

A SEA QUEEN

A Novel

BY

W. CLARK RUSSELL

AUTHOR OF

"THE WRECK OF THE 'GROSVENOR'" "THE 'LADY MAUD'"
"A SAILOR'S SWEETHEART" ETC.

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Dedicated
TO
MRS. RICHARD RUDDOCK
OF SUNDERLAND
A SAILOR'S DAUGHTER

A SEA QUEEN.

CHAPTER I.

I AM BORN AT NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

I AM not only a sailor's daughter, but I may say that I was born among sailors, as much so as if my birth had taken place on board ship; for on the evening on which I came into the world my father was entertaining a company of captains and mates in the parlor of his house, and my mother would say the doctor told her that when he went down-stairs, to give my father the news of my arrival, the room was so full of tobacco-smoke that the guests loomed through it like colliers in the mist of a Tyne fog, so that after peering about, and hitting, as he supposed, upon my father, and saying, "Captain, there's a bundle of troubles for you up-stairs, but she's a fine baby, and as far as I can make out promises to be like you," he found that he had addressed the wrong man.

The doctor, I say, told my mother that story, and what followed. My father, on hearing the news, flourished a long clay pipe, and pointing to a steaming bowl on the table, exclaimed, "Lads, here's punch enough to christen the lassie with. Sit down, doctor—sit down, man; there's a pipe and yonder's a tumbler. What shall her name be, lads? I'll speak last."

This produced a dead silence, for not only did the presence of the doctor make the sailors shy, but one of them, a Blyth skipper, who was in Newcastle on business, said that "inventin' was not in his line, and that Snowdon"