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A BOUNTY BOY



A :: :: :: ::

BOUNTY BOY

*Being some Adventures of a Christian
Barbarian on an unpremeditated Trip
Round the World* :: :: :: ::

By :: :: :: :: :: :: ::

Frank T. Bullen, F.R.G.S.

*Author of "The Cruise of the Cachalot,"
"With Christ at Sea," etc.* :: :: ::

LONDON
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*PREVIOUS WORKS BY THE
SAME AUTHOR*

THE CRUISE OF THE *CACHALOT*.
IDYLLS OF THE SEA.
THE LOG OF A SEA WAIF.
THE MEN OF THE MERCHANT SERVICE.
WITH CHRIST AT SEA.
A SACK OF SHAKINGS.
A WHALEMAN'S WIFE.
DEEP SEA PLUNDERINGS.
THE APOSTLES OF THE SOUTH-EAST.
SEA WRACK.
SEA PURITANS.
A SON OF THE SEA.
CREATURES OF THE SEA.
BACK TO SUNNY SEAS.
SEA SPRAY.
FRANK BROWN, SEA APPRENTICE.
OUR HERITAGE, THE SEA.
ADVANCE ; AUSTRALASIA.
THE CALL OF THE DEEP.

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To
DR. ROBERT F. HORTON
IN LOVING ADMIRATION



PREFACE

THIS perhaps should rather be called a prefatory note, since all the introduction to my book that I deem necessary is to say that in it I have endeavoured to sketch a community for whom I have the highest admiration, the descendants of the mutineers of the *Bounty*, who I maintain are a standing proof of the miraculous power of the Gospel in the regeneration of mankind when unhindered by sacerdotal interference. And in order to make the subject as full as possible, I have taken one typical islander, the *Bounty Boy*, out of his surroundings into the world, and told his adventures therein with a view of showing how the Christian who is one indeed may fare.

FRANK T. BULLEN.

MELBOURN, CAMBS.,
September, 1907.

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CHAPTER I

A Christmas Bounty

FIFTY years ago, in a primitive but comfortable house situated in one of the fairest spots that this world can show, a group of men and women were holding a prayer meeting. An unobserved listener who had been accustomed to such gatherings elsewhere would have been at once impressed by the perfect naturalness of these people, in that not one of them behaved differently from how we should expect a happy family to act in the presence of their parents while one of them was relating some interesting experience. There was no self-conscious posing for effect, no making of long prayers composed of meaningless repetitions with an occasional verse of Scripture or of a hymn thrown in for effect, no unnatural groaning or shouting, all was quiet, sweet, and delightful.

But truly, never did a body of Christians exercise their privileges under more heavenly conditions upon this earth. Through the open sides of the house could be seen in one direction a delectable stretch of pasture land interspersed with graceful trees and edged by dazzlingly white sand, beyond which lay a vast sapphire space flecked with snowy-topped wavelets, whose diamond spray glittered rejoicingly under the glowing beams of the fervent sun. In the opposite direction tree-clad hills sprang from emerald meadows and cultivated land, soar-

ing upward until the fleecy cloud forms kissed their summits lovingly as they gently glided past, flecking the smiling verdure beneath with patches of softest shade and thus enhancing the beauty of the picture.

Yes, it was a fair spot to the eye, as any one who knows Norfolk Island can testify, but that to the worshippers was not the greatest of their many blessings. Time had been, and that not long before, when this earthly paradise was polluted and degraded by the presence of the very dregs of humanity, the lees of the convict settlements of New South Wales ; and it would be hard to say which was worst, the crimes for which they were being punished, or the nameless horrors to which they were subjected in excess of legal punishment. Happily that evil blot had been removed from the lovely island, and now it was peopled by a tiny community of less than two hundred, who were, it is safe to say, quite near attainment of the heavenly state on earth, and consequently were as happy as it is possible for man to be while bearing about with him the body of physical death.

Here the worship of God, free from any idea of form or ceremony, was as natural to all as their ordinary conversation. Crime and vice were unknown as was wealth, possessions were practically held in common, sickness and disease and their necessary concomitant the doctor had no place, and a spirit of idyllic simplicity reigned, of sweet contentment and peace such as has never been known elsewhere in any other community whatever.

Now on this particular Christmas Day the meeting of which I spoke at the beginning of the chapter had a special significance. The fifteen or sixteen persons composing it had met together to celebrate,

not Christmas merely, but the birth of a babe who was hourly expected. It would not be fair to say that they were special friends or relations of the parents in a community where no enmity existed and where all were more or less related to one another, better to say that they were just those who could most conveniently be there on a day when every household was celebrating in purest fashion the coming of the Babe of Bethlehem. And these particular friends were in specially bright and happy mood, for to them the expected event bore a double character. So they passed the time in the pleasant exercises of which I have spoken, their petitions being singularly free from suggestions that the mother elect or the coming babe were in any danger, until suddenly the door of the one inner apartment was thrown open, and a splendidly handsome man appeared bearing the welcome infant, which plunged, squalled, and gave other vigorous tokens of his conscious entrance to the world of sense.

As if with one accord and in perfect harmony all burst into the glorious old song "Angels from the realms of glory," singing with all their heart in their voices. And as the lovely strains of the refrain died away, a sweet voice from within cried, "Thank you all, dear ones; I'm so happy." A glad response went up from all, and then, after duly admiring the boy, the visitors strolled away, all but two, to spread the glad news among the community that another dear life had arrived to share their happy lot.

Now this was a particularly happy occasion, for the parents of the new comer were, in a society where all were friends, all were stalwart, healthy and handsome, pre-eminently so. Grace, the mother,

who had only been married to Philip Adams some eighteen months, had been the acknowledged beauty of the island, no mean honour where all the girls were beautiful. She was also exceedingly beloved by all the women and men alike, nor was there a trace of jealousy of her, that hateful weed that poisons so many lives. Moreover, she was an accomplished musician, and had for a long time filled the post of teacher of that precious acquirement of singing (they had no instruments), with the result that their choir, which comprised nearly the whole of them, would have taken high rank anywhere, except that the vocal exercises were almost wholly confined to hymns, just a very few old songs, such as the "Land o' the Leal," "Robin Adair," "Allan Water," etc., making up the balance.

Philip, her husband, was a prime favourite too, but for his high manly qualities allied to a simple and gentle nature that invited as well as gave confidence to all. He was awarded, without claiming it, the chief place in the island as the strongest swimmer, the swiftest runner and the most expert boatman, as well as the hardest worker of them all. And those were the qualities that appealed to these children of nature next to their supreme adoration of the good and true. Physically he was easily first of the community, standing six feet six inches on his bare feet, forty-five inches round the chest, with a perfect mouth of teeth; and at the time of the birth of his first child he had never known an hour's illness in his life.

Thus it will be seen that the entrance of our hero upon life's arena was one that any monarch might vainly covet for his child, one indeed that left nothing to be desired, even though his surroundings were almost as primitive as those which encompassed

the birth of the Babe of Bethlehem. In fact, I feel sure that I shall be accused of painting too idyllic a picture of the conditions which obtained in Norfolk Island at that date, and I hope and believe in a great measure in both Norfolk and Pitcairn Islands to-day; but when I recall the great mass of unbiassed testimony to all these facts which is easily available, I feel much comforted in the belief that my readers will rejoice with me in the knowledge that so happy a people have been and are existing in the simple light of the Gospel.

But we must return to the scene in the house after the guests had gone singing away. The two remaining were John Young, father of the mother, and Christian Adams, father of Philip, their respective wives being in the inner room with the mother. As soon as Philip had handed back his son to the women he returned to the society of the elder men, who were both of them splendid specimens of manhood in the prime of middle age or between forty and fifty. It must be noted in passing that, strange as it may seem to our exotic notions of hospitality, there was nothing set before these guests to drink: the water jar stood in the corner with a coco-nut shell to drink out of; there was no tobacco, there were no chairs, only clean soft mats upon the spotless floor; and yet they were perfectly happy because none of these things had become desirable or necessary to them.

As Philip stretched his great limbs on the mat by the side of his father, the latter looked round at him lovingly and said, "What are you going to call the babe, Philip?"

"Ha! ha!" laughed Philip. "I've thought of the finest name for him you ever heard, and I want you to guess what it is. I've told Grace about it,

and she is delighted, says it's just a splendid idea. Now guess."

The two elder men ran through practically every name on the island; truly there was not much variety, for, as some of you know, these happy folk have always seemed averse from using any but a certain set of well-known names. But to all their suggestions Philip laughingly shook his head until his father's brow clouded a little and he said, "I hope you haven't got any high-falutin names out of some book; it will savour of sinful pride if you have."

"No, father," cried Philip, "but what do you say to Christmas Bounty Adams?"

Up sprang the two men to their feet in such delight that it seemed as if they must leap into the air.

"Why that is the most splendid set of names in all the world. Christmas Bounty Adams! Well, he's a lucky fellow, and I only hope he'll be a Christmas bounty all the days of a long life. And now, if the wife can spare you—she'll do with a little sleep, I'm sure—we'll stroll round and tell our friends this fresh bit of news, they will all be so pleased."

Only pausing to peep in at his wife for a moment Philip rejoined the two elder men, and together they strode through the beautiful glades with the sound of gladsome song ringing in their ears on every hand, in tune with their overfull hearts.

Very briefly, for the story should be well known, let me recall the circumstances of these primitive folk being on Norfolk Island. Most people know the romantic story of the mutiny of the *Bounty*, and how, after scenes of bloodshed and riot as bad as can be imagined, the mutineers and their descendants, on their little island home of Pitcairn, turned to

God and became as little children in their simple, loving faith. Not so many, however, are aware that in 1831, some forty years after their first landing on Pitcairn, they outgrew their small territory, and at their own request many of them were conveyed to Tahiti. The gross immorality of the natives of that lovely island, however, so dismayed them that they sacrificed the only available wealth they possessed, the copper bolts of the old *Bounty*, and purchased a passage back to their beloved Pitcairn. They managed to maintain themselves there, although much straitened for room, until in 1855, two years before my story opens, the British Government, having discontinued the use of Norfolk Island as a penal settlement, granted it to as many of them as cared to migrate thither, a privilege which was taken advantage of by between two and three hundred of them.

And although they never wavered in their earnest affection for the little island that had seen their first emergence into the shining light of the Gospel, they evinced the same sweet spirit of contentment, coupled with energy, in all they undertook, so that in about a year they were as fully and completely settled there as could possibly be, and were, if anything, more passionately fond of England, a land they never saw, than ever they had been. Thus, having cleared the way as it were, let me go on to say that in addition to the features of natural beauty which I have already enumerated, Norfolk Island is the centre of a most prolific haunt of sperm whales, and the capture of these gigantic and dangerous mammals is one of the chief pursuits of the agile islanders, who are probably about the best boatmen in the world. For in addition to their wonderful whaling skill, the practice of landing in the tremendous

surf that beats upon the harbourless coast has made them very expert in this most difficult art, while in the water they are, like their maternal ancestors the Tahitians, almost amphibious.

Now, as the three men strolled along they were continually invited as they passed the pretty houses to come in and join in the general rejoicings that were afoot, the singing and thanksgiving; for all this people's joys were intimately associated with their simple faith; their religion, bright and happy, was not merely a part of their life, but the whole, the mainspring of all they thought and said and did. And as the three were nothing loth, besides having their bit of news to communicate, their progress was but slow. Still, eventually they reached the abode of their venerable pastor, who was not only the shepherd of this peaceful, docile flock, but teacher and magistrate, or rather arbitrator since there were no evil-doers to punish. He received them literally with open arms, and having heard their news lifted up his voice in praise and solemnly blessed them, promising to visit them the next day in their homes and view the wonderful new baby.

Then as the day was wearing to a close practically the whole population came joyously down to the shore, and there more like a school of porpoises than men and women, boys and girls, they disported in the limpid waves, swimming and living until, healthily wearied, they regained the shore and sought their several homes.

Philip and Grace, overflowing with happiness, knelt by the side of the babe and solemnly commended him to their loving Almighty Friend, asking only that he might grow to be a good man amongst good men, preserving the golden tradition of the community, and if it should please God that he

should wander from their shores as some of their brethren had done, that he might always present to the eyes of those with whom he associated the pattern of a man of God. Then they took their simple meal of fruit and bread and milk and went to rest.

CHAPTER II

A Whale Hunt

HAPPY, says the proverb, is the nation that has no history. And since history is so largely made up of the unspeakable horrors of war with all its attendant retinue of resultant miseries, there would really seem to be more truth in this proverb than in most. Yet it must not be forgotten that, surfeited as we are with tales wherein all those things that make life a burden almost too grievous to be borne are set forth in hideous detail, it is no easy task to make a peaceful narrative interesting nowadays. As difficult as to wean the epicure's palate from highly seasoned and mysteriously concocted dishes back to the simple luxuries of childhood.

Nevertheless it is an inestimable privilege to be allowed to try, and I do hope to show that these simple happy folk possessed the true grit and manliness that all must admire while being totally free from that whining hypocrisy and hateful assumption of spurious virtue that makes the world generally disgusted with so many professed religionists. And here let me say that these happy islanders were what they were from love of the infinitely good and in no wise from the fear of a punishing hell too terrible even to be thought of by their simple trustful minds.

Very early the next morning, Grace, in perfect

health and strength, and in accordance with time-honoured custom, took her babe down to the sea and bathed him in those waters which henceforth would be as familiar to him as the dry land. And as she laved his tiny limbs in the shining waves, she noted with swelling heart how strongly and sturdily he kicked, and she longed to take him in her arms and plunge into deep water at once. But she realized that so severe an ordeal could not be good for him, and although she sorely missed her morning swim, was about to return when she heard her husband's voice behind her.

"Give him to me, Grace," he cried.

"Thank you, dear," she replied, and laying the babe in his strong arms, she turned back and sprang joyously into the sea, plunging and flashing through the surf like a fish or a seal in the perfect abandonment of delight that these children of the wave know when in the element they love so well. Prudence restrained her from going too far yet, so in a few minutes she returned, and taking the crowing babe from Philip she sat sedately down upon a fallen tree trunk and watched her mighty husband as he in turn hurled himself through the surf and sported like a porpoise. His bath over, they returned to their home and breakfasted as they had supped, simply and heartily, and then, leaving Grace to receive the visits of matrons and maidens who would presently come trooping along, he departed to his work of cultivating their tiny fields.

But it was ordained that on this eventful day he was not to remain long at that peaceful task. He had not been thus engaged for more than an hour when a long-drawn cry arrested his attention and caused him to drop the tool he was using. It was the signal, well known to them all, that whales were

coming close in ; the watcher on a high overhanging cliff had spied them and sent his powerful voice ringing across the settlement, from which came hurrying an eager company ready for the great combat with the monsters of the deep. They gathered round the boats where, carefully covered in against the fervent heat of the sun, these precious craft lay waiting with all the gear, harpoons, lances, lines, etc., neatly stored in a shed by their sides.

Swiftly and with hardly a word their boats were equipped, the necessary preparations made, and in less than half an hour from the first sounding of the alarm the two boats, with six men in each, were launched and springing seaward under the pressure of five long ash oars wielded by men who were almost insensible to fatigue and whose rowing was a wonder and a delight to behold.

The watcher on the cliff guided them by means of well understood signs, that is, he made a human semaphore of himself, for it is not until very near to whales that men in boats can see them, and moreover the sperm whale does not send aloft a high column of vapour into the air as do other whales. His breathings are copious, but owing to the shape and position of the spiracle or blow-hole, the thick, highly charged breath spreads itself in a cloud immediately upon leaving his body. And that cloud does not ascend, it is thrust forward ahead of the whale, and being heavier than the air only spreads and gradually settles.

So guided by the look-out man, they laid to their oars with great energy, pulling with a peculiarly noiseless stroke. The blades entered the water cleanly and gripped it so firmly that the tough ash of the looms bent like the lower half of a fishing-rod when catching tarpon. There was no noise

either from the rowlocks, for they were padded with thick mats covered with green hide and kept well greased. This great care to preserve silence is absolutely necessary, for although as far as we can tell the sperm whale has little or no sense of hearing as we understand it, he is peculiarly susceptible to strange sounds, and the accidental clatter of an oar on a gunwale is quite sufficient to alarm a school of whales at over a mile's distance. What this other sense which answers the purpose of sight, scent, and hearing may be we do not know, we can only imagine; like so many other matters connected with the mysterious life of the whale it is hidden from us.

For an hour they thus toiled at the oar, being by that time several miles from the land they had left, so far indeed that even their keen sight could hardly distinguish the movements of their ally on the cliff, and then at the raising of the leader's hand they all ceased from their labour, lay on their oars and gazed keenly around. No sign of whale or spout was visible; but that only meant that it would be well to pause awhile, because the probability was that the creatures they were hunting had, according to their usual custom, sounded or gone down in quest of food.

Now as they did not know what the approximate size of the whales might be, they could only wait and watch, for small whales may only remain below from twenty minutes to half an hour, while full-sized bulls have been known to remain under water for as long as ninety minutes. Of course they kept good watch and patient withal, but when an hour had gone by and no sign came, each man felt that it was useless prolonging the quest. So they only waited now for the signal to return, being in

any case too far from the land for a successful capture, that is, to get their enormous prize home, supposing they did slay one.

The signal was soon given, and without a word of regret or grumbling, the boats' heads were turned shoreward, and with a leisurely stroke they began to retrace their way. There being no necessity now for silence, the boats' crews, as their custom was, began to sing, raising their tuneful voices in the melodious strains of some well-known hymn, until Philip suddenly lifted his hand in an authoritative gesture, at which singing and rowing stopped simultaneously. Without a word, all eyes being fixed upon him, he pointed ahead, where within a cable's length all saw the lazy spout of a whale, almost like a puff from a big pipe, rise from the sea.

With great care the oars were peaked, that is, the inner ends of them were drawn inboard until they could be tucked into circular cleats prepared for them, and short, broad paddles were produced, by means of which the boats were quite noiselessly propelled towards the unconscious whale. Philip, perched on a pair of cleats in the stern, guided the boat, which was well ahead of her sister, as she silently stole nearer the victim. Presently Philip swung his boat round, making the signal to the harpioneer to spring to his feet with his weapon as the boat glided alongside the quiet monster. And, then to the amazement of everybody, Philip shouted, "Put that iron down, Fletcher! This whale is safe from us. Look, boys!" All hands did look, and say that the object of their pursuit was a cow with a calf clinging to her huge breast, the nipple held in the angle of its immature jaw.

The boat lay perfectly still until the other boat came up, Philip raising his hand to warn his father

that something unusual had occurred. The newcomer swung alongside as Philip had done, and all hands stared at the pretty sight. And owing to their habit of thought, every one of those strong men understood intuitively why Philip had countermanded the attack, and not at all considering the loss to themselves in a monetary sense, fully agreed with him. So they lay on their oars and watched the mother, as supremely happy she lolled upon the shining sea and felt her offspring draining the life-giving milk. Then suddenly turning over on the other side to present the other breast, for the young whale cannot suck under water, she became aware of the presence of intruders and sank, settled noiselessly, leaving scarcely a ripple to mark the spot where she had been.

As soon as she had disappeared Philip cried, "Out oars, boys, and let's get home," following up his order by breaking out into song, in which all the twelve lustily joined in perfect harmony until nearing the beach, upon which the vast rollers of the Pacific, despite the glorious weather, broke in massive rollers topped with dazzling foam. A sweep or two of the steering oars and the graceful craft swung round head to seaward, and as the mighty combers came irresistibly shoreward just a measured stroke or two was made to meet them. Then, when the boats had mounted the glowing crests of the breakers, the oars were peaked and they were borne shorewards upon the shoulders of the advancing hill of water until they touched the beach, when every man but the steersmen sprang overboard, and snatching the gunnels of the boats rushed beachwards, digging their toes into the yielding sand as the retreating wave swept past them, until it was gone and they were all high ashore.

This feat, nothing to them who practised it nearly every day of their lives, is one of the supreme tests of boatmanship and must be witnessed or taken part in to realize the resistless onrush of the roller and the no less mighty drawback when, baffled, the vast rolling mass retreats. It is a manoeuvre to try the skill and stamina of the best, and the roll of its victims is very long. I speak feelingly, for on my first encounter with this business I was as near being drowned as could be. For not realizing the danger, I too leaped out of the boat with the others, and was at once hurled seaward like a piece of drifting seaweed, dazed and helpless, buried in the heart of a wave. But my Kanaka shipmates, as much at home in that immense turmoil as if they stood on the beach, grabbed me and held me against the rush of retreating water, then hauled me to land and in rough but effectual ways restored me to the world I had so nearly quitted. That was on the steep beach of lava fragments at Sunday Island in the Kermadecs.

A throng of villagers hastened down to greet the returned adventurers, full of eager questioning and sympathy. Some of them had been on the Head with the lookout man, and had witnessed the last encounter. Of course they could not understand what had happened, but in a few words Philip explained, and when he had done so, the public endorsement of the righteousness of his action was spontaneous and complete. For, after all, to this happy community what was a trifling loss like that compared with the gain which each felt they had made in the practice of mercy, of yielding to the best and truest impulses of the heart. And so there were no sour faces, no recriminations, only the usual mutual rejoicings.

Philip only paused long enough to see his gear bestowed and then strode away through the smiling meadows to his pretty home, where he found his Grace holding quite a little Court surrounded by maidens, matrons and children; she sat upon the threshold of the house, and her friends were picturesquely disposed about her. The baby was asleep upon her lap, undisturbed by the chorus of song that was going up from that concourse of fifty persons. It was a scene to gladden the heart of a painter or poet, and if it had been possible to bring it in its entirety before any assemblage of cynics in the world, they would certainly have been unable to resist its perfect charm.

Philip's coming was hailed with a long cry of joy, and he was immediately surrounded by a bevy of girls who pushed and pulled him into a place by the side of his wife. And there, enthroned as it were, they sat while the joyous crowd, augmented every moment until almost the whole community was present, sang and talked and sang again, offering all the love and congratulations that their hearts could feel or their lips express. The happening of the day out at sea was fully commented upon, calling forth immense manifestations of approval, for it was just the kind of thing that appealed to these gentle children of the sun, and thus the happy time wore on until the arrival of the patriarch minister who, however, wielded no priestly influence whatever.

All loved him and revered him for his saintly character as well as venerable age, but no one, not even the youngest, imagined that he had any prescriptive right to approach their God for them. Every one was taught as soon as able to understand that God was the all Father, Christ the near and

dear brother, and to choose a go-between from men was to do dishonour to the great love manifested towards men by God, to show practical disbelief in every word set down in the New Testament for their guidance and comfort.

Therefore though all showed the deepest respect and readiest reverence to Mr. McCoy at his coming, it was a respect and reverence entirely devoid of superstition, the loving homage of children to a father, or friend to friend. They gathered round him, brought him to the seat of honour beside Philip and Grace, and then waited with intense interest for what he should say to them, knowing that he had come amongst them for that purpose.

He rose, and in trembling tones began—

“ Beloved children, especially you by my side, Grace and Philip ; I am full of joy at being among you at this happy time. Surely we are peculiarly blessed among all the people on earth, here in this little out-of-the-way corner of the great globe. We live in love, fearing no evil, having all our wants supplied to the full. We suffer neither from cold nor heat ; from hunger nor surfeit. Disease comes not near us nor our live stock, and best of all this heavenly care has not made us arrogant and careless, for we feel as full of gratitude as our hearts can hold. And every day sees new mercies showered upon us. Some one of our little company has a special blessing, and being one in heart and mind we all rejoice in that blessing, and feel our mouths filled with praise.

