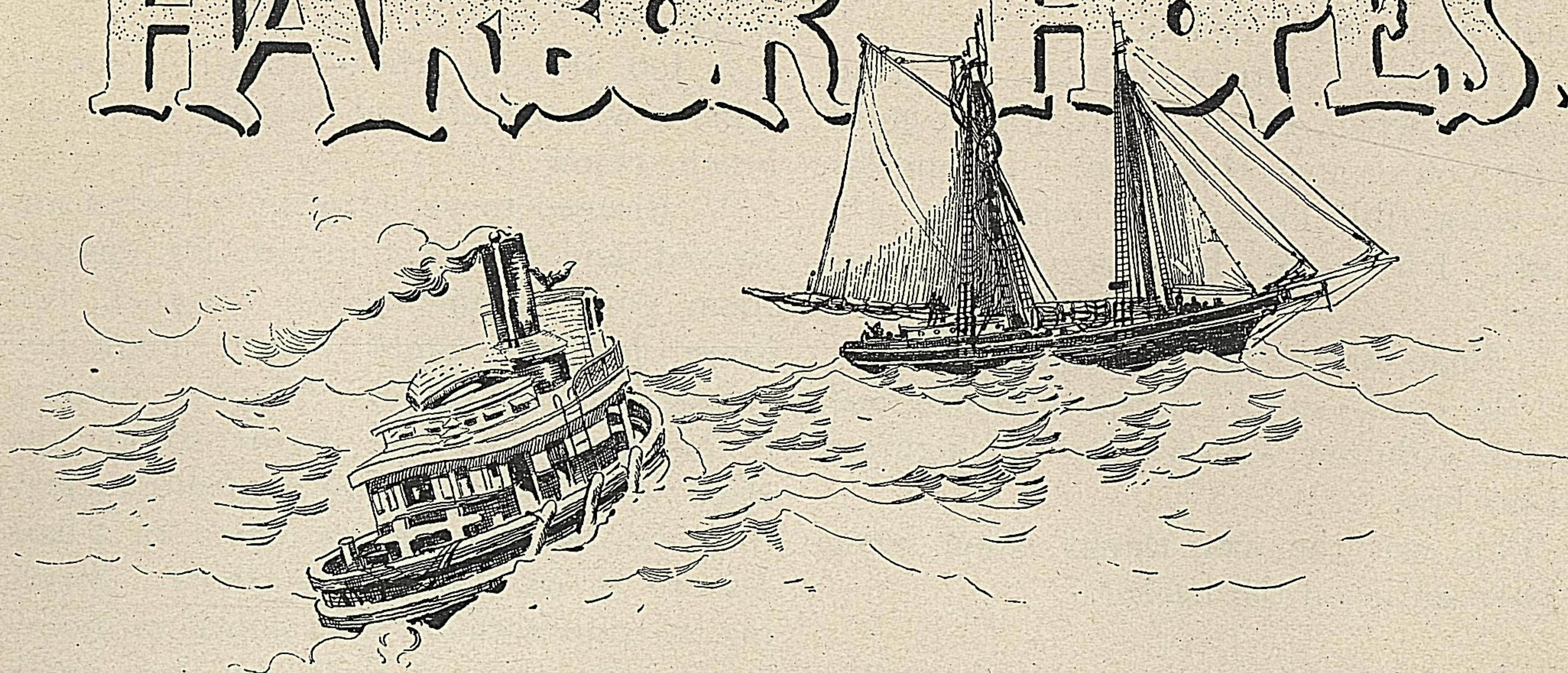


HARBOR HOPES.



By Maximilian Foster.

Illustrated from life by I. W. Taber.

ON the ways she had been christened the "Fancy"—a ribald whim of fate—but the crews that came to know her evil habits called her more names than this. Her first owner she broke. The next, after paying her price half-over in repairs, cursed her for what she was, and sold her for what he could get. She was squat, snub-nosed, and blowsy—a brute of a harbor tug; unhandy, ill-mannered, and always looking like a retarded offering to the junk-heap.

When the Blue Star Company bought the "Fancy" she was at her worst. She had forgotten for years the touch of a paint-brush; the gold-leaf had moulted from the eagle on her pilot-house, and her upper body was as full of patches as a peddler's breeks. But this was not all—her engine, a single-cylinder, high-pressure machine, racked on its foundations at every stroke; steam wheezed from all the weakened valves, while the furnace-grates gorged more coal than either her work or her worth could warrant. Moreover, the machine was full of tricks. It had a way of hanging fire if given steam too quickly on a dead centre, and if the crank was pried over, the piston shot up with a shock that bid fair, some day, to drive the

cylinder-head clean through the roof of the deck-house. Man after man departed her engine-room in doubt and terror; she was fired by men that could get no work elsewhere, and then, in a final extremity, destiny appeared in the person of Garrity, her last engineer.

The Blue Star people made no other change; they were tired of paying for repairs. But for Garrity's toil and perseverance, and his shifts to make her work, the "Fancy" would soon have gone to swell some scrap-iron monument to the memory of forgotten hulks. Hour after hour he stood guard with a wrench and an oil can, one eye on the gauges, the other on the engine, helping the cripple to stand up to its duty on the bed-plates. It was his honor to do his best, but there were other engineers in the trade—men older than he—that would have left the machine to itself, to rend and rack asunder.

Garrity's declaration of policy came as a climax to an interview, personal and purely confidential. It was held in the smudgy engine-room with Dolan, the "Fancy's" pilot. Dolan saw no hope of a better command while the tug was still afloat, so he had suggested craftily that with a little less attention the life of the "Fancy's" engine would abruptly