the different ports on the *Californian* coast. His acts of self-sacrifice had been noted with applause, not only by sailors, but by the merchants and shipowners of the Union.

A few years before, a Peruvian schooner, the *Sonora*, had come ashore at the entrance to Coronado Beach, and the crew would have been lost if communication had not been established between the ship and the shore. But to take a rope out through the breakers was to risk one's life a hundred times. John Branican did not hesitate. He threw himself amid the waves which came rolling in with extreme violence on to the reefs and then came beating onto the beach in a terrible surf. In sight of the death which he would have faced without thinking of the danger, the people would have held him back. He resisted; he hurled himself towards the schooner; he succeeded in reaching her, and, thanks to his bravery, the *Sonora's* crew were saved.



About a year afterwards, during a storm which broke some five hundred miles out in the Pacific, John Branican had another opportunity of showing what might be expected from him. He was mate on the *Washington* when the

captain was washed overboard by a wave at the same time as half the crew. Remaining on board a disabled ship with half a dozen seamen, most of them injured, he took the command, and although the vessel had lost her rudder, he managed to handle her, and brought her into San Diego under jury masts. This almost unmanageable hulk contained a cargo worth five hundred thousand dollars, and belonged to Andrews.

Great was the young sailor's reception when the *Washington* was moored in the port of San Diego. As the chances of the sea had made him captain, there was not a voice among the whole population against confirming him in his rank.

It was under these circumstances that Andrews built the *Franklin* and offered him the command. He accepted it, for he felt himself equal to the post, and could pick and choose his crew, for people had confidence in him. And that is how it came about that the *Franklin* was beginning her first voyage under the orders of John Branican.

The departure was an event for the whole town, Andrew's was justly considered one of the most honorable firms in San Diego. Of the highest character for the security of his business relationships and the strength of his credit was Mr. William Andrew, who directed its affairs with a sure hand. This worthy shipowner was not only esteemed, he was loved. And his behavior towards John Branican was unanimously applauded.

There was thus nothing to be astonished at if during this morning of the 15th of March, a numerous gathering of spectators—in other words a crowd of friends, known and unknown, of the young captain—appeared on the quays of

the Pacific Coast Steamship Company to greet him with a last cheer at his departure.

The crew of the *Franklin* consisted of twelve men including the boatswain, all, however, good sailors belonging to San Diego and happy to serve under the orders of John Branican. The mate was an excellent officer, named Harry Felton. Although he was five or six years older than his captain he was in no way offended at having to serve under him, nor was he in any way jealous of the position his captain held. He considered that John Branican deserved his position, he had sailed with him before and they mutually appreciated each other. Besides, what Mr. William Andrew did must be well done. Harry Felton and his men were devoted to him body and soul. Most of them had already sailed in some of his ships. It was, as it were, a family of officers and sailors—a numerous family devoted to its chief, which constituted its maritime staff and did not cease to increase with the prosperity of the house.

And it was without apprehension, or rather with ardor, that the crew of the *Franklin* were entering on this new campaign. Fathers, mothers, relatives, were there to say farewell, but to say it to those whom they would soon see again. “Good-bye, and see you again soon, shall we not?” It was only a six months’ voyage, a simple passage during the fine season between California and India, there and back between San Diego and California, and not one of those expeditions of commerce or discovery which keep a ship for long years on the most dangerous seas of the two hemispheres. The sailors had been many other such voyages, and their families had been present at many more disquieting departures.

The preparations would soon be complete. The *Franklin* at her anchor in the middle of the harbor was already clear of

the other vessels, whose number bore witness to the importance of San Diego as a port. From the place she occupied she would have no need of a tug to take her out to sea. As soon as her anchor was short apeak, it would be enough for her to fill her sails, and a beautiful breeze would take her rapidly out of the bay without her having to go about. Captain John Branican could not have wished for better weather, nor a more favorable wind, over the sea which glittered under the rays of the sun around the Coronado islands in the offing.