“ The latest is the babe bestowed upon our beloved ones here, a babe lusty in form and beautiful of face, and given to us on the day whereon we celebrate the coming to earth of our brother, God manifest in the flesh, which in itself is a matter of great rejoicing. Truly it is a blessed babe. I know but little of the

great world with its teeming millions, I have been too happy among you all my life to wish to see more than I did on my one voyage, but what little I do know convinces me that it is rare if not unheard of for a child to come amongst a community and be received with such fervent love and sincere thanksgiving as this one. We all rejoice, for we have no doubt that he will be a beloved brother amongst us, worthily maintaining the high and sweet standard of love towards God and man which has so long prevailed among us. And if it should be the good pleasure of our Father that he leaves us for a time and visits other countries, we shall confidently look forward to his keeping up the character that we are so pleased to bear, the character of being children of God, not haughtily holding that we are better than others, but that we are only happy in the knowledge of the love of our Father for us His loving, grateful children. Little Christmas Bounty! upon your baby head rest all the prayers, all the love of this people, all united to you by ties of blood, but far more closely knit to you in the one bond of Christian love.

“ Brother and sisters, it is time for us to separate, for the day draws to its close. And before we sing our parting song of praise and thanksgiving, let us unite in the spoken word to our Father. Father, most good and gracious, we all thank you for your love. We have all that we can ask or think. Blessings innumerable crowd upon us. We have nothing to ask you for, only to praise you for the abundant joy and happiness you have given us in overflowing measureless plenty. Nothing, that is, for ourselves, but for those who suffer and sin, for those who toil hopelessly in darkness and slavery of various kinds, we ask that they may know Thee as we know Thee. That they may receive as we

do receive. They are as worthy as we are, but have not the same inestimable advantages. Ah, dear Father, bless our less fortunate brothers and sisters scattered about Thy beautiful world. Hear their pitiful cries, heal their gaping wounds, fill their hungry hearts, and may they all know Thy boundless love through Thy messenger Jesus, our Beloved One, the Saviour of mankind. Let us sing, dear ones, 'O God, our help in ages past.' "

That response was one to stir the most sluggish heart: no books, no instrumental help, but the grandest of all music, the glorious human voice when trained in harmony. The lovely woods and vales were filled with golden melody, every soul pouring itself out in purest praise. If only the most ardent scoffer at holy things could have been there, he would have found his pointed sarcasm grow blunt, his ready sneer fall harmless, for here was a people beyond the arrows of scorn, whose worship was indeed single-eyed. They worshipped God because they loved Him. They praised Him because they could not help it. No thought of gaining heaven or of avoiding hell entered their minds. They had already begun their heaven, and as for hell they never thought of it. If pressed they would doubtless have admitted that they believed in such a place, but with a thrusting aside shudder. What had it to do with them?

The sweet strain ceased, and the aged minister, rising to his unsteady feet, lifted his hands in blessing, his voice full of happy tears: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God Almighty, the leading of the Holy Spirit and the full knowledge of this intimate communion with the unseen be with each and all of you now and for evermore. Amen."

A moment's silence and the gathering quietly melted away to their happy homes, while the bright silver moon shed a splendid radiance over the peaceful scene.

CHAPTER III

C. B.'s Childhood

THE story of a boy growing from his birth to manhood in our centres of civilization cannot fail to be of interest if properly told, principally because of the thousand and one dangers that beset him in that perilous journey. This is the case, no matter how well or how ill brought up he may be, peril encompasses him round about, visible as well as invisible, peril from which no amount of care can adequately protect him. Indeed the care that is often bestowed has the effect of rendering the child's life a burden to him, especially if he be brought up at home. Moreover, if we are foolish enough to believe one thousandth part of what we read about food and drink and the deadly microbes and bacteria that lie in wait for us everywhere, we should certainly perish of worry or become, as faddists always do become, a misery to ourselves and a nuisance to all around us.

But here on Norfolk Island the child had every chance. And in telling of C. B. I am only taking the ordinary type: he had no advantages over his fellows. Fed by his mother alone, who had never known a day's illness in her life, never knowing the taste of drugs, living in the open air without ever being pampered by tight clothing of any kind, never too hot, never too cold; how could he help growing up to the age when he could run about,

without an ache or a pain, a sturdy, perfectly developed, perfectly healthy child? Of course he could swim as soon as he could walk, that to any one who knows the island goes without saying, and as soon as he could toddle down to the shore with the other children, spent, as they did, quite half of his time in the sea. The food given him was of the simplest: fruit and vegetables, milk and fish, very little meat, because it was extremely scarce for one thing, and for another, these gentle people only hunt when necessity drives, and never kill a domestic animal if it can be avoided.

So this child of love and prayer grew and waxed strong, a joy and delight to his parents, and a pleasure to all the community, as all the children were. In exuberant animal delight he and his companions climbed the trees and the mountains, tumbled about in the surf like so many dolphins, with never an anxious or fussy parent to say "don't." Cuts, scratches, bruises they gained in plenty, all treated in the simplest way and all getting cured in almost magically quick time, as do the hurts of animals and savages. And it must never be forgotten that these people led the perfectly natural lives of savages without any of the savage vices, that they knew and practised the virtues of civilization without its follies and crimes; what then could be expected in the result but perfect health and happiness?

With all this boisterous enjoyment of childhood the simple education that the venerable McCoy was able to impart was not neglected. Reading, writing and the first four rules of arithmetic were soundly taught, and by Grace the beautiful accomplishment of singing through the tonic sol-fa method. They were altogether a singing people; it was ingrained, so

that this took no trouble to teach. Beyond this in the way of education there was nothing except that the reading of the Bible was encouraged, not as a means of storing up virtue by reading so many verses or chapters, but for the pleasure and profit of seeing what God had said to His people. And this, with the exception of a few well-worn books, such as the standard poets, Dickens, Thackeray and Miss Wetherell, comprised their reading. None of the children were compelled to read as a task. When once they had learned to read they were allowed to read or not just as it pleased them.

Under such pleasant auspices as this what wonder was it that our hero at sixteen was as near being perfect in body and mind as the most exacting parent could wish. True, he would have been plucked at an examination for the fourth standard in any Board-school, but if he was ignorant of much school learning as Board-school boys know at home, he was also ignorant of a great number of other things, of practically all the evil knowledge acquired by our children in great cities in spite of all our efforts. And on the physical side, being a child of nature, there could be no comparison between him and city children of whatever class imaginable. His whole life, as was that of his companions, boys and girls alike, was spent in training, unconsciously, and so he was always fit for any of those manly exercises that the young human animal rightly loves. He could not play cricket or football, but he could swim and dive all day, could climb the tallest tree in the island like a monkey, could run from the level to the top of a three-thousand-foot hill without distress, and could not swear or lie, having never known any occasion for either.

Of course, he had not grown up so far without

having brothers and sisters—two of each had been added on to the family circle, all of them fine children capable of keeping up the credit of the island people. But we have no concern with them further than to note their arrival, and to record the fact that, as they grew old enough to realize things, they all adored their eldest brother, who, for some reason or another which they could not understand, was looked up to as possessing some mysterious blessing from on high beyond that accorded to any one else. They knew, however, that he was totally unconscious of this. He went on his happy care-free way, full of gay life, full of fun and harmless mischief, but also full of love for all around him.

It was now that he had his first real adventure. As I have said, he was sixteen years of age, and, as was usual among the island people, he was as big and strong as a full-grown man, though, of course, not with so much stamina. He was a constant companion to his father, who was now a mighty man indeed, at the meridian of a life that had been so well spent and so peaceful that all his powers were in perfection. C. B. was never tired of admiring his father's huge proportions, as, with only a pair of breeches on cut off at the mid-thigh, they swam or fished together. To C. B. his father was indeed a king of men, strong, wise and kind; and he was overjoyed to be near him, to feel his superiority, and to hope some day, if God willed, to be like him. They were companions in everything now that C. B.'s studies had finished, and the elder man felt his youth renewed as he watched his son springing to whatever work was in hand, felt indeed that he was signally blessed and was very happy.

So it came to pass that one morning, as soon as

the first gorgeous heralding of the dawn had overspread the sky, Philip and C. B. arose from their several mats (bedsteads, bedding and all the paraphernalia of our bedrooms being unknown and therefore unwanted), and after a loving kiss and a blessing from mother Grace, who was still beautiful and always abundantly happy, they strode down to the shore for the commencement of a day's fishing. It was the season when a special kind of fish greatly liked by the islanders came inshore near enough to be caught in large numbers with hook and line. It was always an occasion of great activity among the men, not that they depended upon the fishing, but because it afforded a large quantity of pleasant food, and they always attacked the opportunity eagerly.

So when Philip and his son reached the boat-house all hands requisite for manning the boats were there, and after the usual hearty greetings and the indispensable word of prayer, without which no enterprise was ever undertaken, were over, all sprang to the work, fairly hurling the vessels into the foaming surf, and in a few minutes the two vessels, doubly manned, were in the smooth water beyond the rollers, and to the accompaniment of happy song were making their way seaward to the fishing grounds.

The beauty of the day was not more marked than usual in such a lovely climate, but to any one who was accustomed to the grey cold mornings of our northern home it would have called forth ecstasies of admiration. For as the golden sun rose majestically from the horizon all nature was flooded with glory, an added wealth of beauty that made even those most accustomed to it catch their breath. The sea was like a sheet of shot-silk whereof every movement exhibited a wonderful play of different

colours and shades in endless variety, while the diversity of hill, dale and beach ashore, unable to compete with all this glowing series of tints, yet showed a splendour of illuminated contour flecked with passing cloud shadows that held the eye enchanted with its beauty.

Every member of the boats' crews noted this loveliness, revelled in it, and since there was no need for silence as in the chase of the whale, discussed it in such terms of affection as their limited vocabulary could command. Said John Young—

“Seems to me that the gold and jewellery of the New Jerusalem John writes about wouldn't please me like this. If God's going to make a new heaven and a new earth, I'd like to live on the new earth if it's going to be like this. But I can't imagine Him making it any better.”

“Ah,” responded Walter McCoy, “that's because you've never been away from here, one of the most favoured spots on His footstool. Now I've been down south of New Zealand in the winter, an' when the great gales blow, a sea gets up that's like a ravening host of wild beasts. Snow and sleet strike you like whips, and the cold searches the very marrow of your bones. Then I thought of our dear island home, and prayed God to take me back there quick or let me die.”

Philip chimed in, with one of his beautiful smiles mantling his strong face, “Walter, my boy, that was because you let your body dictate to your soul. I know, and when I was up the Behring Sea I hid away one night when the call came to work. I had all the man frozen out of me. And as I laid in the stinking corner I felt the bitterest pang of shame I have ever known. Something said to me, ‘You're a fine-weather man, and your trust in God only works

when you are comfortable.' I tell you, boys, that hit me worse than ever the mate's boot would have done if he had caught me. But I thank God that He gave me courage to rush out of my hole as if I had been flung out, and do the work that fell to my share. And the lesson has lasted all my life."

At that moment the leader in the other boat cried loudly, "Here we are, boys; ship oars and out lines. There's a splendid lot of fish, thank God."

All hands obeyed on the instant, and presently the boy was delighted beyond measure to see the fine big fish come tumbling inboard one after the other in quick succession. It was indeed a stirring scene, although from a sporting point of view it savoured too much of business, perhaps. These were not sportsmen though; they only fished to satisfy their bodily needs, having no idea of making game of taking life, their savage instincts having been entirely modified by their practical working belief in the loving Father.

They were in the height of their fishing, the boats being half full of spoil, when Philip, who had a very large fish on his line, turned to see how his son was faring with another big fellow, and as he did so, his foot slipped upon some slime in the sternsheets and he fell backwards, striking his side upon the boat's gunwale and falling overboard. A great shout of laughter went up from all the boat's crew except C. B., for with these amphibious islanders to fall overboard was just a bit of good fun. But C. B., craning over the side, saw that his father, instead of coming to the surface again like a cork, was still far below, and at the same instant he noticed an awful black shadow gliding swiftly in the direction of the still sinking man. Without a moment's hesitation he dived, feeling at the same moment

for the knife in his belt, a long keen-bladed weapon which all carried while fishing.

Downward he sped through the clear water, arriving by the side of his father's quietly undulating body just as a great glare of white showed the belly of a sixteen-foot shark as he turned to bite at this big piece of food. In a moment the boy had snatched his knife from his belt, and with one tremendous spring sideways had plunged it deep into the belly of the monster, and then with a strength that amazed himself sawed it lengthways along the great body. The water grew thick with blood, he groped blindly for the body of his father, felt nothing, swam gropingly about until almost bursting from lack of air, and then with a feeling of utter despair shot upwards to the surface.

One deep painful breath and, clearing his eyes, C. B. stared wildly about him. Then he gave one despairing cry of "Father!" It was answered by a dozen different voices cheerfully crying, "All right, all right," and in a moment or two he found two stalwart swimmers by his side ready to aid him if he needed help, and keeping up an incessant splashing in the water for the purpose of scaring the sharks. Guided by them he swam to the boat, and just as he snatched at the gunwale to climb inboard two huge sharks rushed towards the little group of three from opposite directions, meeting head on in full career with such a tremendous shock that they both sank quietly down apparently stunned, while the three friends climbed safely into the boat.

And there lay his father, still and pale as his bronzed face would show, but, God be praised, yet alive. C. B.'s first impulse was to fling himself down by his father's side and burst into an agony of weeping, for he thought that the dear one was dead; but,

without a restraining hand being laid upon him, he conquered himself and, trembling violently, said, "Is father much hurt?"

"We don't know yet," replied Walter McCoy, "but, thank God, he's still alive, and I can't imagine such a man as he is being killed by what he's just gone through. But we're getting ashore with all speed, and if you will take an oar it'll help you a lot: you'll know you're doing something for him that must be done and that with all your might: Give way, boys; we want to get home quick."

C. B. instantly seized an oar and laid to it with a will, as did all the rest, full of anxiety as they were to get their much-loved comrade home. So in a very brief space they made a landing, and were met on the beach by Grace, who with love's intuition, had felt that something had happened which needed her presence. When she saw the still limp form of her love, she only turned a shade paler and felt her knees tremble. Then quietly, as if inviting a few of them up to supper, said, "Please, friends, bring him gently along to the house where I can attend to him properly."

Then turning to her boy she kissed him, having noted his working face, saying, "Don't worry, dear; he's in our Father's hands and all will be right."

But C. B., boy-like, could no longer restrain himself, and bursting into a very tempest of tears, sobbed out, "I tried to save him, mother, indeed I did."

"Ay, that he did; no man could have done more than this boy, Grace," said the nearest men in unison. And as they followed the bearers of Philip across the fragrant fields to the house, Grace heard with a swelling heart of the noble deed whereby her first-born had proved his manhood, and man-

aged to find room in her stricken heart for pride that she had been permitted to rear such a noble son. Then dismissing the whole heroic deed from her mind for the time she hastened her steps, intent upon preparing a comfortable bed for her suffering husband. It was an ordeal through which she had never before passed, but she rose to the occasion, and when the bearers arrived she faced them calmly, and directed them where to lay him.

The ablest of the islanders in the matter of simple surgery soon arrived, and after keen examination of the insensible man declared that he was suffering from three broken ribs, a mere trifle in these stalwart men's eyes. What else there might be internally he could not tell, but he did what he could in bandaging the massive body tightly, and then suggested that they should all kneel and pray for the success of the means used. Which was done in simplest fashion, and as the prayer ended, all were startled to hear a sonorous amen from the hitherto unconscious man. It needed no ordinary restraint to keep them from bursting into cries of joy, but they did refrain, and with murmured thanksgivings all went away except the impromptu surgeon, Grace and her son, the younger children having been taken away by helpful neighbours.

The scene that ensued was a delightful one, Grace and her boy welcoming back the friend and father, who, except for an occasional spasm of pain flitting across his bronzed features, seemed to have entirely recovered from his recent terrible experience, and inclined to blame himself severely for letting "such a trifle upset him," as he put it. Indeed, except for the pain of his grating ribs, which at each movement reminded him of the mischief done, he was quite impatient of lying there, wanted to be up

and doing, although there was nothing to be done.

Suddenly his roving glance fell upon C. B., who, having finished some small task he had been engaged upon for his mother, was standing near gazing upon his father with eyes humid with love. Philip half raised himself, suppressing a groan of pain, and beckoning to his boy said, "Grace, this son of ours is a man. He has done a deed to-day of which any man might be proud and few men would even attempt. More than that he has saved me for you."

Grace replied, with one of her beautiful smiles shining on her still comely cheeks: "For that, if he had been a bad boy all his life instead of a very crown of rejoicing, he should possess the very core of my heart. But being what he is and has always been, I can only, as I have continually done since he was born, bless God for him humbly as I do for you."

Then Philip, putting his arm round the boy's neck, said slowly: "From this out my son, you are my partner as well. I look upon you no longer as a boy but a man, not merely as a son but as a brother, equal in all things. Grace, you must say good-bye to your little boy, who has attained unto the full stature of a man." At which his brothers and sisters, who had now returned, burst into loud lamentations, not realizing the importance of the occasion, only feeling that they had lost their play-mate.

But C. B. drew himself up with an air of native dignity and replied, "I felt like a man, dad, when I dived after you, but now I know I am one, and I hope, like you, I shall never do what a man ought to be ashamed to do."

There was another cheerful gathering at Philip's home that evening, and the usual round of prayer and praise which was the keynote of all their festivities, praise especially, floods of melody rising and falling across those peaceful savannahs and making them echo again. In all the pleasant exercises C. B. took his part, being now recognized as no longer a child, but he listened with greater interest than ever to the thousand-times repeated tale of the Lord's wondrous dealing with this little band of people descended from murderers and savages, yet by the special grace of Providence developing into the most consistently Christian people upon earth. And so, with a final triumphant outburst of the Old Hundredth, the happy meeting terminated, and the revellers dispersed across the scented meadows to their several homes.

One of the most remarkable things about primitive peoples is the way they recover from hurts ; wounds, bruises, fractures that would mean long and severe illness to civilized folk being treated by them as of little or no account. This is, of course, to be noted among animals, who recover with surprising rapidity and ease from the most shocking wounds, and with only the most rough and careless methods of surgery if they receive any attention at all. I have a big Labrador dog which was recently kicked in the face by a skittish horse. Owing to my absence from home nothing was done to the poor beast, whose jaw was exposed to a cut three inches long for four days. And the ghastly wound could not heal, because when it irritated him the dog would rub his face against a quickset hedge and tear the wound open again. I took him to a veterinary surgeon, who put three stitches in the gaping gash, drawing the ragged edges as closely together as

possible, and confining the poor animal for three days with a shield over his head. The result is that now, two months after the accident, it is impossible to see where the injury was.

And in just the same marvellous way will the human animal recover from the most ghastly wounds, although many savage customs militate directly against health. But when perfectly natural living is allied to purity of mind and body and an absence of every kind of stimulant whatever, we have a condition of things making for perfect health, such health as may only be seen among the people of whom I am writing.

As usual then Philip made so rapid a recovery that within a week he was going about his daily duties as if nothing had happened, and had quite forgotten the episode as far as his injuries were concerned. But his son was now his inseparable companion; they became as it were partners in every enterprise, and the proud father noted with complacent pride the development of his son's body and mind as being on the way to surpass his own. As far as ordinary school education went they were about equal, as indeed were all the islanders, for the subjects they learned were strictly limited, and they had no craving for higher education, not knowing or feeling any need of it.

But all unconsciously, during their long hours together, Philip was filling the boy with strong desire to see the great world without. Philip's adventures on his two voyages had been fairly exciting, but hitherto he had said little about them to his fellows, because there were many things connected with them that he did not care to recall. They had filled him with more ardent love than ever for his quiet island home, and he had used such influence as

he possessed to dissuade any of his friends from wandering.

Now, however, in reply to constant questioning, he told his son more than ever he had done before, recalling scenes long forgotten, while the boy listened with intensest interest and admiration for the grand father whom he almost worshipped. And so C. B. grew steadily towards manhood in all the best traditions of the community, until at eighteen years of age he had risen to the full stature of a man in all that makes for true manliness, innocent without being ignorant of all that was worth his knowing, brave, modest and strong, and withal, in spite of the uncouth garb in which he was clothed in common with all his fellows, handsome as the statue of a Greek god. And here endeth the sketch of Christmas Bounty's boyhood.

CHAPTER IV

Evil from Without

NOW it happened that one morning at about eight o'clock when the fishermen were about to launch out into the deep in their regular quest for food that a sudden cry of "Sail ho!" was raised and re-echoed until all the islanders heard it. A large sailing ship was standing in towards the bay with the obvious intention of communicating, and immediately everybody was on the alert. For in spite of their happy care-free life, which left little to be desired by them, there were certain needs which they had inherited, such as clothes, tea, sugar, flour, and tools, which the presence of a ship always brought vividly to their remembrance. And in consequence they were always ready to barter their simple commodities: fruit, vegetables, eggs, fowls, pigs, fish, etc.; for whatever they could induce the visitors to part with except liquor and tobacco.

So a boat was hurriedly launched, manned by the stoutest rowers, with Philip at the steer oar, and C. B. at the stroke, while the rest of the islanders busied themselves collecting such produce as they hoped the ship might be in want of. Fowls and eggs and fruit and milk and pigs, fresh food such as ships in that day were so often glad of. As the boat dashed alongside in splendid style the rowers noted that the ship was thronged with passengers of a curious type to them, hundreds of yellow faces peered

over the side and an incessant high pitched babblement of voices went on, utterly unintelligible to the islanders. Philip grabbed a rope thrown to him and was about to spring on board when he caught sight of those rows of parchment-like faces and paused, looking doubtfully at his boat's crew.

The captain, however, gazing cynically down upon him, said: "What's the matter with you? Afraid of a few Chinamen, are ye? Come on board and don't be such a fool."

Philip flushed darkly under his tan, and then saying quietly, "Don't make the warp fast," swung himself lightly on board, where, standing on the rail holding on by the main top-mast backstays, he surveyed the strange scene beneath him on the vessel's deck. She was crowded with yellow men, who wandered aimlessly about or squatted in groups gibbering away. To add to the confusion there were hundreds of canaries in cages which were hung about, and they were all singing at once, each doing his little best to drown the clamour of his neighbours.

Raising his voice almost to a shout the captain addressed Philip with the question: "Have you godly beach-combers got any fresh provisions to sell? I'm fifty days out from Macao bound to Callao, and my passengers are beginning to die like flies. I don't know what's the matter with 'em, unless it is the foul grub that was put aboard for 'em by the com-pradore, though I never heard before that any grub was foul enough to poison a Chink."

Philip replied calmly: "We have plenty of produce, sir, which we shall be glad to exchange with you for tools, clothes, books or anything of that sort. But we don't want money, it's of no use to us."

And he recapitulated the articles available for supply at once, to which the captain replied: "All

right, come on aft and I'll have some stuff brought up to show you." So Philip most willingly sprang down on the deck and followed the captain aft to the cabin. Here he was first offered some rum, which he courteously refused, much to the captain's amusement. Then in obedience to the captain's commands a heap of clothing was brought up out of the slop chest and a few rusty tools of various sorts, including half a dozen coal shovels, at sight of which Philip's eyes glistened, for these were sorely needed on the island. There were no books available at all, only a heap of old newspapers which Philip did not look twice at, for what did the news of the world matter to these children of Nature ?

Then having selected such goods as they needed as far as the limited supply before him would allow, Philip suggested that they should be put in his boat and that the captain should accompany him ashore and see what they had got to offer in exchange, which goods they would bring back with the captain to the ship. To this the captain answered that he should prefer Philip to bring such stuff as he had ready, pass it on board and make his bargain there, as he, the captain, did not want to leave the ship.

Philip rose and looking the captain steadfastly in the face, said : " No sir, on several occasions when we, trusting that other people would act as we always do to one another, have brought our produce on board a passing ship, we have been compelled to take whatever the captain has chosen to give us or nothing at all, because we were completely at his mercy. Now we are always ready to give of our substance to help ships in distress, expecting no payment, but we are sorely in need of certain things, and can only get them by selling our stuff. And if we are cheated it is hard for us to bear, knowing as we

do that we would never cheat anybody for any consideration whatever."

