

SIR JOSEPH

You've a remarkably fine crew, Captain Corcoran.

CAPTAIN

It is a fine crew, Sir Joseph.

SIR JOSEPH

*(examining a very small midshipman)*

A British soldier is a splendid fellow, Captain Corcoran.

CAPTAIN

A splendid fellow indeed, Sir Joseph.

SIR JOSEPH

I hope you treat your crew kindly, Captain Corcoran.

CAPTAIN

Indeed I hope so, Sir Joseph.

SIR JOSEPH

Never forget that they are the bulwarks of England's greatness, Captain Corcoran.

CAPTAIN

SO I have always considered them, Sir Joseph.

SIR JOSEPH

No bullying, I trust - no strong language of any kind, eh?

CAPTAIN

Oh, never, Sir Joseph.

SIR JOSEPH

What, never?

CAPTAIN

Well! Hardly ever, Sir Joseph. They are an excellent crew, and do their work thoroughly without it.

SIR JOSEPH

Don't patronize them, sir - pray don't patronize them.

CAPTAIN

Certainly not, Sir Joseph.

SIR JOSEPH

That you are their captain is an accident of birth. I cannot permit these noble fellows to be patronized because an accident of birth has placed you above them and them below you.

CAPTAIN

I am the last person to insult a British sailor, Sir Joseph.

SIR JOSEPH

You are the last person who did, Captain Corcoran. Desire that splendid seaman to step forward.

*(Dick comes forward)*

No, No, the other splendid seaman.

CAPTAIN

Ralph Rackstraw, three paces to the front - march!

SIR JOSEPH

*(sternly)*

If what?

CAPTAIN

I beg your pardon - I don't think I understand you.

SIR JOSEPH

If you please.

CAPTAIN

Oh, yeas. Of course. If you please.

*(Ralph steps forward)*

SIR JOSEPH

You're a remarkable fen fellow.

RALPH

Yes, your honor.

SIR JOSEPH

And a first-rate seaman, I'll be bound.

RALPH

There's not a smarter topman in the navy, your honor, though I say it who shouldn't.

SIR JOSEPH

Not at all. Proper self-respect, nothing more. Can you dance a horn-pipe?

RALPH

No, your honor.

SIR JOSEPH

That's a pity, all sailors should dance hornpipes. I will teach you one this evening, after dinner. Noe, tell me - don't be afraid - hoe does your Captain treat you, eh?

RALPH

A better Captain doesn't walk the deck, your honor.

ALL

Aye! Aye!

SIR JOSEPH

Good. I like to hear you speak well of your commanding officer; I dare say he doesn't deserve it, but still it does you credit. Can you sing?

RALPH

I can hum a little, your honor.

SIR JOSEPH

Then hum this at your leisure.

*(hands him music)*

It is a song that I have composed or the use of the Royal Navy. It is designed to encourage independence of thought ad action in the lower branches of the service, and to teach the principle that a British sailor is any man's equal, excepting mine. Now, Captain Corcoran, a word with you in your cabin on a tender and sentimental subject.

CAPTAIN

Aye, aye, Sir Joseph. Bosun, in commemoration of this joyous occasion, see that extra grog is served out to the ship's company at seven bells.

BOSUN

Beg pardon, if what, your honor?

CAPTAIN

If what? I don't think I understand you.

BOSUN

If you please, your honor.

CAPTAIN

What!

SIR JOSEPH

The gentleman is quite right. If you please.

CAPTAIN

If you please!