At this time—six o'clock in the morning—it need scarcely be said that all the crew were on board. None of the sailors could return to the shore, and as far as they were concerned the voyage had already begun. A few of the harbor boats were at the starboard gangway waiting for the people who were bidding the last good-bye to their friends and relatives. These boats would take them to the quay as soon as the *Franklin* hoisted her jibs. Although the tides are not strong in the Pacific, it was quite as well to go out with the ebb which would soon begin.

Among the visitors we must particularly notice Mr. William Andrew and Mrs. Branican, accompanied by the nurse carrying little Wat; they were accompanied by Mr. Len Burker and his wife, Jane Burker, Dolly's cousin-german. Harry Felton, the mate, having no family, had no one to bid him good-bye. The good wishes of Mr. William Andrew were not wanting on the occasion, and he asked no more than that those of John's wife should be added to them—of which he was assured in advance.

Harry Felton was on the forecastle where half a dozen of the men were shortening in the cable at the capstan amid the metallic clatter of the pawls. The *Franklin* had already begun to move as the chain came grinding in through the

hawse-hole. The house flag with Andrew's initials floated at the main-mast head, while the American flag fluttered in the breeze from the peak, and displayed the Stars and Stripes. The square sails were all ready for setting as soon as the ship was under way under jibs and staysails.

On the front of the poop so as to lose nothing of what was being done, John Branican received the final instructions from Mr. William Andrew relative to the manifest, that is, the detailed statement of the goods which constituted the *Franklin's* cargo. Then the shipowner gave the young captain the papers, and added,—

“If circumstances oblige you to change your course do the best you can for our interests, and send me news from the first land you touch at. The *Franklin* may perhaps put in at one of the Philippines, for you have doubtless no intention of going through Torres Straits?”

“No, Mr. Andrew,” said John, “I should not think of taking the *Franklin* into the dangerous seas to the north of Australia. My road should be to Hawaii, the Ladrões, Mindanao of the Philippines, Celebes, and the Strait of Macassar, so as to reach Singapore by the Java Sea. From there to Calcutta the road is clear enough. I do not think the route will have to be changed on account of the winds we shall meet with in the Western Pacific. If you have anything of importance to telegraph to me send it to Mindanao, where I shall probably put in, or to Singapore, where I certainly shall.”

“That is agreed. On your part let me know as soon as you can the state of the market at Calcutta. It is possible that it may oblige me to change my intentions regarding the return cargo.”

“I shall not fail to do so, Mr. Andrew,” said John Branican.

At this moment Harry Felton approached, and said,—

“The anchor is apeak, sir.”

“And the ebb?”

“Is just beginning to be felt.”

“Hold on.”

Then addressing Mr. William Andrew, the captain, full of gratitude, repeated,—

“Once more, Mr. Andrew, I thank you for having given me the command of the *Franklin*. I hope I shall justify your confidence.”

“I have no doubt of it whatever,” said Mr. Andrew; “and I could not leave the business of my house in better hands.”

The shipowner shook hands with him heartily and moved towards the stern.

Mrs. Branican, followed by the nurse and the baby, rejoined her husband with Mr. and Mrs. Burker. The moment of separation had come. Captain Branican had now but to receive the last farewells of his wife and family.

Dolly, as we know, had not been married two years, and her child was hardly nine months old. Although the separation caused her profound grief, yet she would not let anything of it be seen, and restrained the beating of her heart while her cousin Jane, of weak nature and without energy, could not conceal her emotion. She was very fond of Dolly, and in

being near her had often found some alleviation of the sorrows caused by the imperious and violent character of her husband. But if Dolly concealed her anxieties, Jane was none the less aware of what she felt in all its reality. Doubtless Captain Branican would be back before six months, but at least it was a separation—the first since their marriage—and if she was strong enough to restrain her tears it could well be said that Jane wept for her. As to Len Burkner, the man whose look no tender emotion had ever softened, his eyes were dry, and with his hands in his pockets he moved about inattentive to what was going on, and thinking of one knows not what. Evidently he had no ideas in common with the visitors whom sentiments of affection had brought on board the ship at her departure.