At this modest and dignified remark the captain flew into an assumed rage and cried, "You stuck up hypocritical half nigger, half mutineer, how dare you talk to an English gentleman like that! I've half a mind to have you flung overboard, only I know you can't be drowned. Don't come any of your palaver over me, for it won't do. I understand you fellows through and through."

Philip smiled sadly, but without showing a trace of surprise or fear, then saying, "I'm sorry, sir, that we can't come to terms," turned to leave the saloon.

This was too much for the captain, who roared "Here! where ye goin', ye black thief?" (Many a bronzed Englishman is darker than Philip was.) "Come back here!"

But Philip strode to the deck, leapt on the rail, and shouting, "Let go, boys," plunged feet foremost into the sea. In a moment the boat, released, was at his side and he had climbed on board.

Overhead, the captain, standing on the rail, was crying, "Don't be silly, I was only trying to bluff you, it's all in the way of business. Come up alongside; I'll come with you and bring the stuff ashore. Good heavens! what a rum lot these Kanakas are, to be sure."

By this time Philip had taken hasty counsel with his friends and had decided to take the captain on shore if he would come, but that none of them would board that awful ship again under any pretence. So they sheered alongside, caught again the rope that was flung them and received a heap of goods, the captain and two men following. Then they headed for the beach with a sigh of relief, for the very proximity of the ship was hateful to them. They

soon reached the landing place, the captain and his two henchmen looking very white as the ably handled boat was deftly guided stern foremost over the immense breakers, and stepping ashore uncertainly as the ready arms of the islanders were held out to them.

But no sooner had they landed than the captain and his two men began to swagger and ogle the women and girls who crowded down to the beach intent upon welcome. C. B. was close beside the skipper as he reached forward to clasp a beautiful girl near him by the waist. Lithe as a leopard the boy sprang between the maiden and the captain, crying as he did so: "That's my sister, sir, and anyhow you mustn't touch our girls; you are not good enough!"

Well, wasn't that foolish man angry? he made a sweeping motion with his arm as if to brush an insect from his path, but C. B. seized him by both hands and held him so firmly that he was unable to move, saying at the same time, "Please behave yourself, sir; we won't hurt you, but you must not go on ugly like this." The two men who were with the captain looked frightened—for they were thinking of massacres in the South Seas of which they had often heard and doubtless expected something of the kind. The skipper however knew better, and acted worse, for he raged like a madman, the islanders standing round looking grave and stern while all the women folk slipped away. When he had cursed himself out of breath C. B. spoke again: "Now, sir, if you are ready we'll take you back to your ship. We want to trade badly enough, but it's almost paying too dearly for the privilege, having men like you among us. We are very sorry for you, but wish you would go."

No one of the islanders added anything, for they felt as if C. B. had exactly expressed what they would say and for a few moments there was a dead silence. Then the captain said in a curiously subdued voice : " I don't know but what you're right after all, young fellow, whoever you are, and I apologize. I didn't intend to act so ugly, believe me. And now if you'll bring along your produce we'll trade, for I ought to be getting back to my ship." Immediately following upon his words, and without an order being given, there was a dispersal of the islanders, who soon reappeared laden with all the things they had to sell : vegetables, fruit, eggs, fowls and pigs, all that sailors most eagerly desire after a long voyage.

It was an easy market, for there was practically no haggling, and when all the goods that the captain had brought were exhausted, the kindly folk presented him with the rest of the produce which was left, an act of generosity which deepened the tan on his face as he, even he, realized what a contrast there was between his behaviour and theirs. But I do not know that he was so very much to blame after all, for it was probably the first time he had come across practical primitive Christianity in full operation. However, as he turned to leave the beach again he held out his hand to C. B., saying : " Youngster, I'm ashamed of myself, that's all I can say. I shall remember to-day as long as I live. And I want to tell that splendid fellow the same, the man whom I spoke so badly to in my saloon."

" Oh, you mean my father," said C. B. " Here he is ! " and Philip stepped forward, a gentle smile on his face, and his hand outstretched, saying as he came, " Don't bother about me, sir, I'm only sorry that you should be afflicted with such a hasty temper and disbelief in the goodness of anybody. But please

say no more. If you are ready to go on board we are ready to take you."

"Ah, I don't wonder you want to get rid of me," murmured the skipper sorrowfully; "how you've put up with me so long I don't know. All I know is that you've made me feel as I've never done before, and I'd love to stay here and take a few lessons from you good folks how to live. But I must get back to the hog-trough again, I suppose. Come along, the sooner I get aboard the better," and he strode firmly towards the boat.

Philip and his son looked at each other for a moment irresolutely, the same thought in each of their minds, should they ask him to stay and see their dear old pastor who would speak words of comfort to his tortured soul? But the time had passed, all hands were in the boat save the steersman, and Philip sprang to his place while the waiting crowd ran the buoyant craft out into the foaming surf and the long oars drove her strenuously through the tormented waters, forcing her out to the smooth sea beyond. Once out of the surf the rowers settled down into the long, regular swing of deep sea oarsmen, and they rapidly neared the vessel. She lay lazily rolling to the heavy swell with her mainyard to the mast, but not a sign of life about her, for all the crowd on board. But as the boat swung alongside the mate sprang on to the rail and shouted his orders, a rope was flung, the side ladder lowered and the skipper climbed aboard, saying as he did so, "Come up, Mr. Boat-steerer, and I'll treat ye different, see if I don't."

But Philip gravely declined. He did not care to run any such risks, knowing from much previous experience how soon such impressions as the captain had received are apt to change with a different scene.

And the captain did not repeat his invitation. Turning to the mate he ordered all dispatch to be made in getting the stores on board, then abruptly left the side and the boat's crew saw him no more. In a very few minutes the boat was cleared and as soon as she was empty Philip shouted, "Cast off that rope." It was done and with a powerful sweep of the steer oar they swept away from the ship's side, and shipping their oars bent to them with a will, every man of them feeling glad to put an increasing distance between them and the hive of evil they felt the ship to be.

And as they did so they saw the mainyard swing, heard the wailing cries of the sailors as they trimmed the sails to the light breeze and with a sense of utter relief watched her glide off towards the open sea. Then Philip raised his beautiful voice in the grand old song of satisfaction: "O God, our help in ages past," in which his crew joined, as was their wont, in sweetest concord. By the time she reached the beach the ship was almost hull down on the horizon and never, as far as log-books or signalling stations can tell, was she reported again.

That night there was another great family gathering of the islanders, first for equitable division of the articles bought, and next for the usual thanksgiving in that they had suffered no harm at the hands of their visitors. For even these gentle, happy children of love were suspicious of all contact with the outer world, they always feared the worst, knowing how utterly foreign to their ideas of brotherly love and unity of heart were the majority of even the few people who touched at their island. How hard it is for us, who, whether we like it or not, are bound to feel doubtful of professors of Christianity, when we realize the deeds and hear the words of so many of them, to

understand the feelings of this primitive people, among whom the commandment to love one another had become an ingrained principle. Many of us with the best will in the world to believe in them find ourselves saying, "Ah well, they are exceptionally favoured by their situation and history. If they only lived as we do, among civilized heathen, professing to be Christians and yet denying the power of God to do His will among us they would be as lukewarm and half hearted as most of us are."

Something of this kind must have entered into C. B.'s thoughts that night. For after the young ones had gone to sleep he and his father and mother sat on the stoop in front of their house discussing in their simple way the events of the day and their bearing upon what they knew of life until suddenly the young man said, "Mother, sometimes I think that it's all very well for us to be as happy and loving and fond of God as we are here where everybody is like-minded, but what if one of us should be suddenly flung out of this among people like those we've seen to-day? How should we stand it, do you think? I don't quite know how to put it, but what I mean is, are we good because we are shut in with goodness and have no temptations to be had, or are we good because we really love good and hate evil? And should we be thus good if everybody around us was bad?"

His gentle mother made answer, "Dear son, why worry your head about such things. If I understand God's word at all it tells me that if I live for God and with Him for the present the future has nothing to do with me. But I believe that wherever He puts me He will provide me with grace to meet every form of evil. I do not find, though, that if I go voluntarily where there is evil I get any pro-

mise of being made proof against it. At any rate I know that I love God and all His ways as far as I know anything, and I can't imagine myself happy in any other condition. And I am quite content with that, blessing Him for putting me where I am, in the midst of people who love Him also."

Philip who had been sitting, as was usual with him when unemployed, gazing into vacancy with his thoughts far away, suddenly aroused himself and said in a dreamy voice—

"I don't believe that all the people who don't know God are unhappy, but I'm sure that most of them are, judging from those I've mixed with on my travels. And I'm quite sure that if people were taught in Christian lands as we are here, if they were brought up to look upon God as a personal Friend always near, and one that no one who knows Him could be afraid of, there would be an enormous number of people more loving Him and knowing Him than there are. I kept my eyes open and listened also while I was in America and Australia, and I went to all sorts of places where they said God was worshipped, and I got entirely bewildered.

"For it seemed to me that what they called religion was a thing which hadn't anything to do with their lives at all. They went to church or chapel or meeting on Sundays, and said so many prayers or listened to what the preacher had to say, not at all because they loved God, but because they thought that if they didn't do these things they would be punished for ever and ever by being in a place called hell, always burning and never burnt up. As for loving God as a man loves a good father or mother, or loving Jesus as one loves a dear elder brother who has always been our ideal man since we were toddlers, the thing didn't seem to strike them in any way.

And in some of the churches I went into I could hardly help laughing, it all seemed so funny, all a big show to please God who made all the glorious world we live in and the wonders in heaven above. When I asked them if they thought God minded how they dressed or walked or smelt (I didn't like the smoky smelly stuff at all), they got angry and said I was an ignorant heathen, which of course didn't hurt me a bit because I knew I wasn't. But I did try to show them in the Bible how plainly God had said as to little toddling children that all this outward show was of no value in his sight, that it was the heart and life that really mattered. Only they said then that I was so stupid it was waste of time arguing with me."

C. B. did not remember ever having heard his father talk for so long a time without stopping before, and he was tremendously impressed by what he had heard. Nevertheless, there was a growing, deepening desire in his mind to go and see this curious world, to test the reality of his own love of God in contact with the extraordinary conditions which his father said obtained in the great struggling masses of people who belonged to professedly Christian countries. He felt, in fact, like the inhabitant of another planet in the old story who was smitten with a strong desire to come to earth and see for himself whether what he had heard was true, and if there were even stranger things to be found in this wonderful little world than he had heard of.

No word of this growing craving escaped the young man, but daily, almost hourly, in the midst of his simple toils, he thought over the possibilities of his getting personally acquainted with the outside world, until the longing to do so was the strongest factor in his life. He grew graver, more self-centred, and all

his intimates noticed it, for it was so complete a change from his previous liveliness. Still, nobody mentioned the matter to him, none felt it their business to interfere with him, more especially as he was if anything more energetic than ever in performing his share of the work, and if it may be said, where all alike were kind and unselfish, was more thoughtful of others than ever he had been.

So the days and weeks and months glided away in most uneventful fashion among the happy islanders. There were births hailed with decorous joy and earnest praise for God's good gifts, two or three deaths, met by all as the natural termination of an earthly probation and the commencement of real life. As such these events were no occasions for wild outbursts of grief. Tears were shed of course when the bereaved ones remembered that in this life the dear companion would be seen no more, but these were speedily dried at the thought of the short time which would pass before reunion came, and then separation would be an impossibility. For these people, strange as it may seem to us, acted as if what they believed were real to them, and not some cunningly devised fable, in which they had to profess belief in order to hoodwink God into letting them into Heaven. A Heaven, by the way, which they believed to be a glorified earth wherein there should be no physical, moral, or mental evil.

For of all three of these, although they themselves were in so wonderful a measure free from them, they had experience from without. As, for instance, when one day after a long spell of perfect peace, not a sail being sighted nor any whaling done, the lookout man on the cliff reported something in the offing, either a dead whale, a boat, or a piece of wreckage. In any case something quite well worth while

investigating, and so a boat with C. B. as boat steerer put off to see what the waif might be. It was an hour's strenuous pull before they reached the object, but some time before C. B.'s eyes had made it out to be a boat, apparently derelict.

But when they drew up alongside of the wanderer a simultaneous groan of pity burst from them, for the sight they saw chilled their blood. There were four ghastly objects lying across the thwarts that had once been men but now looked like mummified corpses. Burnt black by the sun, every bone showing clearly beneath the strained withered skin, hair and beards like weeds, and lying in the bottom of the boat sundry awful fragments of humanity that told their own horrible tale of cannibalism. And a foul stench arose from the boat which befouled the pure air and made the visitors feel deathly sick.

It was no time, however, to give way to any weakness of that sort, especially as they had nothing with them in the way of restoratives, supposing that any life remained in these pitiful relics of human beings. So they made the strange boat fast to their own, and turning shoreward laid to their oars with all their might. Fortunately it was an almost perfectly calm day, so that the passage through the breakers was accomplished with little difficulty, and when they reached the beach there were scores of willing hands ready to help. They lifted the poor wrecks ashore tenderly, finding that two of them still breathed, and immediately carried them off to where hot milk and the juice of fresh fruit could be administered to them. Very gently and patiently they strove to coax back the fast departing life into those frail bundles of bones, and were at last rewarded by hearing some words in a tongue that none

of them could understand issuing from the cracked lips of one of the men.

Their curiosity was restrained, however, by the absolute necessity of keeping the poor creatures quiet if the flickering sparks of life were to be kept glowing, and presently they were delighted by seeing both the rescued ones fall into a deep sleep. Then they turned their attention to the burial of the dead in their little graveyard with all the sweet and simple solemnity they used in their own interments. But the dreadful evidences of cannibalism in the boat could not be forgotten, much as they tried to excuse and extenuate, for all of them felt that nothing would ever have induced them to act in the same manner. Still, these children of peace would not condemn, despite their horror, and their pity was immense.

Long and earnest were the consultations and speculations on the circumstances which had led to the casting away of these poor waifs, but when the time had come for retiring for the night only one possible solution of the mystery had been arrived at—that these were survivors of some terrible shipwreck, and all thanked God that such a frightful experience had never been theirs. And so in this good and peaceful atmosphere of peace and love the little community went to their happy rest.

CHAPTER V

Entertaining Devils Unaware

WITH the first streak of dawn, as was their wont, all the islanders were astir, and their first thoughts were for the rescued ones. The news soon spread throughout the community that the two men had awakened, mightily refreshed, and that one of them could speak a few words of English. All ordinary tasks were neglected, and practically the whole village flocked to the house where they, the rescued ones, had been sheltered for the night. And there they saw their guests gaunt, wild-eyed and scared-looking, holding quite a levee, and one endeavouring to explain how they came to be there.

It was a difficult task, for his English was of the feeblest and his pronunciation of the words he did know so extraordinary that it required many repetitions of even the simplest phrases and great patience on the part of the listeners to gather the sense of what he said. At last, however, they learned that these two were the sole survivors of ten men, who, after killing two of their guardians, had escaped from New Caledonia, the French convict island. Four weeks had elapsed since they had seen the last of that awful place of their imprisonment, four weeks of such horror that the scanty words of English possessed by the spokesman could only give the barest outline of them. But quite enough was told to satisfy them that such an experience

savoured of that place of torment of which they never spoke but in whispers, and they wondered much whether the men who had succumbed early in the struggle were not the more fortunate. And gradually, as they grew more and more accustomed to the curious speech of the man who was trying to explain, they learned of doings within the narrow compass of that boat adrift helplessly upon the great lone sea that made their flesh crawl upon their bones, which made them involuntarily shrink from the narrator, whose utter unconcern as he told in baldest words the story of his adventures, fascinated them while it frightened them. For none of them had ever realized such a depth of callous depravity as was now manifested before them.

Only the sacred laws of hospitality, nowhere more firmly held to and observed than here where everything was held in common, as became the primitive Christianity of the people, restrained them from isolating the strangers as if they were suffering from frightful disease both contagious and infectious. Occasionally a gentle attempt to show their disapproval of the foul terms used by the narrator in telling his story was made, but quite in vain, for it is a lamentable fact that picking up a language colloquially, as one does among the workers of the world, it is always the vilenesses of the language which are first acquired, because they are most frequently used, and by some devilish twist of memory they are always the expressions which stick.

However, the older men among the islanders met and determined that, God helping them, this new and bad element of evil must not be permitted to spread among the younger folk, and the word was passed quietly around that while the strangers

were to be treated with every courtesy and kindness, they were not to be associated with indiscriminately; intercourse with them was to be confined to a very small body of the older men, all of whom had known something of the evil of the world without, and were all unlikely to be affected now by anything they might hear, however vile.

Nevertheless, it was felt throughout the settlement that there had come into their peaceful midst an appalling danger, and the subject came into their prayers continually. The strangers, having made a rapid recovery, swaggered about the little settlement as if they were the lords of it, rather enjoying the whole-hearted terror of them evinced by the younger folk, and yet cursing vigorously what they were pleased to call the inhospitable way in which they were being treated. By this time the islanders had discovered that they were harbouring two criminals of the blackest dye, men from whom the least vestige of goodness was absent, whose thoughts were only evil, and that continually. Worse still, it seemed as if the island was likely to be cursed with their presence for an indefinite time, for upon the suggestion that they would be able to leave by the first ship that called at the island the two desperadoes avowed with awful words that they were not going to risk their liberty in any ship whatever. They were quite contented, they said, in their present position, and proposed to marry and settle down.

What that prospect meant to the islanders can hardly be realized unless the readers have entered into the spirit of this happy community. The advent of a couple of man-eating tigers in some peaceful, lonely village here in England could not cause as much terror, because sportsmen would

speedily be forthcoming who would slay the beasts, and these human beasts, though far more dangerous than tigers, could not be destroyed in the same manner. And day by day those patient, peaceful people watched and waited and prayed, yet feared what they could not help feeling was the approaching tragedy.

It is not too much to say that the whole course of life in that lovely island home was embittered by the presence of these two degenerate children of French civilization, who prated and bragged of their superiority to all law, and being Anarchists and free, professing indeed much the same principles that some of our legislators do to-day, although the latter are hardly prepared as yet to carry those principles to their logical conclusion.

Deliverance from this terrible incubus came in dramatic fashion. By some means, during an extra busy time, the two miscreants had escaped from the almost ceaseless watchfulness of those set apart for that purpose. And as they were always planning evil of a certain kind, and were only waiting fitting opportunity to carry out those plans, they seized this, to them, favourable chance to attempt a crime which I will not hint at. It happened that at this very time C. B. had been up the mountain side after honey, having some days before located a hive. He was heavily burdened with spoil, and having tramped a good many miles was feeling healthily weary, when he heard a piercing shriek. It was the first time in his life that he had ever heard such a sound, but it focussed all his fears and apprehensions, and for one moment paralyzed all his energies.

Then the brave blood surged back from his heart, he dropped his burden and plunged furiously in the

direction of the sound, actuated by he could not tell what terrible thoughts. A stifled scream spurred him on, like a buffalo he crashed through all obstacles, arriving presently in the open of a little glade amidst the thick boscaje to find his sister, his darling Jenny, four years younger than himself, faintly struggling in the grasp of the two ex-convicts. He was transformed for the moment into a savage, and leapt upon the nearest with a yell that would have quite become one of his dusky ancestors. The wretch upon whom he fell, taken by surprise, had no chance at all, for C. B. snatched him up as one does a filthy rag and hurled him with tremendous force against a tree bole, which he struck with a dull crash and fell limp and motionless.

The other scoundrel, letting go the trembling girl, rushed off into the bush, but C. B., full of fury, plunged after him, caught him in a dozen strides, and battered him with fists and feet in so furious a manner that in a very short time he was reduced to a helpless lump of inanimate flesh. Then C. B. desisted, panting, but beginning to feel compunction for the fury he had been led into, as well as fear that he had killed one or both of the wretches. But I am truly thankful to say that such a feeling was only momentary, justification of himself as being bound to act in the way he did or be unfit to live quickly succeeded, and he drew himself up again to the full stature of his grand young manhood. And then he thought of his poor young sister; but she, as soon as she was released from her savage assailants, had fled with the swiftness of an antelope to the settlement, nor stayed until she had found a group of men, to whom she told her story.

So as C. B. was puzzling himself as to how he should secure his prisoners—for, of course, he so

regarded them—three stalwart men, one of whom was his father, came crashing through the undergrowth and greeted him warmly. He said little but pointed to the evidence of his prowess. Both of the villains were just recovering from the shocks they had received, and were looking almost as if they had been dragged along under a harrow. They were very subdued, and regarded C. B. with a great deal of respect, making no attempt at resistance as they were led away toward the village.

By this time the news of the affair had spread, and the whole community were gathering with looks of horror and consternation at the two wretches who had thus repaid, or attempted to repay, the loving-kindness to which they owed life and health. But little was said, and that only in whispers, as the prisoners were led to the house of the old patriarch who was at once minister and dispenser of law, the latter function indeed being quite a sinecure among this people whose love of righteousness was inbred and fostered in every imaginable way.

Arriving there, they were consigned to as near a substitute for a prison as the island afforded, a strongly built outhouse, their hurts being attended to and food and drink supplied them. Then they were left under guard, being informed that any attempt on their part to break loose would be followed immediately by their being tied up, for as they had chosen to behave as wild beasts, they must look to be treated as dangerous, and every precaution taken against them. Thoroughly cowed for the time by the rough handling they had received, the only argument they could understand, they attempted no protest against their confinement, but sullenly accepted what was given them and done for them like men accustomed to bow submissively to the

inevitable. And thus they were left to themselves, the guard keeping close watch outside.

Meanwhile the conduct of C. B. came under strong discussion. No one attempted to suggest that he had acted wrongly, for all were agreed that it was a matter of deepest thankfulness to God that he had arrived so opportunely and acted as promptly as he had done, and yet there was something disquieting, not merely to the community, but to himself, in the fact that he had given way to such an outburst of savagery. And all felt how terrible a thing it would have been if he had slain either or both of the villains, as he would most likely have done had he carried a weapon. He attempted no justification, showed no repentance for his action, but frankly admitted that he was horrified to find that he had so much of the savage in him. And strange as it may seem, though all looked upon him as quite a hero, it is no less true that with their admiration was mingled another feeling which they could not conceal, a feeling which made them hold themselves slightly aloof from him and the sense of which cut him to the quick.

This, added to his previous unrest of spirit, decided him in his half-formed idea of leaving the island at the first opportunity and seeing the world. There was just a trace of bitterness in the thought that his resolution should have been fixed by an event of which he could not but feel proud, and could not help thinking should have made all his acquaintances proud of him too. But there it was, and no amount of meditation or self-examination would avail to alter it. So at the earliest opportunity when he was alone with his parents he told them of his resolve. For a few minutes neither

spoke, and then his still beautiful mother broke the silence, saying—

“Have you consulted the Lord about it, dear boy?”

“Yes, mother,” he replied truly, “but I have not asked for any guidance in the matter, for I feel, I have long felt, led to go. And I don’t believe that such a strong inclination as I have towards something that certainly is not wrong can be of the evil one. Besides it is not my own pleasure I am seeking, neither am I tired of my lovely home, but—well, I must go, that’s all.”

Thereafter his father and mother regarded the matter as settled, only mother like, Grace hoped that it might be a long time before an opportunity came—she wanted to keep her boy as long as possible. But it fell out that only a fortnight afterwards an extraordinary event for the islanders occurred: two vessels arrived off the landing place in one day and hove-to, one the British war-vessel *Thetis*, and the other the American whale-ship *Eliza Adams*, of New Bedford. Joyfully the boats’ crews sprang into their craft and pulled out to the vessels, one visiting the man-o’-war to convey the respects of the whole community to the representative of the country they loved so well, and the other, steered by C. B., to the whale-ship to inquire after their wants.

