JOHNNIE QUICKSTEP'S WHALING VOYAGE

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Johnnie Quickstep's whaling voyage by George Paul Goff

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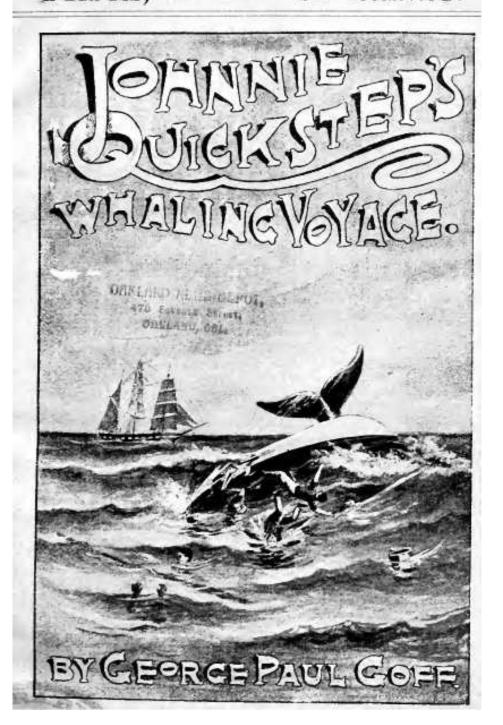
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GEORGE PAUL GOFF

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JOHNNIE QUICKSTEP'S

Whaling Voyage

By GEORGE PAUL GOFF

AUTHOR OF "SAN ANTONIO AND ENVIRONS," "THE HAUNTED ISLAND," "NICK BABA'S LAST DRINK," ETC.

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TO MY SAILOR BROTHER,

HARRY N. MORSE,

THIS BOOK IS LOVINGLY DEDICATED.



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CHAPTER I.

HOW I CAME INTO THE WORLD.

The story which I am going to tell is a part of the events of my youth, when the cares and trials of human existence had settled down upon my broad shoulders, sending me forth upon the journey of life with but few years and no experience at all.

I first saw the light in the great city of New York and came of well-born and well-bred parents, neither of whom inherited anything of this world's desirable things except energy, good manners, independence of character and industry. I had never seen my father except in a photograph, for reasons which will appear as this story progresses, but which to me were eminently satisfactory. The love and devotion of my mother to my father, and to his memory, was one of those beautiful episodes that belong to the scheme of matrimony, but alas, which seldom accompanies that theoretically blissful condition of life. She never tired of telling me all that concerned the author of my being, how he looked, how he carried himself, why I had never seen him, what he said, and much more that I do not think it important to relate at this time. this way my love for him grew and increased into almost hero worship just from hearing his virtues spoken of day and night from my earliest recollection.

It was during the absence of my father, who was serving his enlistment in the armies of the war for the Union, that I was solemnly ushered into this breathing world. I had no agency in bringing myself here, and so became notens votens a factor in the battle of human life—a scheme which seems to me now to be fuller of thorns than of roses.

My father was a small merchant at the time he enlisted, and had a thriving business, which, could he have devoted himself to it, would have made a competence in time and enabled him to have supported his family in ease and comfort. The family comprised father, mother, and the humble individual who is telling this story. My father had good reason to believe when he departed for the seat of war that another member would be added to his family, and was apprised in due time by letter that a son had been born to him. That was all he knew about it, for he was killed in one of the first battles of that sanguinary fratricidal contest.

My real name was not Quickstep, but on the contrary quite a high sounding one, my father being descended from one of the old Knickerbocker families. But he was disgraced in the eyes of his aristocratic relatives, and cut off from family communion in consequence of having committed high treason by marrying my mother, who possessed his heart, and who was the one being in all the world to me, having patience, goodness, virtue, tact, education,