Captain John took his wife's two hands between his, and drawing her towards him said, in a gentle voice,—

“Dear Dolly, I must go. I shall not be long away. In a few months you will see me again. I will find you again, Dolly, never fear. On my ship with my crew, what have we to fear from the dangers of the sea? Be strong, as a sailor's wife should be. When I come back our little Wat will be fifteen months old. He will be a big boy. He will be able to talk, and the first word I hear on my return—”

“Will be your name, John!” said Dolly. “Your name shall be the first he will learn. We will both talk of you and always! Dear John, do write to me at every opportunity. And tell me all you have done, and all you think of doing. Let me feel that thoughts of me are in all your thoughts.”

“Yes, dear Dolly, I will write to you. I will keep you posted up in the events of our voyage. My letters shall be like a log, with all my tenderness to the good!”

“Ah! John. I am so jealous of this sea which is taking you away so far. How much I envy those who love and whom nothing in life can separate! But no; I am wrong to think of that.”

“Dear wife, say to yourself that it is for our child that I go—for you also, to give both of you comfort and happiness. If our hopes of the future are one day realized, we shall never again separate.”

Here Len Burkner and Jane came near. Captain John turned towards them.

“My dear Len,” he said, “I leave you my wife; I leave you my son. I entrust them to you as being the only relations they have in San Diego.”

“You can depend on us, John,” said Len Burkner, endeavoring to soften the harshness of his voice. “Jane and I are here, and we will take care of Dolly.”

“And we will console her,” said Mrs. Burkner. “You know how much I love you, my dear Dolly! I will see you often. Every day I will spend a few hours with you. We will talk about John.”

“Yes, Jane,” answered Mrs. Branican, “for I shall not cease to think about him.”

Harry Felton again came to interrupt the conversation.

“Captain,” said he, “it will be time—”

“All right, Harry,” said John. “Up with the inner jib and mizen.”

The mate went off to execute the orders, which meant an immediate departure.

“Mr. Andrew,” said the captain to the owner, “the boat will take you back to the quay with my wife and her relations as soon as you like.”

“Now, John,” answered Mr. Andrew, “and once more—a pleasant voyage!”

“Yes! a pleasant voyage!” said the other visitors as they went down into the boats on the starboard side of the *Franklin*.”

“Good-bye, Len! Good-bye, Jane!” said John, clasping their hands in his.

“Good-bye! good-bye!” said Mrs. Burker.

“And you, my Dolly, you must go,” added John; “the sails are filling.”

And in fact the sails were giving a slight heel to the *Franklin*, while the sailors sang,—

*“Here goes one,  
A bouncing one,  
One will go, she will, oh!  
But two come home, they will, oh!  
Here goes two,  
A bouncing two,  
Two will go, they will, oh!  
But three come home, they will, oh!  
Here goes three—”*

And so on.

During this the captain had led his wife to the gangway, and as she put her foot on the ladder, feeling himself as incapable of speaking to her as she was of speaking to him, he could only clasp her tightly in his arms.



And then the baby, which Dolly had just taken from the nurse, stretched out its arms towards its father, shook its little hands as it smiled, and this word escaped from its lips,—

“Pa—pa! Pa—pa!”

“My John,” exclaimed Dolly, “you have heard his first word before separating from him.”

Self-controlled as was the young captain, he could not restrain the tear which rolled down onto little Wat’s cheek.

“Dolly!” he murmured, “Good-bye! good-bye!”

Then,—

“Are you clear?” he called in a loud voice, to put an end to this painful scene.

A moment afterwards the boat was off and heading for the wharf where its passengers would immediately land.