As soon as Philip, who was in charge of the first boat, had climbed on board and had saluted the deck, he inquired for the captain, and first, in time-honoured fashion, begged him to consider the resources of the island at his disposal and to do them the honour of paying them a visit to the shore in their boat. The captain having gravely accepted the latter invitation and declared his intention of

paying for whatever produce they might supply, Philip informed him that they had a favour to ask which they earnestly hoped he would see his way to grant, and then proceeded to tell him the story of their undesirable visitors, assuring him that the peace of the island had been destroyed since their arrival, and that now matters were worse than ever, since the miscreants must needs be watched day and night lest they should escape and do some fiendish deed in revenge, adding that on their own showing they were capable of any villainy. The captain listened patiently, and as soon as Philip had done talking replied in cheery tones—

“ Make your mind easy, Mr. Adams ; it’s not only a pleasure to grant your request to take these scoundrels off your hands, but my duty. I have been officially warned of their escape by the authorities and told to look out for them, and I shall be only too glad to rid you of them.”

Philip thanked the captain and requested the loan of a couple of pairs of handcuffs, saying that he would not put the captain to the trouble of sending a boat for them but would bring them off. The captain immediately assented, and in five minutes’ time the boat was flying shoreward with the captain and two of his officers seated in the stern sheets, quite glad of the opportunity afforded them of visiting this wonderful little community whose fame as a model settlement had spread all over the English-speaking world.

But the joy of the islanders who can depict, when Philip told them of their approaching deliverance from the misery under which they had laboured. Do not think them selfish or unmindful of their obligations to their fellow-men because they were

glad to get rid of these undesirables. Had the latter been amenable to kindness or at all to be influenced by goodness so palpably manifested towards them, things would have been quite different. Every effort had been made, more by practice even than precept, to soften those flinty natures, but all such attempts had been met by the most brutal and hideous language as well as threats, of diabolical revenge if ever the chance came. It delighted those foul creatures to see the islanders wince at the awful words and blanch at what they were by no means inclined to regard empty threats, although it was happily impossible for them to realize fully the significance of some of the worst of them.

Most of the islanders were on the strand ready to welcome the captain of the *Thetis* when he stepped ashore, and he and his officers were reverentially borne off to the magistrate's house, and offered the best that the island afforded in the way of refreshments. On the way thither the news flew from lip to lip that they were to be freed from the prisoners, and the air resounded with songs of thanksgiving. Being a man of prompt action, Captain Thurston, as soon as he was comfortably installed at the magistrate's, asked for the two prisoners to be brought before him, and as soon as the handcuffs had been put upon them his wish was obeyed.

When they were brought he addressed them in French, but was answered by a flood of foulest abuse, language that made even his tanned cheek flush and his hand seek the sword at his side. But he quickly mastered his rising temper and ordered them to be taken away and held in readiness for carrying on board. Turning to his host, he said quietly—

“I think you are to be congratulated in that you have escaped serious injury at the hands of these ruffians, for I don't think they would hesitate to commit any crime that lay within their power if the fit seized them.”

To which the dear old man made answer—

“We have never ceased thanking God for that He saved us from such a calamity as that would have been, and we have now the answer to our prayers that He would send a British man-o'-war to take them away from our midst lest our vigilance should relax and they break out among us like two ravening wolves in a flock of sheep.”

But we must return to C. B. on his separate mission to the whaler. As he swung his boat around and came alongside of her in true whaling fashion he was conscious that all hands were watching him, from the four pairs of keen eyes at the mast-heads to the captain on top of the little monkey poop. But he was well trained and in no way shy, so he swung himself on board, being met by the mate and greeted cordially. All hands were gathered in the waist, separate, of course, according to their station, and admiring glances were cast upon their magnificent young visitor, who towered nearly a head and shoulders over the tallest man there. His simple garb of shirt and trousers, the former buttonless and with sleeves cut off above the elbow, and the latter rolled up to the knees, set off his splendid proportions to the best advantage, while his noble head, bare save for clustering curls, and with a face of rare open beauty, apparently fascinated every one there.

The mate in particular was almost stupefied, but pulled himself together quickly, saying—

“Come aft, young man, an' see th' capt'n;

we're in want of fresh provisions, an' we hope that there war canoe won't scoff the hull amount befo' we can get a look in."

C. B. turned on him a dazzling smile, showing two perfect rows of teeth as white as curd and remarked—

"That isn't our fashion, sir. Whatever we have to dispose of, be sure you shall have your share of it. I will guarantee that."

The mate muttered something which sounded like "Sure enough white man, any way;" and, confronted with the skipper, introduced the visitor.

Captain Taber was a man whose aspect alone was sufficient to win confidence from any one not absolutely beyond the pale. He was one of the grand old Quaker type who dare do anything but lie or cheat, inflexibly just but tenderly merciful also where mercy was not a cruelty. You could not look into those deep grey eyes and mistrust him, the firm curves of the closely shut mouth and the huge benevolent nose spelt good man in characters that those who ran might read. He wore the old typical Yankee beard with clean shaven upper lip, and his garb was a long grey coat and broad-brimmed grey felt hat. Grasping his visitor firmly by the hand, he said, "Welcome, young man, aboard th' *Eliza Adams*. I'm glad to see you, and indeed it isn't every day one's eyes light upon so fine a specimen o' mankind as you be. Now what ha' ye got to trade? We're in want of fresh provisions of all kinds if you can make the price to suit us."

"If you have ever been here before or to Pitcairn, captain," replied C. B., "you'll know that dollars mean nothing to us. Clothing, dress material, tools and books, are our chief need, and we are

always prepared to deal liberally with everybody or not at all. We may not be able to supply you as amply as we would like to-day because of the arrival of the warship, but as I told your mate, we shall show the strictest impartiality in dividing what we have to sell."

For a moment the captain gazed at C. B. in silence, and then turning to his mate, said—

"Say, Mr. Winsloe, it ain't often you find the contents match the casket, is it? But here's a feller ez handsom' as a statoo, an' talkin' like an angel. Well, he's a phenomenon." Then, turning to C. B., the old man said—

"Excuse me, I forgot my manners; you see we don't come across men like you every day."

C. B. smiled shyly and answered, "It's all right, sir, I was hardly noticing. In fact, I was just then thinking of asking you whether by any chance you might have a vacancy aboard for a boat-steerer?" The skipper's face was a study as he stood transfixed with astonishment and then burst into a roar of happy laughter, while the big tears ran down his russet cheeks. When at last he recovered his breath he gasped—

"Well, now, if that don't beat all. Ben short of a harponeer goin' on three months since poor Diego got chawed up, and here's one ready made for us, that is if he can handle an iron like he can a steer-oar. Can ye now by any happy chance?" he inquired almost wistfully of the young man.

"If you'll let me try, sir, with one of the irons in the waist-boat I'll show you," replied C. B.

The skipper nodded assent, and C. B., shouting to one of his boat's crew to throw him up the baling gourd, sprang into the waist-boat with it, and when he had bent on a lance warp or short line to a

harpoon he flung the gourd well away from the ship into the sea. Then poising the heavy weapon he balanced himself for a moment, a perfect model for a sculptor, and hurled it at the tiny object. The harpoon described a regular parabola and fell, splitting the gourd in half, while an involuntary cheer went up from the crew.

"That's as good as I want," muttered the skipper, and then aloud to C. B.: "Had any experience on whale?"

"Oh yes, sir," brightly responded the young man, "we do considerable whaling here. In fact, we've got about thirty barrels of humpback oil here now; we'd be glad to trade with you if we can come to terms."

"All right," returned the captain, "we'll talk about that later; the thing now is to get you. Half the cruise is over, that is I can engage you for about two years at the fiftieth lay and three hundred dollars a ton for sperm oil, market price for black. An' if you're willin', I'll put you on the articles now."

"I came principally for that purpose," replied C. B. with sincerity, and within ten minutes he was enrolled as captain's boat-steerer of the ship *Eliza Adams*, presently cruising for sperm whales in the Pacific Ocean with some twenty-two months of her voyage to serve.

I cannot say that C. B. felt excited or uplifted at this accomplishment of his desires, but he certainly felt that satisfaction which arises from the banishment of uncertainty, and with a contented face he took his position in his boat again ready to pilot the skipper in, who was lowering his own boat. A very few words sufficed to convey to his friends in the boat the news of his step, but they were enough to reduce the warm-hearted fellows to

tears. For the departure of any one from that happy community, where all were related and where all were friends, was looked upon by everybody in the nature of a personal bereavement, and indeed was considered much more serious than death, because when any one died those remaining really believed that the departed one had entered into a far happier state of life than could be possible on earth, and that sorrow for them was unnatural and wrong.

But no word was spoken as they sped towards the beach, the seasoned hands in the skipper's boat straining every nerve to keep up with them. A bit of skilful piloting was needed, but the skipper was an old hand at surf boating, and handled his boat with consummate skill. And as soon as she touched the beach there were twenty willing hands ready to grab her and run her up until the wave receded, when all hands jumped out and assisted to drag her high and dry.

In five minutes the news had spread to every member of the community that C. B. was going away, and great were the lamentations. Indeed, it was fortunate that the captain of the *Thetis* demanded their attention as he had to hurry away, as that took the edge off somewhat. C. B.'s boat with a fresh crew was requisitioned to carry off the huge load of fresh fruit, meat and vegetables that had been collected, while the captain with the two desperadoes would go off in a boat free from a hampering load of provisions. Glad as they were to get rid of the terrible creatures that had worried them so long, and also that they had been of service to a man-o'-war, there were few of the usual demonstrations as the boats pushed off, for their hearts were very heavy at the loss of C. B., in spite of all they had felt lately.

CHAPTER VI

C. B.'s Departure

NOW that this momentous time in our hero's life had arrived, all the affection felt for him by every member of the community welled up, and the slight reserve, manifested in spite of all efforts to hide it, because of his furious onslaught upon the savage strangers, melted away, leaving not a trace behind. He was hardly left alone a minute; both men and women crowded around him as if eager to see everything they could of him as long as they could. Many of the girls wept copiously, for he had been secretly worshipped by a goodly number of them, although he was quite fancy free, and had never singled one out for special notice. He might have been affianced to any girl he chose, for he possessed all the qualities that make a man beloved, but by some curious twist, the delights of love for the other sex had never appealed to him—as yet the love of one Christian for another, fostered by the love of God as it should be, had been found all sufficient for the needs of his heart.

At all this display of affection Captain Taber looked on amazed, for he had never seen anything like it before. In his experience people were shy of showing how much they loved a popular favourite, but these simple children of the sun believed in showing their love and were in no wise ashamed of doing so. He kept close by C. B.'s mother, who

exercised a sort of fascination over him, and in response to her repeated entreaties that he would be good to her boy, replied—

“My dear lady, for lady you are of the greatest, I regard your son as a holy trust. He’s just the finest man to look at and hear speak I ever set eyes on, and as far as I am concerned, you may take it that he’ll do well. I have no favourites; as long as a man does his duty on board my ship he’s entitled to and gets the best treatment I can give him, and I take care that he isn’t put upon by anybody. But be comforted, marm, your son’s bound to make his way anywhere. He’ll get imposed upon, of course, until he learns that people such as you are very scarce outside this island. But that won’t do him much harm, I take it. Hallo! what’s this?”

This was the gathering together of the entire population of the island, including the temporary visitors, upon an open grassy knoll almost in the centre of the settlement, which was quite near to where Captain Taber and Grace were standing. As the people disposed themselves in picturesque attitudes upon the grass, Grace said to the captain—

“They are about to hold a prayer meeting to commend my son to the care of God while he is absent from us. We always do it when any one leaves the island, for we know how lonely they will feel but for the fellowship of Jesus.”

The captain bowed his head gravely, but did not trust himself to say anything. For one thing he felt sad and ashamed, knowing how careless and lax in respect to spiritual things he had long been, although his innate kindness and sweet temper had preserved him from much evil.

The captain of the *Thetis* drew near and exchanged

a cordial handshake with his American compeer, saying as he did so—

“ We are apparently about to witness a peculiar sight—a whole people at prayer who all believe in what they’re doing. It is a moving spectacle.”

There was no time for more conversation, for all had arrived, and without further delay the white-haired old patriarch took up his parable, saying to his assembled flock—

“ My beloved ones, let us in accordance with our valued custom commend our brother Christmas Bounty Adams to our loving Father. He goes out from us for a time into a world where we have heard that the name of God is lightly esteemed, where the worship of God is performed at stated intervals, but the life that has God for its centre and circumference is known to and lived by but a very few. But our God is able to keep our dear brother as he kept Philip his father, and we send him away full of confidence that he will live so as to show every one with whom he comes in contact that he is a Christ’s man and that it is a good and pleasant thing to be so. Now let us sing our favourite hymn, ‘ O God of Bethel, by whose Hand.’ ”

The two captains turned pale under their tan, and their frames trembled with emotion as the glorious burst of human melody, unaided by any instrument, rose upon the still air. Never had they imagined anything like it, nor could they hardly believe their eyes when they saw the tears streaming down nearly every face. And when at last the sweet strains ceased, it seemed as if a certain beauty had suddenly left the world. Then the grand old leader’s voice arose in tenderest, most intimate intercourse with their Friend and Father. Nothing of the stereotyped, pumped-up

oration, utterly misnamed prayer, so often heard in pseudo prayer meetings, but the close confidence of beloved children with a Father whose love was known and proved hourly throughout life. When he had finished, Philip stood up in touching simplicity and blessed God for his son's strength and beauty and good life, held him up in his spiritual arms as it were, and gave him to the Father as Abraham did Isaac. Grace followed in an even deeper, sweeter strain, and then as her voice faltered and died away, as if at a preconcerted signal, all the gathering broke out in the majestic strains of St. Ann's to "O God, our help in ages past," followed immediately by the Old Hundredth.

The two captains were close together all the time, but neither spoke, hardly breathed, so impressed were they by the simple yet tremendous scene. When all was over, Captain Taber said sententiously—

"This just lays over all my experience. I've been to camp meetin's before now and they begun quiet enough, but before they got far there was mor'en half of 'em just crazy, jumping mad, howlin' and screechin' like 'sif they was possessed with devils, as the Scripture says. But these folks seems full of earnestness, yet quiet and reverent all the time."

"Yes," responded the British captain, "though I've never been to a camp meeting, I've been to some other meetings in England where the behaviour of the folks has made me blush all over my body. And then again I've been to other meetings where everything was so formal and perfunctory that I could not think that any of them believed what they were saying or what they were hearing."

Just then the old patriarch came up and claimed

his guest, the British captain, but the latter said that he must rejoin his ship at once if the stuff was ready that he had purchased. He was amazed to find that during his stay ashore one heavy boat-load had already been taken aboard, inquiring as he did so if his two passengers were ready and he would see them put on board. They were brought along helpless to hurt anybody, but using their foul tongues to their full power. The captain had serious thoughts of gagging them, but exercised his patience, remembering that once in the cells on board of his ship they might curse themselves dumb and hurt nobody's ears.

So he departed, never to forget that visit and never to be forgotten by the people whom he had relieved, and in an hour's time the *Thetis* turned on her heel and sped seaward on her way to Sydney. Then came C. B.'s turn. All his farewells were said, his exceedingly scanty wardrobe was packed in a mat, and all being snugly stowed in the whale-ship's boat, he, at the captain's request, took the steer oar, while willing, loving hands ran the boat out on the crest of a departing roller and, the oars being handled with the usual skill, she shot out into the smooth beyond, amidst a chorus of farewells rapidly growing fainter as she receded.

Reaching the ship the ample load of fresh provisions was taken aboard with the usual smartness, and the boat hoisted into her place, while the newcomer gazed with keenest interest as the sails were trimmed and the ship filled away. For it must be remembered that for all his skill in handling a boat, whether under sail or oars, and his many visits to vessels, he had hitherto never been on board one of them while she was being handled, and consequently the whole business was of the

newest and strangest to him. And here I must say that in all my conversations with landsmen about the sea life, I have ever found it one of the hardest tasks to explain that even the most experienced sailors, upon first going on board ship, have some considerable difficulty in becoming acquainted with her details. To the untrained eye she may look precisely the same as the ship our sailor has just left, but to the man who has to find in the blackest depth of night the gear about the deck by means of which the sails high over head are worked, there are certain to be many acute differences leading to much blundering and botherment until he gets used to them.

But this is very technical and needs much more space than can be spared to elucidate it properly, and even then I doubt very much whether the result would be considered worth while. So I fall back upon the fact that C. B., grand fellow as he undoubtedly was, stood and looked at what was going on, as the *Eliza Adams'* yards were trimmed for standing off to sea, with a sense of utter bewilderment, which went far to dispel the admiration that his fine physique had excited among the crew in the morning—especially among his fellows, the other harponeers, who were all Portuguese, all full of enthusiasm for their business as well as of skill in carrying it on, but absolutely destitute of the finer feelings of humanity, ruthless and cruel beyond belief, and only restrained from excesses among their boats' crews while on a whale by a wholesome respect for the strong man who ruled them.

These men bore no good will towards C. B. as a stranger and an interloper, and besides, they were jealous of the favour with which the skipper regarded him. Therefore, when he exhibited his ignorance of

the handling of the ship, they were unrestrained in their jeering at him, and used their coarse limited English to its full extent in letting him see how they regarded him. But he only looked at them thoughtfully and wondered why they thus spoke to him, seeing that he had not offended them in any way as far as he could tell. And then the ship being fairly on her course for the south-east the mate, Mr. Winsloe, came to him and said—

“Now then, C. B., you had better see your quarters and make yourself acquainted with your shipmates. I can see you know but dern little about a ship, but I guess you'll learn mighty quick. Come along.”

He led C. B. below to the narrow apartment on the port side where the harponeers, the carpenter and cooper, cook and steward lived together in a certain state, waited upon by a mulatto lad, and fed in precisely the same way as the captain and officers. Here Mr. Winsloe introduced him to the senior harponeer, a huge black Portuguese from Terceira, saying—

“Pepe, just take this chap in hand and show him the ropes. I believe he's a boss whaleman, but a ship's strange to him, and we want him to get used to her as soon as may be. And say”—here his voice dropped to a whisper—“just pass the word to the other fellows that there's to be no fool hazing of this chap. He's too good for it and we don't want him spoiled. Besides, he's quite up to acting ugly, and if he does and gets a knife between his ribs there's going to be big trouble with the old man, an' a joke ain't worth all that.”

Fortunately C. B. heard nothing of this, but he noted the deep scowl on Pepe's face as he replied—

“ All right, sir. But you don't 'spects me to look after him 'n keep d'other fellows from hazin' 'im, do ye? Kaze if ye do I cain't say as I thinks it far an' reasonable, specially as he's such a greenie.”

“ Now, that's enough er that guff, Pepe,” returned the mate warningly; “ I know all about you and you know all about me.” Then turning to C. B. the mate went on—

“ Now, young man, this is your home and this man is the boss of the show, not but what you're all equal in theory; but there, you'll find out what I mean quick enough, and I hope you'll learn how to take a good-natured joke if you don't know already.” And he departed on deck again, leaving the two men face to face.

For a while they eyed each other in silence, each apparently engaged in taking the other's measure; but while C. B.'s gaze was full of kindly consideration, Pepe's looked full of scowling hatred. At last Pepe muttered some foul remark and turned away somewhat discomfited. He could not understand the calm untroubled gaze, and he was far too good a judge of men not to know that the young giant that stood before him would be much too big a handful for even him to manage, big as he was, if it came to a rough and tumble. This in itself was enough to make him dislike the new-comer, for no man likes being suddenly deposed from a position of supremacy over his fellows.

Then the other harponeers came trooping down to supper, followed by the carpenter and cooper, who were both taciturn Down East Yankees of a good type, but, like most of their kind, utterly callous and godless, although splendid workmen and brave men. In the babel that ensued C. B. could not but notice that there were many blasphemous

remarks levelled at him obliquely, although no one spoke to him direct. And this was in truth a fiery ordeal, seeing that he had never in his life heard anything of the kind except a few broken words that the two escaped prisoners used so freely, and they were scarcely intelligible to him. But far harder to bear than that, he noted with surprise, was the air of enmity aroused by his presence; he who was so sensitive that even the slight reserve manifested towards him after his outbreak in defence of his sister had cut him to the very soul.

But his father had warned him that he might expect something of the sort and that he must steel his heart against it, be strong to endure and rest in the Lord, like the three holy children before the king of Babylon. So he breathed an inward prayer for strength, and drawing up to a vacant place at the table, helped himself to some food. From life-long habit he bowed his head over his plate in thanks to the Giver for a moment, and there burst out a roar of harsh laughter. But this created a diversion, for the cooper growled—

“Shet up, ye heathen, an’ don’t jeer a better man than yerselves when he’s asking a blessin’. Doan’t ye take no notice of ’em, youngster; they don’t know no better.”

C. B. gave him a grateful glance and bravely attacked his food, having a perfectly healthy appetite, and the meal proceeded in silence. But when all hands lit pipes and corn cob cigarettes, the reek of the place immediately sickened him, and turning deathly pale he hurried on deck for air. The smell of the place, full as it was of the odours of stale oil, the smoke from the lamp and the effluvia of bilgewater, was bad enough to lungs that had always

been accustomed to pure air, and the added fumes of tobacco made the combination unbearable.

On deck it was beautiful; a strong breeze was blowing, and the sturdy ship under easy sail was making good way through the water. Under the brilliant moon the bold outlines of his island home were fast fading into indistinctness, and for all his high resolves he felt a pang as he thought of all that he had left and the unknown troubles he was going to meet. And then a deep kindly voice behind him said—

“Well, Mr. Man, feeling a bit homesick, are ye? That’ll wear off mighty sudden, but in the meantime you’ve got to have some clothes. Come down into the cuddy and I’ll fit ye up.”

It was the captain who had sought him out, knowing how easy it is for these islanders to get a chill when first leaving the genial climate of their home for the wide keenness of the sea, and knowing too how scantily his new recruit was provided with clothes. So together they went down into the little cabin, where, aided by the steward, Captain Taber produced a complete outfit of clothes including boots, which C. B. looked dubiously at and then shook his head merrily, saying—

“I’ve never had a boot on in my life, captain, and I’m afraid I shouldn’t be able to walk in them now.”

“True, my boy, I’d forgotten that,” laughed the skipper. “Well, we’ll cut the boots out, and now your account is twenty-two dollars, so you’d better pray for whale to enable you to pay off your score. Cart your dunnage below and get off to ye’er bunk, for I guess you’ve got the middle watch.”

C. B. gathered up his bundle of clothes and carried them to his berth, where he found several of

his berth-mates had already turned in, but they were all smoking furiously. So he could only stay below long enough to get into some warm clothing, and then, feeling sick and silly, he climbed on deck again, a blanket on his arm, to seek a spot where he might sleep without fear of being suffocated. This experience of knowing not where to lay his head was totally unexpected by him, for it was the one thing his father had omitted to mention as being among the hardships of a seafaring life. And he began to wonder whether in all his career he should meet with anything harder to bear, being by nature a perfect lover of pure air.

However, he found a corner which struck him as being out of the way, and laid himself down upon the planks, drew the blanket over himself and commended himself to God, and like a perfectly healthy animal was almost immediately fast asleep. He was roughly aroused at midnight by one of the harpooners, who inquired caustically whether he thought he was going to be a passenger and have all night in. He at once sprang up and asked what his duties were, but his interlocutor turned away with a mocking laugh, muttering—

“Ef yew fink Ise goin’ t’ be yer nuss yous way off.”

So he went aft, where his instinct told him he should find the officer of the watch, and when he discovered that functionary, a thickset taciturn Yankee from Providence, Rhode Island, he courteously asked him if he might be told what to do. Mr. Spurrell gave a snort, being in a middle-watch humour, but he was a man of the most inflexible justice, and his leading principle compelled him to answer the honest question straightforwardly, instead of as so often happens overwhelming the novice with contumely for asking. He

informed C. B. that his only duty was to keep on the alert, going forward occasionally to see if the lookout was being properly kept by the man, and if any sail-trimming had to be done to try and master the details of it, the how and why, so that presently in case of an emergency he might be able to take the watch himself.

C. B. thanked the officer gravely, and then, a happy thought striking him, asked if he might put in his first watch on deck learning to steer the ship. Steering a boat he was as we know an adept at, but using a ship's wheel and compass is a very different matter, and he was unwilling to remain ignorant of anything for a moment longer than was necessary for him to learn it. Fortunately there was an able Kanaka from Samoa at the wheel, who spoke reasonably understandable English and was delighted to show C. B. all he knew. Thus it came about that at four bells, that is at the end of the Samoan's trick at the wheel, C. B. could steer almost as well as his teacher. For there are some men born helmsmen, who learn with astounding ease and rapidity, others who to the last day of their lives never seem to be able to keep a ship, a sailing ship that is, anywhere near her course. Of course steering steamships is, like so many other things at sea in steamers, a purely mechanical process, and if a man does not do it well it argues that he is careless or lazy or both.

The wind held steady, so that the new-comer had no opportunity of learning anything about sail handling this watch, but it had passed away very rapidly and pleasantly, and when eight bells struck C. B. felt more contented than he had been since coming on board. Also he recognized how much he would have to learn, and was correspondingly

eager to get on with that learning. But now he had to face the hole below, for the work of cleansing the ship for the day was beginning, the *Eliza Adams* being, like all those old-time south-seamen from New England, kept as spick and span as any yacht, quite contrary to generally accepted notions, and also in great contrast to the condition in which our English whalers used to be allowed to remain.

The foul atmosphere caught him by the throat as he entered, but he set his teeth and persevered, climbing into his bunk and lying there suffering until he went off into an almost drugged slumber. From this he was aroused at seven bells, 7.20 a.m., to breakfast, which was good and plentiful; but he was not able to eat a morsel, and had to rush on deck for relief. As soon as he appeared the captain saw him, and immediately noticed that there was something wrong with him. Calling him, the skipper inquired in kindly fashion after his health, and on being told what was the matter, raised his eyebrows wonderingly, for the complaint was new to him. And indeed it is nothing short of miraculous to me how men could live at all in such foul dens, reeking with stench and disease-laden air as they were. But of course the poisoning process did not go on long enough to kill, and the strong pure air of heaven when they came on deck soon acted as an antidote to the evil in the blood. A greater mystery still is the way in which our peasantry deliberately choose thus to poison themselves. Working all day in the strong pure breath of the fields, they will go to their cottages and, in company with a large family, close up every cranny whereby a little fresh air can creep in, and soak in that foul fug until the morning. Ugh!

So all the consolation the skipper could give C. B.

was that he would soon get used to it as everybody else had to. And with that poor comfort C. B. had to be content. Now while the captain went on talking to him about the island life there was a cry from aloft, "Porps, porps." A school of porpoises had joined the vessel, and were indulging in their graceful sinewy gambols under the bows as usual.

"Now, my boy," cried the skipper, "is your time to show your shipmates what you can do with the iron. Your shot yesterday was a fancy one, I'll admit, but this is a different matter. Come along forrard."

Already a harpoon had been passed out to the bowsprit and attached to a stout line, which was rove through a block secured there in readiness and the other end passed in on deck. At the skipper's direction C. B. slid down the martingale on to the guys and stood there, his shoulders braced against the martingale or dolphin-striker, while the old ship plunged along, occasionally bringing his feet within a few inches of the waves.

Beneath him the graceful agile sea-creatures rolled and sprang and plunged like mad things in the seething foam from the bluff bows of the advancing ship. C. B. poised his iron, pointed it at one of the rising porpoises, and at the moment it broke the water beneath him the iron flew from his hands. It struck the creature fairly in the middle of the back and sank through him as C. B. shouted—

"Haul up!"

And the men on deck running away with the line jerked the writhing mass out of the water up to the block, where a running bowline was dropped over its broad tail, by means of which it was hauled inboard. Another iron was hastily bent on and

passed out, and the first victim had hardly been cut loose from the barb before another was transfixed in the same manner and lay struggling by the side of its fellow.

Again and again the feat was repeated, for the new harponeer's aim seemed to be unerring, until eleven large porpoises lay in a heap abaft the windlass. And then a really wonderful thing happened. Two porpoises rose at once, rolling over and over each other as they did so, and just as they broke water the harpoon flew and pierced them both at once! Almost all hands saw the amazing stroke, and a great shout of approbation went up, for none of them had ever seen such a feat performed before.

The pair were hauled inboard and another shot made, but this time the iron went through the creature's side, and in its tremendous efforts it wrenched the iron out of its body and fell, a torn and bleeding mass, back into the sea. In a moment the whole school rushed after it and, like a pack of starving wolves, rent it in fragments, leaping high into the air in their frenzied eagerness to get a share of the cannibal feast. So there was no more hunting for the time, but C. B.'s reputation as a harponeer was established upon the firmest basis, and only his fellow-harponeers were ungenerous enough to mutter that perhaps he wouldn't do so well when it came to striking whales.

CHAPTER VII

C. B. Justifies His Position

IT was Captain Taber's intention to proceed in leisurely fashion towards what we know as the "off-shore" grounds, by which term is meant an immense oblong tract of sea off the west coast of South America, extending for about a thousand miles to the westward and from about 50° south nearly to the Equator. This has always been a favourite habitat of the sperm whale, and although not quite so prolific as the Japan grounds or the vicinity of New Zealand, it has sometimes yielded splendid results. But it will be easily understood that in so vast an area, wherein the vision from the crow's-nest of a single ship, or say a circle 90 miles in circumference, is but a speck and that only available by day, it is quite possible for a cruising ship to be many weeks on the ground and never see a solitary spout of a payable whale. And this too although the numbers of these creatures then frequenting a favourite haunt may be incalculable.

Few people, even sailors, can realize in any adequate measure the immensity of the ocean, the vastness of the great lone spaces of the deep. The best method I know to bring this home to one's mind is to come up channel, one of the very busiest of all ocean thoroughfares, on a gloriously fine day and count the number of vessels seen. Of course I assume that the course is in mid-channel, and thus

out of the range of the fishing-boats. The result is amazing. I have only just returned from a cruise in the Channel with the Home Fleet, when we were never more than twenty miles off shore, and I do not recall any one time that we had beside our own ships more than three vessels in sight. If then this be the case in the quite narrow waters of the greatest ocean highway in the world, what must it be where the ocean spreads from one quarter of the world to another? And no people realize this more fully than whalers, who know what it is to cruise for months in the unfrequented latitudes where their quarry is most likely to be found, and who, after a month or so's unsuccessful search are haunted by the idea that just beyond the sea-rim, just over the edge of their little circle, there may be, most likely are, whales in abundance, but in what direction can they steer so as to come up with them?

But to return to C. B. Little by little he became accustomed to the fetid odours of his quarters, could bear to sleep down there even with his berth-mates' pipes all going. But he felt a wide gap in his soul at the utter absence of one topic from all conversation which during the whole of his life had been ever uppermost as the most vital and interesting of all. His soul hungered for some one to talk to about God; he was horrified almost to faintness at the incessant blasphemy he heard around him continually; and, although he would not have owned it to anybody he grieved bitterly in secret that ever he had desired to leave his home and friends. And a great fear also possessed him occasionally. It was that he should grow quite indifferent to the realities of life in the shape of the things of God. Already he fancied he detected within himself a tolerance of the shameful language current about him, if only he could hear

the stories it conveyed of things hitherto beyond any apprehension of his.

In fact, there was going on in the lonely man's soul a conflict such as few of us ashore are called upon to face, a struggle with all the powers of darkness which has to be waged by every newly converted sailor when he goes to sea again, and finds no fellowship nor friendliness among his shipmates because he is suspected of being a Holy Joe. Few things try my patience more than to listen to hair-splitting doctrinal arguments, whether they be on so-called New Theology, or the cut of ecclesiastical vestments, while my mind reverts to the lonely soul in the ship's fo'c'sle, who has just given his heart to the Lord, and has been compelled by the exigencies of his calling to go back to the foul life and conversation which never irked him before, but now is torture.

The proverb that a man is known by the company he keeps has no meaning at sea because your company is not of your own choosing. Detest it as you may you cannot get away from it, and although you may loathe every word you hear spoken, being human your gregarious instincts will assert themselves and fight fiercely against your desire to keep your mind and heart clean by trying to drive you into the society of those whose delight it is to outrage every feeling they think you possess of decency or righteousness. In such a situation as nowhere else in the world can a man rest upon the promise, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the age." And happy will he be if the squabbling of the schoolmen as to the authenticity of the dear words has never come within his mental purview.

I think, however, that C. B.'s plight was rather worse than that of the newly converted sailor. For the latter has been long familiar with the language,

has long known the utter absence of all recognition of God as having anything to do with men's lives, and so, though a return to such environment is utterly distasteful to him, it is not strange, does not come with so much of a shock. But poor C. B., from his earliest infancy, had been steeped in the atmosphere of prayer, of the constant invariable immanence of God and in the belief of His immediate and benevolent interference in the affairs of His children down here. He had not been brought up religiously, for the word is suspect; in fact, as most of us know to our cost, a religious man and an unutterable scoundrel are often synonymous terms. But he had been bred in the belief in the Father's love and the unseen fellowship with Jesus Christ His Son, Himself manifest in the flesh, and that not because, hateful devilish thought, there was anything to be made out of it, any well-deserved punishment to escape from, but because it was entirely good and pleasant to love the all-Father whose plans and purposes towards them were only love and that continually.

One thing, however, came to his aid early in the struggle. It was the remembrance of a conversation he had had with his parents once upon the possibility of the islanders' goodness being of a negative character. That is to say, they had never been tempted to do wrong, all their lives had been hemmed in on every side by right-doing and right-thinking and perhaps, he had only hinted at it, if they had been subjected to the same trials and tests as the people in the great world, they would fall, and fall lamentably. He had not claimed for himself any special strength or virtue, whatever his innermost thoughts may have been, but he had really felt at the time that his love for God was so strong and fervent that he would be glad to test it even in the fiercest fires of persecution.

Of course he did not in the least anticipate what the reality would be, no one ever does. He had strung himself up to meet outrage, in a physical sense to be treated in openly severe ways, not by covert sarcasm, persistent blasphemy and ignoring of the very right of God to interfere in the affairs of man. Now he was face to face with the reality he felt dismayed, but he went to the unfailing resource of the Christian, he claimed his dearly purchased right of direct intercourse with the Fountain of love and wisdom and was at once stayed upon the sure sense of being a child well beloved by the Father.

He strove manfully also to acquaint himself with all those details of ship work which he now found to be quite intricate and difficult. Fortunately his fine physique and utter immunity from sea-sickness stood him in good stead and he learned rapidly, so that at the end of a fortnight he began to feel capable of holding his own with his shipmates. And in consequence of the continually flung hints that he would be found out when it came to the actual business of whaling he prayed fervently for a chance to show that in this at any rate he had nothing to learn here. But as day after day slipped by and no whales appeared he had to listen to a fresh set of innuendoes from his berth-mates, who now said that their ill-luck was due to his presence on board.

So when he took his spell at the mainmast head in the crow's-nest, be sure that his glance never missed any object, however small, that came within the limits of human sight. At last when about halfway across the Pacific it happened to be his first two hours in the main crow's-nest, from 6 to 8 a.m. The young Kanaka who was with him was sleepy and lethargic, taking little heed of the necessity for keeping a good look out in spite of the sub-

stantial bounty offered of twenty dollars for the first sight of an afterwards captured whale making over forty barrels of oil. C. B. was watchful as usual, for so far as he had yet lived he had never allowed himself to scamp or neglect any duty. This was hardly a virtue, it was bred in him.

And consequently at this time, in the full glory of the early dawn, while his heart uplifted itself in praise to the Creator of the beautiful world, all his other senses were concentrated in sight; his vision ranged ceaselessly over every square foot of the huge circle of sea of which he was the centre. Then suddenly, from faraway on the Western horizon, there arose from the clear, placid bosom of the deep a tiny puff as of smoke from a pipe. The watcher stiffened into rigid attention. Ha, there it is again! another and another, and then a creamy curdling of the blue water as if its swell had suddenly met an obstruction. It was enough. Uplifting his mellow voice C. B. sent through the quiet air the whaler's musical long-drawn cry of "Blo-o-o-o-w," the liquid vowels persisting for nearly a minute. As soon as it ceased there arose from the deck the strong voice of the skipper, who had rushed on deck from deep sleep at the first beginning of the cry—

"Where away? keep crying."

"Bloooooow, Bloooooow," came the response, and then with a bursting change: "There—ere—she—white waters—and Blows, Blows, Blow. Broad on the starboard beam, sir, about ten miles off—seven or eight whales, sperm whales, Blo-o-o-o-w."

There was but a very light breeze on the port quarter, the ship making about two knots an hour, and the skipper, grabbing his binoculars and mounting the main rigging, shouted:—

"Port braces, bring her head up WNW. Mr.

Spurrell, lively now," the words exploding as he toiled upward and seated himself on the upper topsail yard. Meanwhile the other masthead-men had caught sight of the whales and were all adding their voices to the musical minor wail that was going up. On deck the watch below were beginning to swarm up; cleansing gear of brooms, buckets, sand, etc., was being put hurriedly away, and boats' gripes cast off, while in each boat the harpioneer might be seen critically examining the state of his weapons.

Presently the old man's voice rang out peremptorily—

"Down from aloft! See all clear for lowering, call all hands. Christmas, you'd better git an' see that all's right in your boat."

As his orders rang out the recipients of them responded severally, and swiftly the various duties were performed, but with an utter absence of bustle, for all hands were well trained. C. B. grabbed a backstay as he slid out of the crow's-nest hoop and came to the deck like a flash, plunging at once full of eagerness in the direction of his boat. But here he found that the fourth mate had been before him and left nothing for him to do. I have not hitherto spoken of this curious individual, who is indeed worthy of special notice, because he is quite a supernumary in time of peace and indeed in time of war has to give place to the Captain should the latter wish to take the field himself. He was a Guamese, from the Ladrone Islands, the offspring of a Spanish father and a Chinese mother, but with practically only the facial characteristics of the Mongol. He was taciturn to a degree, never uttering an unnecessary word, although he spoke English fluently as well as Spanish and the *Lingua Franca* of the islands with which a man may get

along from Honolulu to Haapai. And he answered to the name of Merritt, Mr. Merritt.

Seeing him in the boat, C. B. said pleasantly—

“Is there anything I can do, sir?”

“Get the lines in,” growled the officer, but not uncivilly—it was his natural mode of expression. And C. B., ready on the instant, turned to the boat’s crew who stood near and gave the necessary orders. The two tubs of line were flung into their places and all was ready. From his lofty perch the skipper’s voice came occasionally in steering directions as the whales, being on a passage, changed their bearings. This state of suspense endured for nearly two hours, during which the whales descended twice, their course, the time of their down-going and up-coming and the number of their individual spoutings out being carefully noted, all of which things are guides to the future movements of the whale of the utmost value.

For when unmolested and on a passage from one spot to another the sperm whale steers an exact course, as if directed by compass. So that when he settles down he heads his course and when he rises again, often fifty minutes later, he heads still the same way. Moreover the time he remains below, still when unmolested and on a passage, does not vary, it is as fixed as in the number of times he breathes on reaching the surface. But this latter phenomenon does not alter, whether the creature be unmolested or chased in full health or dying; when rising to breathe he must obey some strange law compelling him to keep to his particular number of spouts unless their quantity is cut short by death.

But it often happens that a school of sperm whales will spend an entire day upon the surface of the sea, apparently basking in the sunshine and

doing nothing but enjoy the sensation of being peacefully alive. In this case their spoutings can hardly be seen, so attenuated does the vapour become as the creature's air vessels get thoroughly charged with pure air. On first rising to the surface, after a prolonged stay below, the breath is so thick that a casual observer could easily mistake it for water, as indeed has so frequently been done. I can never understand why, though, because the expelled breath always hangs in the air like a tiny fog wreath, which water of course could not do.

This digression, which is hardly unnecessary, I think, is merely to while away the long wait while the ship creeps up to the spot where the happily unconscious monsters are pursuing their placid way. At last the voice of the skipper is heard again, saying—

“Lower away, Mr. Winsloe, you're less than two miles off now. Pull straight ahead for ten minutes and then set sail. They're just up and headin' as near No'the as makes no odds.”

“Aye, aye, sir, lower it is,” came the ready response; and with a musical whir of soft Manilla rope over patent sheaves the four boats almost simultaneously took the water, the crews slid down the falls after them and dropped into their places, shoved off, out oars and away.

It is a stirring sight, the departure of boats after a whale from a ship. Every man seems so bent upon distinguishing himself. The flexible ashen oars spring as the weight of the body is thrown upon them, entering the water cleanly, noiselessly, gripping it firmly and leaving it as gently as if there had been no force behind the stroke. The feather is perfect—you cannot pull in a sea way without it, under pain of a bad chest blow, and the thickly padded rowlocks give no sound. Suddenly the mate's boat, leading,

gave the signal by shipping the oars and setting sail and immediately all the crews followed the example, and the big masts were stepped, the white sails shaken out to the gentle breeze, and without a sound the graceful craft slipped through the water towards the still unconscious objects of their efforts.

Etiquette demands that the boats shall follow in order of official precedence, but upon nearing the school that order is usually broken up entirely by the movements of the whales and it is then a case for individual smartness to assert itself. So now, just as the mate had indicated by a wave of his hand that the boats must spread out fanwise, a huge bull whale, the apparent monarch of the school, rose placidly a couple of boat's lengths ahead of C. B. He rose, gripping his iron and jamming his left thigh in the "clumsy cleat" groove, cut out of the little fore deck of the boat for that purpose. Hardly had he poised the heavy weapon when the great back before him rounded upwards like a bow—sure warning that the whale was about to seek the depths.

There was a swift movement of the sinewy arms and the iron flew to its mark at the same moment as Mr. Merritt yelled—

"Now then, let him have it!"

Everybody in the boat saw the iron strike, sink in halfway and bend over as the massive iron-wood pole, weighted additionally with the line, sank downwards. But C. B. snatching his second harpoon sent it whizzing after the first, striking the arrested monster's side about three feet away from the first wound.

Mr. Merritt swung the boat up into the wind, shouting as he did so—

"Down with the mast, lively now, hump yerselves,"

and all hands sprang to the task, while the stricken whale, in a paroxysm of mingled terror and fury, lashed the quiet sea into boiling foam with his gigantic struggles against this unseen, unknown enemy that had so sorely wounded him. But none of his efforts, tremendous as they were, had any intelligent direction; they were just a blind waste of energy, and so the toiling men were able to get the sail rolled up and secured, the mast unshipped and fleted aft, where, with its heel tucked under the after thwart, it was completely out of the workers' way, leaving the boat clear for action. Then, as coolly as if on a pleasure trip and entirely unheeding the frantic wallowings of the leviathan so near, Mr. Merritt and C. B. changed ends, the former's place now being in the bow, for the purpose of using the lance on the whale, while the harponeer steered.

Before, however, Mr. Merritt had got the cap off his favourite lance's point there was a sudden cessation of the uproar, a huge whirling in the sea and the vast body sank from sight, slowly, majestically, as if the monster had suddenly regained the dignity befitting him in spite of these new and terrifying circumstances. Now the line attached to the harpoon led right aft, round a stout oak post built solidly in the boat, the "loggerhead," and thence into the tub where two hundred fathoms of it was neatly coiled, a smaller tub on the other side of the boat holding a hundred fathoms, but all in one length.

"Hold him up, hold him up," growled the officer, as the line began to glide out slowly, and C. B. responded by taking three turns round the loggerhead with the line and holding on to it until the boat's nose was dragged down to within an inch or two of the water, while all hands, except the officer, crowded aft as far as they could get, with the object of putting

a check upon the whale's descent. This is always done, but remembering the immense power of a whale in addition to his enormous weight (a full-sized sperm whale weighs considerably over a hundred tons), its brake power would almost seem commensurate with that of a fly on a cart wheel.

Now they were at leisure to look round them to see how the other boats had fared. But only one was visible, and that was coming towards them at tremendous speed, obviously being towed by a whale, although he could not be seen. On she came, heading straight for them, until, when destruction seemed inevitable and the tomahawk for severing the line gleamed in Mr. Merritt's grip, the boat steerer of the rushing craft made a mighty effort, bending his steer oar like a great bow, and she flew past them only a few feet away. It was a breathless moment, but such are frequent in this strenuous business, and except at the moment are thought little of. Here, if anywhere, the proverb of a miss being as good as a mile holds true—it generally means the difference between life and death.

Slowly, certainly, fake after fake of the line left the tub until it was exhausted, and now the smaller one began to empty in its turn. So the signal was made "running short of line" by up-ending an oar, and soon after urgency was shown by another oar being pointed upwards. But no boat was near, and all hands began to peer anxiously at the fast emptying tub, while one stood by with the *drogue*, a flat piece of planking a foot square which is made fast to the end of the line when it has to be slipped. It is supposed to act as a drag upon the whale, equal to the resistance of four boats. And then, as suddenly the boat righted herself with a jerk,

while the men scrambled each to his thwart, the whale ceased to descend, and Mr. Merritt shouted—
“ Haul in lively now, haul quick ! ”

As fast as the fakes could be coiled in the stern-sheets the line was hauled in, for the whale rose as rapidly as he had gone down slowly, until suddenly he broke water about a ship's length away and with one tremendous expiration of pent-up breath, sprang forward like a hound loosed from the leash. C. B. had only just time to whip his turns round the loggerhead again as the boat, with a jerk that nearly threw all hands from their thwarts, sped after the rushing ocean monarch, leaving a wide, glittering foam track behind her. Mr. Merritt leaned over the bows, clutching his long lance and glaring vengefully at the broad shining back of the whale ploughing through the waves fifty feet away from him. With coarse gaspings he implored, taunted, threatened his crew in the effort to get them to perform the impossible task of bringing him nearer to the whale. The rope was tense as wire, and their utmost endeavours could not get in an inch of it.

And now the wind and sea began to rise, causing clouds of flying spray to break over the boat as she was dragged furiously in the wake of the whale. Merritt's rage was awful to witness. What he said does not matter; it was almost unintelligible anyhow; but his yellow teeth were bared, he champed like an angry boar, and foam flecked with crimson flew from his mouth and hung on his straggling beard. C. B. stood like a statue, alert, tense, ready to act on the instant if the whale should turn.

And thus they sped for nearly twenty minutes, until as suddenly as he had hitherto performed his other evolutions the whale stopped, turned at bay, and with a splendid sweep of the steer oar C. B.

avoided running into his columnar head, bringing the boat head on to his broadside. With one exultant savage yell Merritt hurled his lance, and the whole four feet of slender steel sank into the black body as a knife sinks into butter. "Haul and hold, haul and hold," screamed the furious man as he dragged the lance back, straightened it by a deft blow or two on the gunnel, and now, being closely held against the whale side, plunged it in again. But it struck a rib and bent almost double. Flinging the warp or line by which it was attached to the bow oarsman, he snatched another lance, uncapped it, and was about to repeat his assault, when there came a warning shout from C. B. as the agonized monster turned a somersault, his huge flukes snapping in the air as he brandished them frantically.

"Stern, stern," roared Merritt, and all the energy the crew possessed went into those awkward strokes, while the turmoil made by the maddened whale was deafening. Black, fetid blood flew from his spiracle mingled with acrid foam, which stung like a nettle where it touched the skin, and from the wounds made by the lance the blood spurted to a distance of two or three feet. It was obvious now that one or both of those lance thrusts had reached a vital organ, and the sea monarch was now writhing in the last great struggle of death. He rolled rapidly from side to side, beat the ensanguined sea into yellow foam with his mighty tail, while masses of clotted gore burst from his spouthole with a mournful bellow, like that of some vast bull, and then in a moment the great body went limp, rolled upon its side, and lay still, save for the gentle motion given it by the swell.

All hands drew a long breath, then at Merritt's

command hauled up to the carcass and held the boat alongside, while with a boat spade he cut a hole through the tail. Then cutting the line from the irons close up to them, the end of it was passed through the hole and made fast, a small flag was hoisted, and all was ready for the ship to run down and secure the great prize.