Captain Branican was busy getting under way. The anchor began to mount towards the hawse-hole. The *Franklin*, free from her last fetter, already felt the breeze on her sails, which were shaking violently. The big jib was almost close home, and the guyed mizen caused the ship to luff a little so that she could pass clear of a few vessels moored at the entrance of the bay.

At a new order from Captain Branican the mainsail and foresail went up together with a simultaneous precision that did honor to the arms of the crew. Then the *Franklin*, coming round on the port tack, stood off out to sea.

From the wharf the numerous spectators could admire these different maneuvers. Nothing could be more graceful than this elegantly shaped vessel when she heeled to the capricious gusts of the wind. During the evolution she

approached the end of the wharf where Mr. William Andrew, Dolly, Len and Jane Burker stood within less than half a cable length; and consequently the young captain again had a glimpse of his wife and her relations and friends.

They all replied to his voice which was clearly heard, and to his hand which he stretched out towards those from whom he was going away.

“Good-bye! Good-bye!” said he.

“Hurrah!” shouted the crowd of spectators, while the handkerchiefs waved in hundreds.

Liked by all was Captain John Branican! Was he not the townsman of whom the town was most justifiably proud? Yes! they all would be there on his return when he appeared outside the bay.

The *Franklin*, which was already at the mouth, had to luff to avoid a long mail boat just coming in. The two ships saluted by dipping their American ensigns.

On the wharf Mrs. Branican stood motionless gazing at the *Franklin* rapidly sailing away under the fresh breeze from the north-east. She would follow her with her eyes as long as her masts were visible over Island Point.

But the *Franklin* was soon round the Coronado Islands outside the bay. For a moment the house flag at the masthead was visible through a gap in the cliffs. Then she disappeared.

“Good bye, John. Good-bye!” murmured Dolly.

And why was it that an inexplicable presentiment prevented her from adding, "*Au revoir?*"

## **CHAPTER II - FAMILY MATTERS**

It is necessary to speak in more detail of Mrs. Branican, whom the different events of this history will bring into fuller light. At this time, Dolly—an abbreviation for Dorothy—was one and twenty. She was of American birth. But without going very far back in her pedigree, there could be found the generation which allied her to the Spanish or rather Mexican race, from which the chief families of this country are descended. Her mother, in fact, was born at San Diego, and San Diego was already founded while Lower California still belonged to Mexico. The vast bay discovered about three and a half centuries before by the Spanish navigator, Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo, was at first named after San Miguel, but received its new name in 1602. In 1846 the province changed its tri-colored flag for the Stars and Stripes and since then it has formed one of the States of the Union.

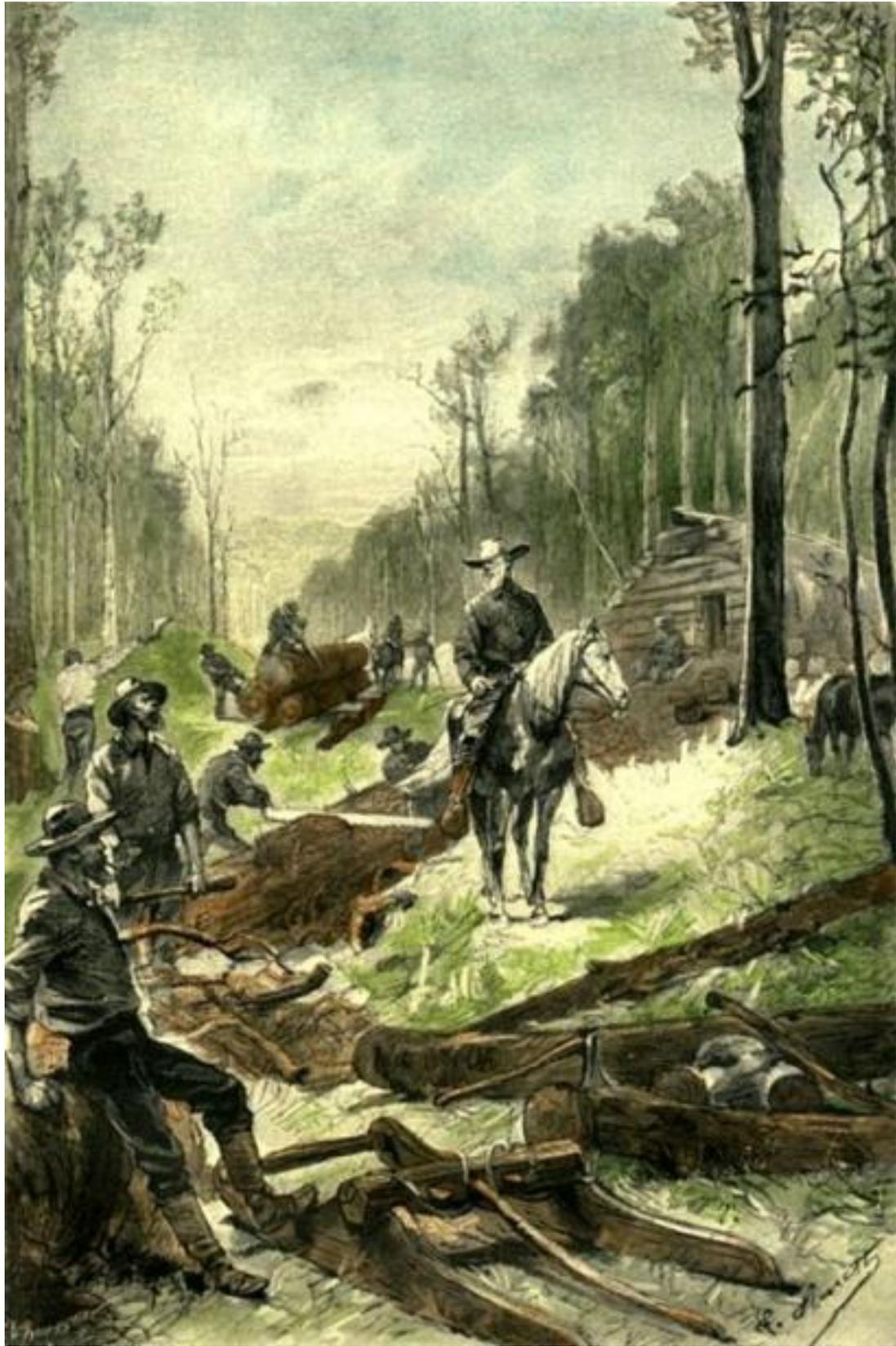
Of middle height, with a face lighted up by eyes large and deep and black, a warm complexion, abundant hair of rich dark brown, with hands and feet rather strongly made, as is generally the case in the Spanish type, a walk firm and graceful, a physiognomy denoting energy of character and goodness of heart—such was Mrs. Branican. She was one of those women who cannot be looked upon with

indifference, and before her marriage Dolly had the reputation among the girls of San Diego—where beauty is not at all rare—of being the one most worthy of attention. She was of a serious, reflective turn of mind, in its larger sense, and was of enlightened views, gifts which marriage would assuredly develop in her.

Yes! under whatever circumstances, grave as they might be, Dolly, now Mrs. Branican, would know how to do her duty. Having frankly looked straight at life and not through the deceitful surfaces of a prism, she possessed a noble spirit and a strong will. The love with which her husband had inspired her rendered her more resolute to accomplish her task. If the case required it—and this is not an empty phrase when applied to Mrs. Branican—she would give her life for John, as John would give his for her, and as both would give for the child born to them in the first year of their union. They adored this baby, which had just lisped the word “papa” at the moment the young captain was separated from him and his mother. The resemblance which little Wat bore to his father was striking—in the features at least, for he had the warm complexion of Dolly. Of vigorous constitution he had nothing to fear from childish ailments. Besides, he was so carefully looked after. Ah! what dreams of the future, the paternal and maternal imagination had already dreamt for this little being whose life had barely begun.