CHAPTER VIII

Treachery and its Consequences

THERE are few pleasures in life comparable with the contemplation of the successful results of a tremendous struggle with overwhelming odds in company with your fellows, whether you be leader or follower. And I know of no circumstance where this is more fully exemplified than in the precious rest-time enjoyed by a boat's crew immediately after the death of a whale. No matter how bad the treatment of the men on board the ship may have been, how utterly weary of the life everybody may feel, or how brutal officer and harpioneer, the sense of having successfully finished the combat draws them all together for a time, and the smoke which is then permitted is essentially in the nature of a pipe of peace.

In the present case everybody was full of satisfaction. For in the first place the new harpioneer had acquitted himself in the best and most approved fashion, the highest expectations of him had been fully justified. Next, the whole operation had proceeded on the most orthodox lines, both on the part of the whale and his destroyers. And lastly, the weather had been fine, the time not too long, and crowning joy of all, the prize was of the largest and therefore the most payable size. Even Mr. Merritt's curious yellow face wore a less ghastly

expression than usual, which in his case meant immense satisfaction.

Their rest was of very brief duration, for when the whale died the ship was barely three miles away to windward, and she had immediately filled away for them. When she reached within a quarter of a mile she was brought smartly up into the wind with her mainyard aback and laid still. Immediately Mr. Merritt gave the order to slack away the line and pull for the ship, which they reached in five minutes, noting as they did so that all the other boats were in their place, at the davits, and that the faces of the crew wore a preternatural air of gloom. The bight of the line was passed on board and all hands tailed on to it, walking the whale up to the ship in rapid fashion. And as the great mass came alongside the skipper's face lightened, for he mentally assessed its stupendous proportions as able to yield about fourteen tons, or a hundred and forty barrels of oil. In splendid seamanlike fashion the fluke chain was passed round the tail and hauled through the mooring pipe in the bow, where it was secured to the massive fluke chain bitt, an oaken post built into the ship and bolted to the heel of the bowsprit.

Without a moment's interval the work of cutting in was begun, but the newly arrived boat's crew were given time to get into another rig. And C. B. received a fresh surprise when, with a pleased look on his face, he went up to Pepe, the chief harpioneer, and asked him what had happened to the other boats that they had missed their chance. It was a simple question, which, had C. B. known anything of the world, he would never have asked, for he would then have known that it would be taken as a bitter insult. Indeed it nearly led to tragedy, for Pepe's

face went reddish black with rage, the veins in his neck stood out like cords of the thickness of a little finger, and he snarled out something in his own language, looking like a starving wolf as he did so. Then in a calmer tone he said—

“Don’ you begin poke no fun at me, Mr. Greenie, or I settle de account mighty quick. You talk somebody else.” And turned away, leaving the bewildered C. B. staring wonderingly at him.

But not for long, for Captain Taber came up, saying pleasantly as he did so—

“Look a here, young man, you’re most too good for this wicked world, you air, an’ I’m afraid I’m goin’ t’ have big trouble about ye. Whatever possessed ye to go and ask Pepe what ye did? I heard ye.”

“Only because I wanted to know, sir,” replied the young man; “I supposed that they had all had some trouble, as will often happen in whaling, and I thought I’d like to know the reason.”

“And it never occurred to you that every one of those harponeers is just full of mad against ye for havin’ disappointed ’em. They’ve ben hopin’ for ye t’ break up fust time ye went on a whale; they hate ye because ye be good an’ quiet an’ simple, an’ if ye was a clumsy galoot they’d soon let up on ye and only play a few fool games on ye. But now ye’re comin’ out smarter than any of ’em, for I can’t deny that this mornin’s work was a bad piece of bunglin’ as ever I seen in the ship; there isn’t one of ’em that wouldn’t enjoy stickin’ an iron through ye right up t’ the hitches. But there, get along t’ the work, ’n keep close to me; I don’t want a blubber spade slipped into ye by accident.”

That afternoon the deck of the *Eliza Adams* presented a curious scene, a scene of wonderful

activity, of massy pieces of blubber swinging inboard and decks streaming with oil. Much of the bad feeling among the other three harponeers and officers had evaporated or was in abeyance, though none of them could forget the blistering words spoken to them by the skipper that morning. The present may be a fitting time to allude to the circumstances briefly. The mate, with Pepe his harponeer, had singled out the biggest whale he could see and laid Pepe on to it. But for some strange reason, when Pepe raised his iron to dart, he did not notice that the whale, evidently an old stager, had at that moment hollowed his back, leaving the blubber all slack. Now an iron cannot penetrate a whale's body when this is the case. And at the moment the point struck the whale arched his back with such suddenness and violence that the iron was flung right back into the boat by the tightening of the blubber, knocking the bow oarsman senseless. In the momentary confusion induced by this, and while the mate was angrily inquiring why Pepe had missed, the second mate, Mr. Spurrell, came charging along fast to a whale which dived beneath the mate's boat, and in order to keep from cutting her in half the line was let go. It kinked or caught in the groove or chock, and but for Mr. Spurrell's promptitude, two more seconds would have seen both boats a mass of wreckage. He, however, chopped the line, losing the whale.

Neither of them could get near a whale again, and as for the third mate, nobody seemed to know what had happened to him, except that he did not appear to have even located a whale, but ambled about like a man in a dream. Take it all round, the morning's work, as far as the old hands were concerned, was a matter to be forgotten as soon as

possible. But that the despised Kanaka, as those fancy-coloured Portuguese called him, the soft greenie, the everything of contumely their narrow coarse minds could suggest, should succeed where they had failed was enough to goad them to madness.

But now a strange new factor intruded itself into the situation. The thirty hands of the crew were, as usual, of several different nationalities. There were several Kanakas from various islands, eight native-born Down Easters who had been lured by spacious promises and a spirit of adventure into this roving unprofitable life, four Europeans of sorts, whom I cannot specify, and the rest Portuguese. Now their discordant elements agreed very well under the stern discipline always enforced on board those ships, but all of them felt warmly towards the big handsome Bounty boy who always spoke so kindly, never used an oath, and greatest quality of all in their eyes, was fully up to his work.

And with that extraordinary instinct for what is going on which is always so surprising on board ship they all realized the antagonism felt towards him by the other harponeers, and though they dared not show any partiality, they felt it, and whenever they could discuss the situation among themselves without the Portuguese listening, they always spoke in the most enthusiastic terms of the new recruit. It must not be supposed that in saying what I have about the Portuguese I am actuated by any hostility towards them. I know what fine men they are for their work, but they are capable of the blackest treachery, regard it as perfectly legitimate to get the better of a man you dislike by any means however base, and to further their own ends will betray their closest friend. Of course I know little of the pure-bred Portuguese, I speak throughout of the

breed I am acquainted with, the many-coloured natives of the North Atlantic Isles ; brave, fierce, and entirely unscrupulous.

Much of the work being done that afternoon was entirely new to C. B., often as he had helped to cut up a whale, for it must be pointed out that cutting a whale in on board ship at sea is an essentially different process from the slipshod business of doing the same thing on shore, especially where all are friends, all desire to get the job done as quickly as possible, for all are co-equal partners in the venture. So naturally he made many blunders, immediately pointed out by the skipper, who worked as hard as any of them, and none missed by the sardonic harponeers and officers toiling on the cutting stage. With one exception, Merritt. Once when C. B. did something foolish, and in consequence came a cropper in the midst of a pool of oil, Pepe, who was toiling on the cutting stage by Merritt's side hacking off the gigantic head, snarled to Merritt.

"Look a dat galoot ! Bouts handy as a ba'r, don't it ? "

Merritt turned upon the speaker with a green light in his curious shaped eyes and snarled—

"Wen you k'n best 'im at 'is work you call 'im bad names t' me, not before. I got no use fer talk like dat. He's a man, dat's what he is, an doan call nobody out deir names needer. Git along wid de work."

Oh yes, very pretty trouble was brewing all round, as the skipper said, and not the less troublesome because the storm centre was perfectly innocuous. Fortunately for himself he had early come to the conclusion that to worry about what he knew to be the prevalent feeling concerning him in the half deck, as the petty officers den was termed, would be

wrong. Again and again in the midst of his work, when tempted to long for the kindly hearty fellowship he had enjoyed all his previous life, he was cheered by the thought of the lonely One and uplifted by the sense that he was privileged to be a fellow in those dark places of the perfect Man. And went on, if not cheerfully, at least contentedly, finding in his work a great solace.

The intricate and disagreeable work of boiling down the oil and stowing it away proceeded apace until all was washed away and the ship resumed her spotless appearance. Then day succeeded day in the peaceful passage across that placid mighty ocean, when there was nothing but ordinary ship's routine to be carried on, and very often C. B. felt sorely the need of something to occupy his mind. True he could meditate and did upon the home he had left, and the strange happenings he had witnessed here; but he did long with an ache at his heart for the sweet communion with his fellow-men that he had so long enjoyed and had thought so little of. He had never imagined a little world like this with *nobody* to talk to who had a single thought in common with him.

But this enforced solitude in the midst of his fellows was all unconsciously on his part deepening and widening his character. In throwing him upon his own resources, the fellowship with the unseen realities of true life made him, without his being in any sense akin to the useless self-centred recluse in his narrow cell wholly intent upon the salvation of his own petty soul, realize in a very special sense the perfect beauty of spiritual communion as he had never done before. Also, because he was debarred from reading anything except his Bible, there being no other literature available, turn

all his physical and mental powers during his hours of work to becoming perfect in his new calling.

And then he suddenly made a discovery which pleased him immensely, made his heart leap for joy. It was that his queer boat-header, Mr. Merritt, had conceived a great liking for him. He was struggling one afternoon with the intricacies of a piece of sailor work, endeavouring to strop a block with three-inch rope, and having made a mess of it, he looked up despairingly to find the inscrutable yellow face of Merritt looking down upon him with a twinkle in the oblique eyes.

"Got kind o' snarled up, I see," said the fourth mate. "Comes a-tryin' to do sailor work 'thout bein' properly showed how. Here, lemme show ye." And sitting down by his side Merritt explained patiently and clearly every detail of the work, nor desisted, never losing patience, until C. B. had fairly mastered it.

"Now anything else in that way you hanker after knowin' you come to me an' I'll show ye, see. But don't go askin' anybody else, 'cause when I take a job on like this I like it all to myself. I'm a jealous man I am, and I've took a strong shine to ye, an' as long as you stick t'me I'll show ye what my idea of bein' a chum is." Then settling down comfortably by C. B.'s side he lit his pipe and went on, "Guess you've often wondered what sort of a queer fellow I was, didn't ye? Now don't say ye didn't, kase ye couldn't help it. Everybody does, an' I don't blame 'em as long as they don't throw it up to me; if they do, well, I'm a pretty poisonous handful when I get a-goin'. But we won't talk about that. I'm talkin' to you now as I ain't talked to any man since I lost my only chum, ten years ago. Some day I'll tell you all about him, but not now. Now I want

t'say that I've been a-watchin' this crowd pretty cluse, an' there's two or three of 'em a-lookin' for a chance to spoil ye fer keeps. An' I've a-made up my mind that I ain't goin' t'let 'em do it. I want ye, fer I believe yer a no end good man any way yer took, an' if ye are misshnary it's the right kind. Put it thar," and he held out his yellow sinewy hand, which C. B. took warmly, and was amazed at the force of the grip he received.

Now this colloquy had certainly not passed unnoticed by the harponeers, and something like dismay ran through the camp. For Merritt, although they had been shipmates with him for eighteen months, was an enigma to them, a riddle they had never thought it worth while trying to solve. They knew him for a splendid whaleman and a thorough seaman, who scarcely ever spoke except when it was absolutely necessary for the purposes of the business. His colour and the strange mixture of races obvious in his face made no difference in a community where a man is judged only by his deeds and not in the least by his origin. And now this mysterious mate had taken up their pet aversion, and who knew what such a combination might produce?

The first result of the association, however, was a decided easing off in the villainous remarks made purposely in C. B.'s hearing whenever he went below, and a certain indefinite shade of respect being shown him. He noticed the change, wondered mildly at it, and then dismissing it from his mind, went quietly on his way as before, until one evening the skipper, coming up to him as he stood gazing over the rail at the placid bosom of the ocean, said in a cheery voice—

“ Well, Mr. Christmas, you seem to be getting

along a little better with ye're berth-mates now, an' I'm right down glad to see it. But what ye ben doin' t'bring it about? I thought nothin' 'd do it but a big row and mebbe a fight in which I was prepared to back ye up. An' I'm ever so pleased to see that ther don't seem to be any prospect of the kind now. Tell me what ye done to 'em?"

C. B. turned on him one of his beautiful smiles and replied—

"I haven't done a thing to them, sir; I don't know what I could do except try and go on as I began, doing my work as well as I can. They wouldn't talk to me, nor let me talk to them, and so I've just had to let them go their own way while I have gone mine."

"Yes, yes, that's all very well," hastily rejoined the skipper, "but how have you managed to make chums with Merritt? I never thought he would associate with any one."

"I haven't the least idea, sir," replied the young man. "He says he likes me, and I'm very glad, but I don't know why he should have suddenly found out that he did."

"Ah well," sighed the captain, "it is as I've often said, you're too good for this wicked world and you're bound to have trouble, but I'm mighty glad I don't see trouble stickin' out so far as I did. An' now as we're just comin' on to the whaling ground, I hope you'll bring us luck and do as well as you did first time lowerin'."

"I hope so too, sir," answered C. B., "and that the other fellows 'll get a look in too. I can't bear to see men so disappointed." The captain gave him a critical look and walked away, shaking his head gravely as though to hint that really his new

harponeer was a problem too difficult for him to solve.

Now by what process of reasoning or instinct Mr. Merritt arrived at the conclusion that there was some mischief quietly hatching, directed against his harponeer in connexion with his work, there are no means of knowing; it was one of those impulses that are not to be reasoned out, only felt and obeyed. At any rate, so strong was his feeling that something was afoot, that he sacrificed watch after watch of his sleep at night lying rolled up in a blanket on top of the after house where he could keep an eye on his boat. This of course in his watch below, when he was supposed to be in his cabin, and he took the greatest pains to keep his movements secret. After nearly a week's watching, he was rewarded by seeing a dark figure, which his keen sight determined to be the mate's harponeer, Pepe, creep noiselessly up into the boat and settle down into her so that his movements should not be seen, the mate having gone below to fill his pipe, and the third mate lolling half asleep abaft the wheel.

Merritt slipped down from his place like an eel, slid along the deck to the side of his boat, then sprang up on the rail and peered in to her, saying sharply—

“What ye doin' in my boat, Pepe?”

The big harponeer stood up and stammered—

“I—I thought I heard a fly'n' fish drop in thar, an' was a-lookin' for it.”

“Oh thet's it, is it?” growled Merritt. “Well, come out of her right now 'thout lookin' any more. I sorter mistrust ye;” and as he spoke he clambered into the boat and glanced keenly around while Pepe got out reluctantly.

It was then just upon the stroke of eight bells, 4 a.m., and Merritt stayed where he was until the bell was struck and the watch mustered. Then calling C. B. to him, he told him to watch the boat and make sure that no one entered her. Having done this he returned on deck and waited for daylight. As soon as it came he mounted into the boat again and pointed out to C. B. that the line in the big tub had been disturbed about ten fakes down. Then lifting fake after fake out he carefully ran along the line as he did so, until a sharp "Ah" came from his lips, followed by "Just look here, my son." C. B. did look, and there was a clean cut in the line severing two strands nearly through. C. B. looked up at the fourth mate's face, and was horror-struck, for it wore the aspect of a fiend. Not knowing what to say, though burning with righteous anger at the shameful treachery, he looked irresolutely back and forth, first at the line and then at his leader, when suddenly he heard the captain's voice on deck. Merritt immediately slipped over the rail and strode to the captain, saying as he came before him—

"Captain Taber, what's to be done to a man that creeps into a boat at night and cuts a tow-line through, an', when he's caught at it, says he's lookin' for fly'n' fish?"

For a moment the captain was speechless with astonishment and rage, then he burst into incoherent speech of a kind that cannot be reported. Merritt stood looking coolly at him until he had finished, and then resumed with—

"Guess I'd like you just to hev a peek at this thing," and led the way to the boat, the captain swiftly following. There sat C. B. still almost helpless with wonderment at the devilish treachery

of the thing while Merritt showed the line and explained how he came to detect the deed.

"But who, who's the man?" gasped the skipper. "Tell me who the man is till I make him wish he'd never been born."

"Now, sir," replied Merritt, "I ain't ever asked you a favour since I ben in your ship, an' I know I've gi'n you satisfaction. Please let me deal with this man in my own way. I won't kill him, I promise ye that, sir, an' it'll be less trouble for all of us." By this time Captain Taber had cooled down a bit, and he looked dubiously at the ugly face before him. At last he said, "I don't want murder done here, Mr. Merritt, neither do I want a man laid up so's he won't be any use for the work, otherwise I think I could leave it to you to give him he's lesson. Yes, I'll do it, if you'll tell me who it is."

"That's good, sir," rejoined Merritt, "your word's always good enough for me. Well, it's Pepe, an' I propose getting him here on the quarter-deck with all hands to see and no weapons but our hands, an' if I don't teach him suthin that'll do him good you can heave me overboard. But I own I'd just like to kill him."

"All right," said the skipper, "I won't go back on my word, keep you yours. But only to think of it! my boss harpioneer to serve me a dog's trick like that! And I thought he was getting so quiet and amiable too. Ah," shaking his head sadly at C. B., "I was a bit too sudden in what I said to ye the other afternoon. This is on your account. Well, I wish I'd never seen ye, but I'll own that it ain't any of your fault, an' I'm not goin' t' be cur enough t' blame ye."

The air was surcharged with electricity until eight bells, for in that mysterious manner before

alluded to all hands knew that stirring events were about to transpire. C. B. was very uneasy, for even without the captain's words he would have felt that he was in some measure responsible for the trouble, though in no way to blame. The only man who seemed perfectly unconcerned was Merritt, who just before eight bells slipped below and presently returned clad only in a canvas jumper, pants and boots. He wore a belt and no cap. The other officers all whispered one to another anxiously, the mate looking specially concerned, for, of course, he knew that it was his harponeer who had done this thing.

Eight bells ! and in the orthodox fashion the watch below immediately appeared on deck. "Lay aft all hands !" thundered the skipper, and swiftly the whole crew appeared on the quarter-deck, foremast hands forward, harponeers to starboard and officers to port. "Stand out here, Pepe," said the skipper, and Pepe stepped forward looking a greenish grey. "Mr. Merritt reports to me that he found you in his boat in the middle watch, and looking to see what you were doing, found that you'd cut his line. What have you got to say ?"

He might have had something to say, but he could not say it, he was fascinated at the sight of Merritt, who had glided nearer to him. After waiting a full minute the skipper went on. "You've got nothing to say, now come here." Pepe came close up to the skipper, who flung his hands round the harponeer's waist and plucked from inside his shirt a long keen knife, which he threw aft. "Now stand back, harponeers," the skipper cried ; "Mr. Merritt is going to teach Pepe a lesson man fashion." The ring widened instantly, and like a leopard Merritt sprang at the harponeer. For a few moments so

rapid and furious were the movements of the two men that it was impossible to tell which of them was the better, and all eyes were strained upon them, lips parted and breath came short.

Then it was seen that Merritt had got the big Portuguese completely at his mercy, holding him with one arm round his neck in a bear-like grip. And with the disengaged hand Merritt beat him as if he were a refractory child, beating him to bruise and hurt as much as possible without disabling; and oh the humiliation of it! In that hour men saw how tremendous was the strength that none had suspected Merritt of before. At last the beaten man lost all sense of manhood and begged for mercy, the big tears rolling down his dark cheeks. Immediately the captain stepped forward and held up his hand, saying, "That will do, Merritt." And the fourth mate sprang to his feet.

Pepe staggered up and would have crawled away, but the captain caught him by the arm. "Wait!" he cried. "Now, men, Pepe has been punished for shamefully cutting a line in order to make the new harponeer lose a whale. If any more of this kind of thing is done and I find the man out, I'll tie him up and flog the flesh off his ribs. That'll do. Carry on with the work. Go below the watch." And immediately the tide of ship life flowed back into its usual channel, the wretched Pepe slinking about like a beaten dog.

CHAPTER IX

The Great Catch

SO sudden, dramatic and complete had been the justice dealt out to Pepe that it made quite an imperceptible ripple in the steady current of the ship's routine. In the mind of the beaten man there was, of course, a deep and deadly hatred for his chastiser as well as for C. B., and schemes of revenge chased one another through his brain continually. But he came of a race that understands and appreciates a good thrashing and has no respect for gentle humanitarian methods, and so Pepe's respect for Mr. Merritt's prowess was very real and sincere. Also his compatriots in the half-deck were perceptibly less sympathetic than they had been. In fact, they were quite ready to throw him over and openly condemn him for doing that which any one of them would have done given a favourable opportunity.

In only one thing did they now agree with him, and that was in their hatred of C. B. It is a melancholy fact that in an assemblage of bad men anything will be condoned but goodness, and the perfectly blameless life led by C. B. was a constant offence to men whose only virtues were high courage in the performance of their dangerous duties, and endurance in the most tremendous labours that can be imagined when the circumstances called for them. But C. B. was now far happier than he had

been since he first came on board. He had almost unconsciously been craving for some human sympathy and fellowship, and now he was in a fair way to get both. He felt himself drawn to his saturnine chief in a most intimate and affectionate way, while he could not but respect and admire him for his effectual punishment of the dastardly offence committed by Pepe. For C. B. had nothing in common with those curious Christians among us whose sympathies are entirely with the criminal and never with the victim, who shudder at pain being inflicted upon the guilty but are quite callous to the agonies of the innocent. To his simple ideas these folk would have seemed to be madmen.

Various quiet warnings were conveyed to him to keep a wary eye upon Pepe, who would be certain to do him a shrewd turn at the earliest opportunity, but he only laughed cheerily and said—

“ I’m not losing any sleep over this matter. If he kills me I am ready to die, and shall not be worse off, but better. If he attacks me openly, he will, I think, get some more sore bones. And that’s all I care about it.”

And then he would change the subject, for he was gradually becoming able to talk about the pure and noble life of his island home to the captain and officers and sometimes to the men, who listened fascinated: as they would, for although most of them had at one time or another heard the Gospel preached in some fashion, they had always looked upon the preacher as one who was paid to say certain things which he did not believe, but which were designed to keep the poor man quiet while the rich man preyed upon him.

Some of them had dim recollections of holy lives lived by their parents, of prayers repeated in lisping

tones at a mother's knee and recalled occasionally in moments of solitude, but none of them had ever met before a man in the spring of life, strong, eager, and able to do all that might become a man, who spoke of God and Christ and love that rules the whole creation as if they were matters of intimate knowledge and infinite importance to him. And while they wondered they admired, and speculated among themselves in blind fashion as to what this portent could mean.

Then suddenly an incident occurred that raised C. B. in the estimation of all hands more than anything else could have done. It was when the ship was on the southern edge of the off-shore ground and slowly working north. The weather was what we call dirty; low ragged clouds shedding rain at frequent intervals, with strong winds and irregular lumpy sea. C. B. and one of the Portuguese harponeers were working together, when C. B. accidentally dropped a serving mallet upon the other man's bare foot. With a horrible exclamation in his own language Louis spat in C. B.'s face, and at the same time struck him a violent blow in the jaw. Not content with that the maddened man drew his knife and was in the act of driving it into C. B.'s chest when the latter seized the upraised wrist in his left hand, caught at the broad leather belt worn by the Portuguese with his right, and with a movement deft as that of an acrobat twirled him into the air and out over the side into the tormented sea. All hands who witnessed the slight scuffle stood aghast, helpless for the moment, as C. B., calmly springing on to the rail, gave a searching glance at the spot where the harponeer was struggling in the foam, and then shouting "Lower away a boat," sprang after his late enemy.