Assuredly Mrs. Branican would have been the happiest of women, if John’s position had allowed him to abandon his trade as a sailor, of which the least of the drawbacks was this necessity of separation from each other. But when the command of the *Franklin* had been offered to him, how could she even think of keeping him from it? And besides, had she not to think of the necessities of housekeeping, and providing for a family which might not always consist of

this one child? Dolly's dowry was hardly enough for the needs of the house as it was. Evidently John Branican might reckon on the fortune which the uncle would leave to his niece, and very unlikely things would have to occur for this fortune to escape him, for Mr. Edward Starter was almost a sexagenarian and had no other heiress than Dolly. In fact, her cousin, Jane Burker, belonged to the maternal branch of the family, and was in no way related to her uncle. Dolly would be rich—but ten years, twenty years might pass before she came into her inheritance. And so John Branican was obliged to work at present, if he had no reason to be anxious about the future; and he had done well in continuing in Andrews' service, in addition to the interest which had been given him in the results of the *Franklin's* voyages. And as besides being a sailor he was a merchant well acquainted with trading affairs, there was every chance of his acquiring by his work a certain degree of comfort while waiting for the heritage of Mr. Edward Starter.



One word concerning this American—whose “Americanism” was quite original. He was the brother of Dolly’s father and consequently her uncle. It was her father, the elder by five or six years, who had so to speak brought up the younger, for both were orphans; and the younger Starter had always retained for him a lively affection augmented by gratitude. Circumstances favoring the elder he had followed the steady road to fortune, while the younger brother had wandered along the crossroads which rarely lead to anything. He had gone off to engage in lucky speculations in buying and clearing vast extents of land in the State of Tennessee, but he had never broken off communications with his brother, whom business kept in the State of New York. When he had become a widower he had settled at San Diego, the native place of his wife, where he died just after the marriage of Dolly with John Branican had been decided on. The marriage took place when the mourning was over, and the young couple’s entire fortune was the very modest heritage left by Starter senior.

A short time afterwards there had arrived at San Diego a letter addressed to Dolly Branican by Starter junior. It was the first he had written to his niece, and it was to be the last.

In substance this letter said, in a form as concise as it was to the point: although Starter junior was a long way away from her, and although he had never seen her, yet he did not forget that he had a niece, his own brother’s daughter. If he had never seen her it was because Starter senior and Starter junior had never met since Starter senior had taken to himself a wife, and because Starter junior lived near Nashville in the remotest part of Tennessee while she dwelt at San Diego. Between Tennessee, and California there were several hundred miles which it was in no way

convenient for Starter junior to travel, and if Starter junior found the journey too fatiguing for him to go and see his niece, he thought it would be no less fatiguing for his niece to come and see him, and he begged her not to think of taking any trouble in the matter.

In reality Starter junior was a regular bear—not one of those American grizzlies with claws and fur, but one of those human bears who are specially fitted to live outside all social relationships. But that was no concern of Dolly's. She was the niece of a bear—be it so! But this bear possessed an uncle's heart. He did not forget what was due from Starter junior to the brother's daughter who would inherit his fortune.

Starter junior said that this fortune was already worth having. It was then worth 500,000 dollars, and could not but increase, for clearing speculations were prospering in the State of Tennessee. As it consisted of land and cattle it would be easy to realize at good prices, and there would be no difficulty in finding buyers.

If this was said in that positive and somewhat brutal fashion which is peculiar to Americans of the old type, it was said all the same. The fortune of Starter junior would go entirely to Mrs. Branican and her children; but in the event of the death of Mrs. Branican, without descendants, this fortune would revert to the State, which would be very happy to accept it.

Two things more.

1. Starter junior was a bachelor. He would remain a bachelor: "the folly he had avoided between the years of twenty and thirty he would avoid at sixty," so his letter said. There was nothing then to turn aside this fortune, as he