A few vigorous fish-like strokes brought him to the side of the Portuguese, who was evidently in great pain and only feebly endeavouring to keep himself afloat, although these men are all splendid swimmers. Throwing himself upon his back, C. B. seized the man by the collar of his strong serge shirt and held him easily head to sea, rising and falling on the waves like a piece of drift-wood. There was no delay in picking the pair up; indeed, in ten minutes from the time that Louis went flying overboard they were on board again, and C. B. sprang lightly on deck and assisted his aggressor down.

"What does this mean, Christmas?" sternly demanded the captain, who had seen the whole affair. In brief, unimpassioned words C. B. told what had happened, and then turning to Louis the skipper demanded his version. Foolishly but naturally the Portuguese lied, making C. B. out the aggressor, at which the skipper smiled sardonically, saying—

"Ah, I thought so. You Portagees are as bad as they make 'em. But what's wrong with yer hand?" seeing that he held it tenderly and was evidently in pain.

"I doan know, sir, feels all broke." An examination proved that the wrist was dislocated, and the skipper's rough-and-ready surgery was immediately put in force, after which the groaning and completely discomfited man retired below, too miserable to curse his bad luck as he called it.

"Now, Christmas," said the skipper severely when they were alone, "I don't know what t' say t' ye. You really mustn't go heaving my harponeers overboard like rubbidge, nor yet get t' breaking 'em all up. Nor yet you mustn't let 'em go sticking knives in you. Confound you, why

are you always in the right and yet getting into some scrape or another? I shipped a handful of hot stuff when I took you aboard, I can see, and I wish I hadn't, yet I'm beginning to feel that I'd rather lose anybody than you, you 'mazing muscular Christian."

"I'm sorry I hurt the man, sir," modestly replied C. B., "and I didn't intend to do so. But if I hadn't been quicker than he was, he would have probably put me out of action for longer than he'll be now, while I only thought of defending myself, and a dip overboard can't possibly do anybody any harm."

With a cross between a grunt and a laugh the skipper turned away, leaving C. B. standing quietly to receive the curt congratulations of Mr. Merritt, and be the centre of admiring glances from all the crew that were on deck. The matter formed the principal, in fact almost the only topic of conversation on board for the next three days, during which C. B. went on his simple accustomed way, except that he was assiduous in his attention to the suffering man, who, in addition to the pain of his wrist, had sustained a severe rick to his spine, making it very painful for him to get in and out of his bunk. And as none of his compatriots thought of doing anything for him, he would have fared very badly but for the man he intended to kill.

By the time that Louis was able to resume work they had been nearly three weeks on the ground and no spout of sperm or right whales had been seen. It was just the fortune of the fishery, but as usual it bred a good deal of peevishness among the crew, whose monotonous life grew very irksome. I know of few conditions more trying to the active

mind than to be on board of a clumsy old whaleship always on a wind tacking from side to side of a great lonely expanse of sea, shortening sail every night to a close-reefed main topsail and fore topmast staysail and making sail again at daylight. No books to read, no new topics to talk about, nothing to do but the same things over and over again, week in week out, with never another sail in sight. It is a life that unless a man has mental resources of no common kind tends to stultification of the intellect, and especially makes him peevish, irritable and intolerant even of himself.

The usual bounty had been doubled, and the men were so keen that they hardly cared to go below when their turn came to do so. The only men on board who seemed unmoved by the long spell of inaction were Captain Taber and C. B. The first was that fine type of man, as I hope I have suggested, that is even now, thank God, to be found in many New England towns, who, though not making any special profession of religion, are in a very real sense not far from the Kingdom of God. Honest, brave and honourable; combining in a curious way the astuteness of the man of the world with the sweet simplicity of a little child; they are the salt of the United States, and their lives and work stand out in brilliant contrast to those of the money-grubbers and professional politicians who are making the noble name of the Great Republic a byword and a hissing among the nations.

As Captain Taber used to say so frequently, "This thing" (the scarcity of whales within an area where they should be found) "runs in streaks; we'll get all we want and more also dreckly." He was a highly educated man but loved the vernacular, and occasionally lapsed into it from his grave Elizabethan

English. And so it proved, for one morning before it was light he came on deck, and sauntering up to C. B., who was enjoying a pannikin of coffee and biscuit, he said casually—

“ Now you fellers 'at don't smoke are supposed to have the sense of smell more highly developed than us misbul degenerates who do, don't yer nose tell yer nothin' now ? ”

“ Yes, sir,” brightly replied C. B., “ it's been telling me ever since I came on deck at eight bells that we're in the thick of either a big shoal of fish or a school of whales of some sort. The air's quite heavy with fish smell.”

“ Ah ! an' I suppose you couldn't indicate the kind o' whale that's possibly around, could ye ? ” inquired the skipper drily.

“ Hardly, sir, although I've heard of it being done,” replied C. B. “ But I've never believed it. I feel sure, though, that the fellows who are stealing up to the crow's-nest now, sir—look at 'em—will start their music at the first streak of dawn.”

“ So long as they see sperm whales I'm willing, or even right whale,” murmured the skipper, “ for this thing's growing quite monotonous to me. I want the boys to get some amusement too. Oh well, I must go below and fill my pipe again. However a grown man man like you can get along without tobacco I don't know.” And he glanced quizzically at C. B., who only smiled and resumed his eager watch to windward.

There was not a cloud in the sky from horizon to horizon, nor as far as could be seen was there a trace of haze. So that when the first tremulous throbings of dawn made themselves felt it was as if an indefinite weight had been lifted, the displacement of shadow by light. And then the whole

dome above began to glow in sombre tones, at first duplicated below a shade or two deeper. It was like the birth of colour, and even the eager watchers poised in mid air forgot their desire for a moment at the amazing sight. Then, as at a celestial signal, the sea-rim in the east brimmed with liquid gold, a blazing disc appeared, and it was day.

Simultaneously with the upward leap of the sun four voices rang out in the thrilling cry of "Blo-o-o-o-w." Indeed it was a stirring sight. Far as the eye could reach from horizon to horizon there appeared to be bursting from the sea an endless succession of jets of smoke, each one denoting the presence of a monster sperm whale. Only twice in my life have I ever seen such a sight, once off the Solander Rock, Foveaux Straits, New Zealand, and there the horizon was restricted by land on two sides, and once when on a passage to Gibraltar from London in the P. & O. ss. *Arabia*, Captain Parfitt, who, if he sees these lines, will doubtless remember that the previous day at dinner we had had a slight controversy about the quantity of whales now to be seen at sea. I held that whales were more plentiful than ever, he asserted that they were nearly extinct, and the next morning the splendid ship steamed for an hour at sixteen knots through one immense school of sperm whales which must have numbered many thousands.

The captain only took one glance round at the mighty concourse, then shouted, "'Way down from aloft. Mr. Winsloe, we'll lower all five boats to-day, and each one act independently of the rest. These whales are all feeding and I don't anticipate any trouble, but the first boat that kills, stick a wheft in the whale and get back to the ship. She'll want handling and that smartly too. Shipkeepers

keep her to windward, that's all you've got to do, and look out for boats coming back. Now then, away for good greasy money."

Whirr, whirr, splash went the five boats, and as soon as they struck the water each boat pushed out from the ship using paddles only, for the whales were quite near, and each singling out a whale for themselves. Within fifteen minutes every boat was fast, that is, the barbed harpoon had established a connexion between boat and whale that would only cease by accident or design when the whale was dead. And then that placid sea became the scene of a Titanic conflict, wherein the puny men in their frail craft joined battle with the mightiest of God's creatures on most unequal terms. To and fro they flew, those pigmy boats amidst the crowding hundreds of leviathans, who, filled with wild dismay at this sudden calamity, knew not whither to flee and moved aimlessly and harmlessly. And owing to the immense spaces in which they wallowed they were not now even as dangerous as a herd of bullocks would be in a field, for there a man might get crushed to death by accident; here, although to a novice the scene appeared dangerous, the older hands knew that an accident was now far less likely than when whales were few and far between.

To add to the confusion and apparent danger existing, the sea appeared to be alive with immense sharks, who in some mysterious way had gathered to that stupendous feast. In fact, the enormous amount of marine life peopling that remote ocean breeds a feeling of dismay in some minds, a sense of being out of place, weaklings in the midst of unimaginable forces of destruction. Not, of course, that this thought occurred to the old whalers. They revelled in the gigantic slaughter, and incurred un-

necessary danger by being unable to resist the temptation to lance loose whales passing by. The frenzy of killing was upon them, and they lunged right and left indiscriminately, heedless of consequences.

In half an hour from the time of leaving the ship Captain Taber had his whale dead, and sticking a wheft (a small flag with a pointed end to its staff) in the carcass he bade his crew give way for the ship with all speed. Arriving on board he took charge, and as there was a good working breeze he was able so to handle his ship as to keep well to windward of the whole flotilla of boats, which soon began to hoist their whefts in token of having killed each one his whale. There was no need to discriminate, for all had done well, five big whales had been killed in less than two hours; and now came the hardest part of the great day's work, and one calling for the greatest amount of seamanship. For when once the first whale had been secured to the ship, she became sluggish in her movements, as indeed she well might with a floating mass of some eighty tons attached to her. Those boats that were farthest away, realizing the difficulty, attempted to tow their prizes, an immense task in itself, but now, hampered as they were on every side by the bewildered monsters, who wallowed aimlessly, as having lost all sense of direction or power of flight, wellnigh impossible.

Yet in some strange and apparent come-by-chance fashion the whole five whales were secured to the ship, all five boats were hoisted into their places, and the utterly exhausted men went to their food, full of satisfaction with their morning's work. And while they fed and rested the ship was left in charge of the cook and steward, who gazed over the side at the strange scene with mingled feelings, in which real alarm predominated. Indeed, it was a sight

calculated to terrify. The huge carcasses attached to the ship by hawsers floated around her like a concourse of submerged wrecks bottom up. Around and between them blundered bewildered whales lost to all their usual instincts, and all the spaces in between the living and the dead monsters were thronged with hordes of sharks countless in number.

To complete the amazing scene there had drifted out of the void great flocks of sea-birds, albatrosses, mallemauks, Cape hens, Cape pigeons, fulmars and others, which kept up an incessant screaming, fluttering, rising and falling, all ravenous and impatient for the cutting in to begin. It was indeed a wonderful revelation of the abundance of life in mid-ocean, such as is only vouchsafed to these deep-sea wanderers, the whalemén.

Two hours' rest was allowed, and then Captain Taber, sauntering towards his mate, said—

“Mr. Winsloe, we've got a big thing in hand, but the best of weather for it. We'll take each whale alongside and get the heads off first, lettin' them all tow astern as we cut them off. Then we'll put all our vim into gettin' the carcasses skinned, and if the boys only work as they ought, I think we might get the back of the work broken by eight bells to-night.”

Winsloe only grunted, for he was a man of few words, and, slouching forrard, roared, “Turn to!”

Now it would be quite easy for me to take an entire chapter in the attempt to explain the nature and progress of the gigantic task that was accomplished by those forty men, toiling almost incessantly from noon until daylight the next morning; but as the great business has nothing adventurous or thrilling about it, I fear I could not make it interesting. Only I feel that I would like you to realize the scene.

The immense masses of blubber being hove inboard by the full power of the crew at the windlass, the great tackles groaning and the ship canting over under the load, the unwearying thrust and recover of the long-handled spades as the toiling officers and harponeers laboured to disjoint the huge heads or scarp the blubber so that it would strip easily from the carcasses, the fitful weird glare of the cressets of blazing "scrap" (pieces of blubber from which the oil has been boiled disposed about the ship to give light to the toilers), and just outside that tiny circle of human labour the solemn vastness of the darkling ocean, the loneliness of that untraversed sea.

But I should do scant justice to the picture if I failed to note how, within that apparently charmed circle which had the ship for its centre, the deep was alive, luminous and vivid. The ceaseless come and go of the ravenous sea-scavengers, striving with all their wonderful energy to get a share of the great feast that was spread, was in itself a sight to linger in the memory as long as life should last, had the workers but time to look at it. And to complete the uncanny interest of the whole strange scene, there was the uneasy passings and melancholy voices of the sea-birds, flitting whitely through the gloom, impatiently waiting for the day.

Daylight saw the huge task completed, and the ship's deck from one end to the other blocked with the mighty masses of case and junk and blanket pieces. The blubber-room, as the square of the main-hatch down to the 'tween decks and for about ten feet on either side of it is called, was choked full of blubber, not another slice could be got down, and in consequence all the rest had to be piled on deck. Old whalers will doubt the possibility of such a

feat as the cutting in of five sperm whales in twenty hours until I explain that none of the whales were too large to have the case lifted inboard, and that, of course, makes all the difference; for I have been twenty-four hours engaged in cutting in *one* whale, and with a smart man in charge too. But then that whale was so huge that many time-wasting things had to be done that were unnecessary in the case I am relating.

As the last case was hove on board and secured, the skipper gave a long sigh of relief and cried—

“ Spell ho! all hands. Mr. Winsloe, give the boys three hours’ rest, good, and then we’ll start blubber watches (six hours on and six hours off); and say, you cook-man, just you see to it that the men get the best breakfast that can be scared up in the ship.” And as he turned away towards the stern the oil dripped from his hair, his clothing, and squished out of his sea-boots, for the captains of those ships, if they drove their crews, drove themselves hardest of all, and no man could say that his skipper could only drive, not lead.

Now, impossible as it may seem to us, there was no attempt made to change clothing. Just a perfunctory wipe of hands and face with oakum wads preliminary to a wolfish devouring of food, for all were outrageously hungry. That everything eaten and even the tobacco smoked afterwards was reeking with oil nobody minded, for in truth the product of the sperm whale when absolutely fresh as this was is as bland and pleasant as the purest olive oil: it is only when it gets stale and rancid that its unpleasant taste and odour become manifest.

The short respite worked wonders for the toilers, although those of them who had to resume work at

10 a.m., four bells, thought longingly of the greasy bunks in which the fortunate members of the watch below were recuperating from their heavy labours. But a spirit of emulation was aboard, and there was no cursing or driving; every man therefore did his best to reduce the chaos on deck to something like order. The huge cases were split open one after the other, the spermaceti baled out and passed into tanks below, and as each was scraped dry it was hauled to the waist and pushed through the open gangway into the sea, where, in spite of the vast banquet given them in the carcasses of the whales during the night, there were thousands of gaping candidates for more.

As the fierce sun came out and beat down upon the piles of blubber the oil exuded and filled the decks, for all the scuppers and wash-ports were closed tightly, and there was no time to bale or place to bale the oil into until the fires in the try-works should be started. But by dint of the hardest, most unremitting toil, at midday enough of a clearance had been made to start the fires and the work of boiling down began. And here I must leave the business for a while because, although it has not its parallel in any other work ashore, it is dirty, greasy, smelly; full of sordid discomforts, and difficult indeed to see the romance of except to the privileged few who have strong imaginations.

Throughout the following week all hands toiled nobly to stow away their great catch, but the captain and officers had a pretty bad time, for every day small pods of sperm whales would come nosing around, quite close to the ship, as if they knew (and perhaps they did) that her crew was unable to take advantage of this wonderful opportunity through having their hands so abundantly filled. Then when at last the whole catch had been reduced into the

comparatively small compass of nearly 600 barrels, or 60 tons of oil, and the lash rails all round the ship were fully occupied by huge casks full of oil getting cool, the harponeers of each boat made haste to refit their boats, sharpen their weapons, and make all ready for the next opportunity, thinking at the same time how very unlikely it was that those visiting whales would happen along again now that they might look for a cordial reception.

I have not made any special mention of my hero in connexion with this great piece of work, because he did only what every one else did, his best, and at a time like that the slightest softness or slacking-off of a man in a position of authority is noted at once, not merely by his compeers but by his subordinates. Through this really severe ordeal C. B. passed triumphantly in spite of the novelty of much of the work to him, and by the time it was over there really seemed to be a tacit agreement on the part of the men who hated him to let him alone, since he had proved in the most satisfactory way that he was entirely capable, willing and cheerful, and that the men forward would jump more eagerly at his slightest pleasantest word than they would at a bitter curse weighing a threat from one of the truculent Portuguese. In fact, although no one told him so in so many words, all the circumstances attending this great catch went to place C. B. in the position in the esteem of his fellows that he deserved to occupy, and lasting peace seemed assured.

CHAPTER X

A Gam and a Revenge

THERE was ample time after this severe ordeal to restore the *Eliza Adams* to her pristine cleanliness, for as the captain caustically remarked, the whales seemed to have all concentrated in that spot and subsequently to have all left for parts unknown. And really it did seem like it, for no solitary spout was seen for nearly three weeks. Then came a pleasant diversion; how pleasant only those can know who for many months have been denied all the intercourse with their kind outside of the little population of the ship. Pepe being at the masthead from 4 to 6 p.m. yelled "Sail ho." This was the first cry of that kind that the crew had heard since leaving Norfolk Island, and be sure they were proportionately excited.

Many eager speculations were made during the next two hours, for the wind was but light and she was fully ten miles away, as to whether the stranger was a "spouter" or a merchantman. And a great relief was felt when just at sunset she was made out to be one of their own fraternity, and joyful greeting signals were exchanged. It was quite dark before the two ships came near enough to each other to "gam" as we call it, but what of that? What of the fact that a stiff breeze had got up, and that boats passing between the ships in the dark must necessarily have a rough time. In the Navy and among

the whalers such things are most lightly esteemed. I have seen a group of Naval officers brave a most tempestuous passage of half an hour's duration, the picquet boat taking green water over as she plunged through the seas, merely to have an hour's lawn tennis or golf and come off again, and I have known repeatedly whalers brave the terrors of the great Southern ocean rollers in half a gale of wind at night merely in order to have a chat with some fresh fellows, exchange a few ideas that to strangers might have the merit of novelty.

So at eight bells, 8 p.m., as her lights were seen stationary abeam about a mile away, a boat was lowered from the *Eliza Adams* into which the captain and C. B. with the boat's crew descended, and pulled away into the darkness until the dim black hull of the vessel they are bound to suddenly loomed huge and threatening from the darkness.

"Ship ahoy!" roared the skipper. "Here's Captain Taber of the *Eliza Adams* come a gamming."

"Welcome, Captain Taber, I knew it was you as soon as I heard ye hail. This is the *Matilda Sayer* of Dartmouth, Captain Rotch."

"Good lad," yelled Captain Taber delightedly. "Pull two, stern three, ah! unrow there;"—and as the boat ranged alongside he gripped the man ropes and ascended the side ladder of rope like a goat climbing a precipice.

While the two old friends greeted each other there was a whirring of sheaves and down came the mate's boat into the water. Dark forms leapt into her and she pushed off, immemorial custom having decided that in gamming when the captain visits a ship the mate of that ship goes a visiting his fellow on board the other vessel. As they pushed off into the darkness a voice was heard above, "Haul up and

hook on, chums," and they did so, their boat being cheerily hoisted into the position the other had left. For this was also a pleasant sea-custom among whalers, being eminently practicable because of the almost standard size of all whale boats.

Arriving on deck the four hands were immediately haled forrard, and C. B. was welcomed in the half deck by the harponeers, where such hospitality as they possessed was offered him and all hands crowded around him eager to talk to him, and listen to what he had to say. First of all with native courtesy they inquired what sort of a season the *Eliza Adams* was having and other matters of that kind, but he could not help noticing that they all looked curiously at him, as if they could not quite make him out. At last the old carpenter, a fine venerable Yankee, said—

"Whar d'ye hail from, mister?"

"I come from Norfolk Island," replied C. B. pleasantly.

"Well, do tell," ejaculated the cooper, "I didn't know they was ever any natives on Norfolk 'cept convicks from England, and I heerd that they was done away with long ago. An' yew don' look like a Kanaka neither."

"Neither am I," explained C. B. with gentle dignity. "Surely you must have heard of the Pitcairn Islanders finding Pitcairn too small for them, and a number of them being sent by the British Government to Norfolk Island, which was given them to live in."

A chorus of remembrance arose in a babel of voices until the old carpenter, getting up, came close to C. B. and peered in his face intently, at last remarking quietly, "Did your father ever go to sea in a spouter, young feller?"

“ Oh yes,” answered C. B. ; “ he was in the *Rainbow* and the *Canton*, both New England whaleships, for a considerable time.”

“ And what might his name be, if he’s still alive, as I hope ? ”

“ Thank you, he’s still alive, or was three months ago, when I left home, God bless him, and his name is Philip Adams ! ”

The effect upon the carpenter was electrical. He smote his thigh with great violence and shouted —“ Boys, thishyer fine specimen of a boy is the son of the finest specimen of a man that ever trod God Almighty’s earth. Nine months I was shipmates with him in the ole *Canton*, and if ever a man was tried by a lot of ornery scalawags, he was. He could a broke any one of ’em in pieces with his fingers ; he was as much above ’em at any kind o’ work as he was in strength an’ good looks, yet that mis’ble gang used to chip him, poke fun at him, play tricks on him, until I used to feel as if I could a killed ’em myself, and I warn’t much better than they was. But never once did anybody hear an angry word or a bad word of any kind outer his mouth, never once did he miss a chance of doin’ even the worst of his tormentors a good turn, and never once did anybody have real cause of complaint about his work or anything that he did. And when he left the ship to go home because his agreed time was up, I never see such a carryin’ on, you’d a thought everybody on board had lost father and mother and all their other relations. Young man ”—solemnly—“ if you’re only one quarter as good a man as your father was, the ship is entirely blessed by having ye aboard, and I’m honoured at bein’ able to shake ye by the hand.”

There was a momentary pause as “ Chips ” sank

down on his chest again, and C. B.'s eyes glistened with heavenly pride at the honour paid to that dear father whom he so fondly loved. Then he said—

“ My dear dad is all you say of him, and all I am or ever likely to be that's any good I owe to him and mother. But he is a very quiet man, especially about himself, and so we knew little of what he had gone through. I understand it better now since I have been whaling myself. I thank you with all my heart for what you have said about him, it has done me more good than you can possibly imagine.”

There was rather an awkward pause after this, as if the other members of the half deck hardly knew what to do with such a prodigy as they now believed they had got in their midst. But the carpenter came to the rescue by saying—

“ Looky here, youngster, your father had a very tuneful voice of his own, and although he didn't talk much he would sing by the hour, all about God and heaven and the like, and my ! but it made me feel right good. D'ye happen to take after him in that ? ”

C. B. flushed a little and replied—

“ Since I've been to sea I've never sung a note except humming to myself. But I used to sing at home a good deal, and I'll be very glad to try if you like. I only sing hymns, though.”

“ That's quite good,” hastily answered the carpenter, “ your father didn't sing anything else either, an' I don't suppose any of us will know the difference. We're all more or less heathen, you know.”

So without further pressing C. B. lifted up his sweet tenor and sang “ O God of Bethel,” amid a silence that was positively painful in its intensity

of attention. And as soon as he had finished he was disconcerted by a very tempest of applause and vociferous shouts of "Same man sing agen. Bully for you, old hoss," etc., etc. And nothing loth C. B. sang again and again, his repertoire being tolerably extensive and his memory as good as his bringing up would naturally make it, until tired out he had to cry off. Then, and not till then, it was found that all hands in the ship, forgetting the gam, had crowded as near to the half deck as possible, charmed by the sweet strains.

The whole incident brings forcibly to my memory an experiment of my own once when gamming a ship called the *Cornelius Howland* off the Three Kings, New Zealand. I was one of the visiting boat's crew, and after the usual topics of conversation flagged a song was called for. I explained that I had some pretensions to a voice, but could only sing hymns, for in the sect among whom I was converted it was esteemed wrong to sing anything secular, and mortal sin to go to any place of amusement whatever. It was immediately explained to me that so long as I sang, the words did not matter in the least, especially as scarcely anybody would understand me. So I piped up instantly with a favourite of mine from Sankey's book, "Through the Valley of the Shadow I must go." It was received with shouts of joy, one man who was especially delighted saying, "Well, — my eyes, that's what I call a — good song, d'ye know. I could sit and listen to that kind o' singin' all night."

I humbly apologize for the blanks, but the reader will, I hope, feel as I did, that the forcible expletives they represent meant nothing to the speaker, who was only using his ordinary language. I only

know that I went on singing to the exclusion of everybody else, and was quite hoarse the next day from the unaccustomed vocal exercise, for we didn't sing very much in my ship. After all, it was not much to be wondered at, for the polyglot crowd met with in the fore-castle and half-decks of a whaler has usually one gift in common—an intensely musical ear, although the execution of pleasing music is denied them in nearly every instance. And for instrumental music they usually have that truly infernal instrument, the accordion, from which the most ingenious musician that ever lived can draw nothing but noise. So that a little real music is received with great joy.

At midnight the cry was heard, "*Eliza Adams'* boat's crew away," and C. B. sprang to his post, but not before his new-found friend "Chips" had handed over to him his choicest treasure, a small parcel of well-thumbed books, ragged copies of Dickens and Charles Reade, with one or two others by less known authors, but all to C. B. a storehouse of wonders, a treasure unlocked. Then with a warm handshake they parted, C. B. feeling happier than he had done since leaving home. Never before had he realized how much he had craved for sympathy and the opportunity to express himself in terms of love and admiration for his Father in heaven. And when they presently reached the ship Captain Taber said to him—

"You seem to have had a pretty good time, Christmas. I heard you singing away and remembered how your folks used to sing. It must have been quite a treat to you to let loose again."

C. B. said nothing, for he did not feel that any answer was required of him, but he longed with greater desire than ever to be able to talk about

the matter that lay nearest his heart. No one who has not been in a similar position can begin to realize what it means to be dumb upon the one topic that interests you. To feel that if you mention it to anybody you will not only not be understood, but your words will be construed as an insult. But he gave a great sigh and took the matter quietly to the Lord as was his wont, feeling much comforted thereby, strengthened to wait and endure as long as he should be called upon to do so. And all unknown to him relief was at hand.

Two days after meeting with the *Matilda Sayer* the crow's-nest reported whale in the usual manner. But this time it was a lone whale of very large size steadily making a passage across the ground at a leisurely pace. Now a lone whale is always potentially very dangerous, because his loneliness is due to the fact that he has been cast out of the society of his kind. A big bull whale only maintains his position as leader of the school as long as he is able to beat all aspirants to the dignity. And as the young bulls growing up are continually striving to attain that position, it will easily be seen that to keep it the holder must be of exceptional strength and vigour, while the day will surely come when in the natural order of events he will have to abdicate, which does not mean that he may take an inferior position in the school, but that he must leave it altogether and from henceforth until the end, which may be many years distant, he must roam solitary.

But this condition of existence for the whale naturally means that he becomes morose, savage and wary. And if he should in addition have been the object of attack by whalers and have got away from them, he becomes doubly dangerous because

of the never-to-be-forgotten lessons he has learned as to how to act, and also because it usually happens that he carries with him, imbedded in his flesh, some rankling fragments of bombs and certainly a galling harpoon.

Now in consequence of these well-known facts concerning the lone whale, it is usual to approach him with considerable caution. But there are many whalemens to whom caution in dealing with their gigantic quarry is a word of no meaning, they are reckless in the extreme, and no amount of disaster ever seems sufficient to teach them. Of such was Mr. Merritt: that strange composed man took fire within when approaching a whale. He "saw red" as the saying is, and although handling his boat and using his weapons with consummate skill, he had not one iota of prudence in his whole make up.

Now on this momentous occasion, because it was a lone whale, Captain Taber ordered the chief and fourth officers away, keeping the other boats in readiness to lower of course should there be any necessity, but not anticipating that more would be needed. It was a fine day, but the wind was high and the sea was correspondingly heavy. According to etiquette Mr. Winsloe was first on the whale, into which Pepe with his usual skill planted both irons right up to the hitches. Mr. Merritt lay off a little with his boat, noting with some surprise that no frantic wallowings and struggling followed the dart. Assuming, as was most natural, that Pepe had failed to strike the whale, he pulled up rapidly, having dowsed his own sail, to where Mr. Winsloe's men were busy getting their mast down.

When within a couple of boat's lengths of them all were horrified to see the huge black head of the

whale suddenly rise ghost-wise on the port bow of the boat, while the gleaming pointed lower jaw emerged from the water on the starboard side. The view was only momentary, for as they gazed horror-stricken they saw the great jaws close, crashing through the flimsy sides of the boat as if she were of so much paper, and with a yell that rang high above the roar of wind and sea the crew sprang clear of the wreck for their lives. But C. B.'s eagle eye noticed on the instant that the harpioneer had disappeared, and in a second he had leapt from the boat into the vortex caused by the wallowing of the whale, dived and caught at a black mass far beneath the surface, the body of Pepe entangled by the whale line. Fortunately at that moment the whale, disdainful to seek safety in flight, returned to the surface, and consequently there was little difficulty for such a powerful expert as C. B. to bring his prize to the surface, free him from the line, and assist him back to the boat. I say assist, for Pepe, though grievously injured, had never lost consciousness, and in consequence was able to make some feeble attempts to help himself.

By the time he had been hauled inboard the rest of the crew had been rescued and the bight of the line, which C. B. had dropped as soon as he had cleared it from Pepe's limbs, was picked up and taken through the notch in the bows, displacing their own line. Now Mr. Merritt was in his element, danger and difficulty of any kind seemed to give the needed stimulus to his otherwise sluggish nature. Charging the rescued crew to double bank the oars, and placing the injured man in the bottom of the boat, he changed ends with C. B. and awaited the onslaught of the whale.

That monster played the usual waiting game,

just appearing for an instant to spout, and then only exposing the point of the snout where the spiracle or blow-hole is situated. He was waiting his opportunity to perform the same operation on the second boat as he had done on the first. But Merritt seemed to have placed himself in absolute correspondence with the whale's mind, for each time that either the great flukes or the ponderous jaws appeared above water the boat by a quiet order had been driven to a safe distance, and the threatened blow or bite did not take effect. In fact the queer yellow man was playing the waiting game also, knowing that the whale's exertions were rapidly tiring him out.

For, strange to say, vast as is the strength possessed by these monsters, they tire very soon when they have to exert themselves much. And it is only when they are allowed to take things easily, as sometimes happens through cowardice or unskilfulness on the part of the whalemén, that they are able to weary out their aggressors and finally emerge the victors in the long fight. At last Merritt saw with a chuckle of delight that the whale was going to rush him head and head as we call it. He had his bomb gun ready to hand, and laying down his hand lance he put it to his shoulder, crying—

“Now, stern all hard and keep her just as she heads, Christmas.”

With so much power at the oars the boat rushed swiftly astern as the whale came rushing on, the great head rearing high out of water and exposing the gleaming white cavern of the throat.

Coolly, as if ashore at some practising ground, Merritt took aim and pulled the trigger. There was a splash, a report, and an appalling commotion in the sea ahead of the boat, in the midst of which

another report was heard, the explosion of the bomb within the whale's body. "Way 'nough," shouted Merritt, and the boat stopped a cable's length away from the place where the mighty mammal was tearing up the deep in his Titanic death throes. For a few moments the scene was appalling, almost akin to a submarine volcanic eruption, then the uproar suddenly ceased and the magnificent beast lay dead, listlessly tossing upon the waves which the exuding oil from his wounds turned into smooth hummocks of water quietly rising and falling around.

The tumult had hardly subsided when the second boat ranged alongside with orders to Mr. Merritt to return at once with his overmanned boat. And he obeyed cheerfully, because nothing is more annoying than to try and work in a boat where the hands, by reason of their being too many, get in one another's way, this being especially so when, as was now the case, one man grievously hurt was lying in the bottom of the boat. They soon reached the ship and climbed on board, Mr. Winsloe hastening to the skipper and reporting the catastrophe, while all hands rallied on to the falls and ran the boat up with Pepe's unconscious body in it. He was tenderly lifted out and carried aft on to a mattress, where his clothes were removed, disclosing the severe nature of his injuries. The whale had evidently nipped him sideways, for the great teeth of the lower jaw had made eleven ghastly bruises, each four or five inches across, and in three places the clothing was driven deep into the blackened flesh. Three of the largest ribs were broken, and the right arm was horribly lacerated by the whale line being twisted round it under a great strain.

But owing to the bluntness of the teeth there

had been no loss of blood, except in so far as it had blackened and spread under the skin, which of course was highly dangerous from the possibility of mortification and the absence of any but the rudest surgery. However, all that could be done for the poor wretch by way of cooling lotions and bandages was done, and he regained consciousness to fall into a refreshing sleep.

Meanwhile the crew had toiled fiercely under the direction of the mate to get their prize alongside, finding as it was hauled near that its dimensions were more imposing than they had imagined. Measured along the rail it was roughly seventy feet in length, which is as far as is accurately known about the limit of size for a cachalot, while as it lay on its side, its jaw parallel to the ship, it looked as imposing in size as a vessel of two or three hundred tons bottom up. The fluke chain was passed without difficulty, and all the available force of harponeers and officers that could get at it attacked it at once with almost desperate energy, for it was getting late in the day, the night promised to be very dark, and none relished the prospect of pursuing that gigantic task without other light save that afforded by the feeble cressets. To Mr. Merritt and C. B. fell the task of severing the monstrous head, a labour which it is most difficult to realize. There is but a slight crease in the place where a neck ought to be, and here the carcass is nearly twenty feet through—a mass of muscle and sinew with scarcely any soft parts, and right in the centre of it the huge ball and socket joint of the vertebrae which is composed of bones nearly two feet thick. And if those spades plunging down into the depths of that mass darkly (for it is impossible to keep the scarp open) should miss the joint, as it is exceedingly

likely they may, the additional work is tremendous. I have seen this task occupy the labours of the whole of the officers and harponeers of a ship, relieving one another at frequent intervals, for a whole day.

But this huge toil is but little greater than that which is being prosecuted at the same time by the others, all of whom are balanced upon the precarious plank of the cutting in stage, suspended far out over the side and springing to every roll of the ship. There is the junk to be divided from the head, a mass weighing eight to ten tons cut diagonally from the lower point of the upper jaw, and there is also the huge oblong mass of the case, or really half the remainder of the head, to be cut through, where a careless lunge of the spade may cause the leakage of all the valuable spermaceti which it holds in a liquid state. In this immense task strength avails little unless allied to skill, and skill is of small use without strength and endurance to keep driving the spade in the right place.

In a small whale, as I have hinted before, these operations are much simplified, because the head can be cut off and hoisted on deck, where the work of severing junk and case is quite easy. But as now the whale was of the largest size and most of the work had to be done upon the huge masses rolling and tumbling in the unquiet sea beneath, all the strength, patience, and endurance possessed by the workers were needed to the very limit. At last the head came off, and a great groan of relief went up from Merritt and C. B., whose arms felt as if they would drop off through sheer weariness. But there was no prospect of rest, the only relief they could hope for was a change in their movements bringing a different set of muscles into play. The

blubber hook had long been in position affixed to the eyepiece, and no sooner did the huge mass of the head surge astern than the high clear voice of the captain rose—

“Heave away there cheerily now, I want to see how quick ye can skin this whale.”

He was answered by an incessant clattering of the pawls as the windlass brakes flew up and down, and the first blanket piece of blubber, a foot thick and nine feet wide, rose majestically into the air.

As soon as the blocks of the tackle came together the windlass stopped, while the captain, armed with a formidable boarding-knife like a cutlass blade stuck in a long wooden handle, cut a big circular hole in the centre of the blanket piece, thrust the strap of the waiting tackle through it and secured it by a large wooden toggle, shouting as he slipped it into its place, “Heave on yer whale, my hearties, heave on yer whale : surge on yer piece !”

“Oh what a jargon,” I think I hear some reader say wearily. I’m sorry, but it can’t be helped. It only means that the men at the windlass heave on the second tackle and let the fall of the first slip round the windlass barrel. Then as soon as the second tackle has taken the strain “Vast heaving” is called, while the captain with his boarding-knife cuts through the blanket piece high above the hole he made for the securing of the second tackle and the mass, now disengaged, is lowered into the blubber room.

It sounds like a lengthy process but really is not, for in the present instance the captain’s appeal was answered so well that in twenty-five minutes the whole of that vast carcass was denuded of its blubber and had floated away, the centre of a ravening horde of sharks.

CHAPTER XI

The Story of a Crime

ALTHOUGH it would be quite unfair to imagine from the immense activity prevailing in the ship during the cutting-in that Pepe was neglected, it is certain that according to a very well understood and constantly acted upon rule in South Sea whalers, work connected with whaling takes precedence of everything else. Nothing is allowed to interfere with it as long as it is humanly possible to carry it on. Remembering the quite scanty rewards to be obtained on an average by the most ardent and successful whalers, the absolute impossibility of any supervision by the owners for three or four years at a time, it is, I think, little short of marvellous to note the extraordinary energy and perseverance manifested by these men, of whatever grade above that of seaman, in the chief business of the voyage.

Physical injury, lack of rest, incredible toil, privation suffered are all made light of in the chase, capture, and disposal of the whale. Charges are often brought against the leaders of gross inhumanity to the men working under them in the absence of full restraint; but as far as that cruelty consists in overwork, or work under desperate conditions, I bear witness that if the sailor or foremost hand is not spared, neither do those who drive him spare themselves. The voluntary work that I have seen some of these men perform would be taken as

incredible if I were to relate it, and I therefore shrink from giving instances. Besides, to the majority of those whom I hope will read this book, the whole business would be unintelligible because entirely out of the purview of a serene and quietly ordered life.

This terribly energetic method of working was a most severe lesson to C. B., hard to learn, harder still to understand. For in the gentle life of the islanders, though great efforts were sometimes necessary in an emergency, as we have seen, they had no ideas of hard work as a habit, for the love of working hard, or for the greed of gain. They were as far removed from being ascetics as they were from being hypocrites. They loved their simple pleasures and heartily gave thanks to God for them, and they could not understand why any sane person should misuse his body in order to get more than somebody else had—the last condition being an unthinkable one to them where everything was held in common. But it had not taken C. B. long to discover that in the new world of which he was now a denizen, might and endurance, as well as ability to get and keep, were the objects of praise and almost worship. That men were held in esteem, not for what they were, but for what they had, and that the easiest sneer to their lips was that a priest, a parson, or a religious man of any kind was an individual who had found that the easiest way of getting a living without work was gaining a hold over the minds of your hard-working fellows by pretending that you were in touch with the unseen world.

So he had early come to the conclusion that he must prove his manhood by his eagerness to work, his indifference to fatigue, and his ability to do all

that was required of him, as well as by his passive obedience to all the loving precepts of the Gospel. And this kept him going sometimes when he would fain have sunk down with fatigue, a generous pride and belief in God's sustaining power as being certainly no less able to uphold the Christian than the mysterious force that kept Merritt, the man of no beliefs and strangest origin, going apparently with ease when everybody else was sinking with fatigue. Nobly he sustained his part, and nobody suspected how near he was several times to giving up and declaring that whatever happened he could work no more without rest.

This present business was really the severest he had gone through, because his successful effort to save Pepe was made under the most trying conditions, every ounce of his great strength as well as his endurance of privation of air had been put forth, and then as soon as the ship was reached work harder than ever had to be engaged in. Consequently as soon as the last case had been strung up alongside by the two main tackles and the business of baling it out had commenced he was most thankful to hear the skipper say—

“Now, I'll watch these fellows baling the case, an' all the rest of ye scoot, get a good skin full of grub and a rest. We'll set blubber watches at eight bells” (eight o'clock p.m.).

As they stepped away from the waist, with all its débris of quaint fragments of blubber and bone, and the swish, swish of oil surging from side to side of the deck, Merritt said to our friend—

“Christmas, me boy, I ain't too sorry to knock off for an hour or two. I believe I'm getting old; can't work day in and day out 'thout wantin' a rest same as I used to.”

C. B. replied simply—

“ I thought you could hardly be made of ordinary flesh and blood. You seem to work like a machine and never to think of rest, while I often find myself wondering how much longer I can hold out.”

“ Ah, me boy,” responded Merritt, laying his hand most affectionately on C. B.’s arm, “ you forget the differences between our ages. You’re only a boy just done growin’, ’bout twenty-two ain’t ye ? while I—well I don’t quite know how old I am, but I guess about thirty-five, have got all my gristle hardened into man, and can plug along ’thout showin’ it. But you shape better than any youngster I ever see.”

As Merritt finished speaking, C. B. suddenly bethought him of Pepe, lying aft there in miserable pain, and slipped along to his side. Finding the wounded man awake he dropped one knee beside him, saying—

“ How is it, Pepe ? Can I do anything for you, get a pipe, a drink, or move you ? ”

Pepe looked up at the fine eager face, and moistened his lips twice or thrice before he replied with another question : “ What made ye save me ? If I’d been in your place, I’d let ye die, an’ glad o’ the chance. An’ I’d be best pleased if you’d let me go when I was three parts gone. I don’t want t’ live cos you’ve beat me, you an’ yer Chinaman. Go away ; I hate ye, an’ if I could I’d kill ye now. What did ye ever come aboard this ship for ? Ye’ve made a hell of her for better men than you are.”

C. B. knew better than to stay and talk to a man in that frame of mind, a man too who, for all he knew, might be raving in delirium ; but he thought with some consolation of certain unclean spirits of old who cried to the healing Lord, “ Art thou come to

torment us before our time?" and turned away to his berth below, where he found a good and ample meal awaiting him. He ate and drank reverently, gratefully, and then, greatly refreshed, lay down in his bunk and went fast asleep almost on the instant, having not a single care of his own. And, as it happened that he was not in the first watch, it was 2 a.m. before he was called, and then he sprang to his feet at the word full of life and energy.

When he rushed on deck he found the machinery of oil-boiling in full blast, the caldrons bubbling fiercely, the square iron funnels of the try-works blazing like the squat chimneys of an iron foundry, and the clatter of the mincing machine incessant. He had little imagination or he would have thought what a picture she made, this tiny hive of human energy with all her toilers, in the midst of that immense stretch of lonely ocean, engaged in converting to human use the treasure of the boundless deep ravished from its mightiest denizen. But he only saw a little group of almost dead-beat men who had been working mechanically for hours, only thought pityingly of the ill-requited toil and what he considered to be the folly of it all.

Then he plunged into the work himself, while the second and fourth mates prowled about the decks, keeping a vigilant eye upon possible shirkers, seeing the great casks rolled away from the cooler as the cooked oil was poured into them and they brimmed over. In fact the ship was now just a floating factory from which, except to an observant onlooker if such there had been, all romance had departed to make way for the greasy heavy toil. No lookout was kept, no hand at the wheel, which was lashed hard a lee; for, in case any other ship should be wandering that way, the trying-out whaler was a

beacon in herself, visible for many miles. She certainly could not run another ship down, and any one who run her down could be little less than a criminal lunatic, at least quite unfit to have charge of a ship.

So the heavy round of work went on without intermission until, about 4.30, the darkest hour before the dawn, all hands on deck were startled beyond measure by hearing a high clear voice crying—

“Ship ahoy! What ship is that? Do you need any assistance?” All eyes were turned in the direction of the hail, and there close by them rode a ship of war, her side crowded with men plainly visible in the blue flare she was burning, but looking all corpse-like in that unnatural light.

Loud and clear came the response from aft, for Captain Taber seemed to be always on hand when wanted: “Ship *Eliza Adams* of New Bedford, whaling, now engaged in trying out.”

“Thank you,” came the somewhat dissatisfied answer across. “I thought you were on fire. Good-night and good luck. Go ahead, please; forty revolutions, course S.80.W.”

It was only one of the police of the seas, a British man-o'-war attached to the South American Squadron; but as she did not leave her name or destination no one on board could guess who she was. Captain Taber said sardonically, “That’s a Johnny Haul Taut, I bet; thinks he owns the show. But I guess he’s ben sold a pup this watch. Wonder what sort of guff he’ll enter up in his log about this.” It was not generous, but characteristic of American captains in discussing British seamen and their seamanship, and we can hardly quarrel or bother with it to any good purpose. But what was entered in the log was just this—

“Saw a glare to the eastward, looking like a ship on fire, altered course at 3.55 a.m. to E.N.E. and ran down at full speed, twelve knots. Discovered the glare to be the whaleship *Eliza Adams* of New Bedford trying out a whale. Resumed course immediately, S.80.W., forty revolutions. Weather as before.”

By the next day at noon the deck was clear of all the filth, and the factory-like work was proceeding with machine-like regularity, all hands being now well rested. And as cask after cask was filled at the cooler and rolled away to a secure temporary berth on deck, the captain was heard to say something to this effect: “I thought so. I guessed that whale to be about the biggest in all my experience, an’ now I’m gettin’ to be sure of it. Never saw a bigger whale nor yet richer blubber.” By which he meant that the blubber was so full of oil that when cut the clear fluid gushed almost like water and besides it was full of cysts, small cells of about the size of peas, which were filled with a bland substance of the consistency of cream, probably almost pure spermaceti.

For although the great reservoir of spermaceti is in the head, in this case yielding nearly fifty barrels or five tons of almost pure spermaceti, this curious substance is found in the oil from any part of the body, particularly the great dorsal hump. Why the head should have so huge a quantity of this fluid contained in it is a mystery, the only supposition concerning its use being that its very low specific gravity brings the vast mass much more quickly to the surface than would otherwise be the case, and brings it up too in such a position that the spiracle or blow-hole is the first portion of the whale to break water. This substance has nothing in it

of the nature of brain matter—the brains are quite small in proportion to the size of the creature—but it has been held, in view of the high intelligence shown by the whales and seals, all of which are noted for their apparent paucity of brain, that this thought or intelligence matter is distributed over the different nerve centres, or to put it more colloquially, the creature has, like the telephone system in a large town, several local exchanges, as well as one central exchange for the transaction of general business.

And in the same way it has been supposed that the whales, huge as they are, cannot possibly contain sufficient air for the needs of the creatures during the prolonged period—often nearly an hour—during which they remain under water, since they have no other means of aerating the blood whatever. So it has been assumed that in some mysterious way the vital principle of the air, oxygen, is in some way secreted during the period that the whale is on the surface, a supposition which is somewhat supported by the fact that the whale upon coming to the surface must make so many respirations, always the same in number, before he can seek the depths again, which would point to some process going on in addition to ordinary breathing. Also it would certainly be impossible for him to sink if he inflated himself, as it were, by shipping a great reservoir full of air.

But this is probably enough of whale anatomy for one chapter, so I will leave the subject for a while, merely recording that the captain's most sanguine expectations were fulfilled, the whale yielding one hundred and sixty barrels or sixteen tons of oil and spermaceti, which at the then high market-price of the day, £108 per ton, made the handsome sum of over seventeen hundred pounds

for less than a week's work. Of course the long spells of inaction and the heavy outlay as well as upkeep must be borne in mind, and I do not suggest that the great game was ever in the nature of a gold mine, only that when a monster like the one we have just tried out was obtained he made a very considerable addition to the profits of the voyage.

All the oil having been run down, and the lavish application of lye and sand to the decks and paint-work having made the ship look her usual smart self, the monotonous old routine began again, but for our hero at least its monotony was a thing of the past. For one thing he began on his bundle of books, only reading a very little at a time at first, but gradually getting absorbed in them and reading on to the great loss of his sleep. But oh, to be able to read like him, to drink with an entirely unsophisticated thirst at the fountain of good literature believing every word as if it were directly inspired! Of course he read his Bible as he had always done, from a genuine love of it and a full appreciation of its living histories, not at all as a religious duty, but as with his wonderful memory he knew it nearly all by heart, it was entirely delightful to him to get hold of something fresh.

At last his chief, Merritt, said to him one night, with just the slightest shade of grievance in his voice, "'Pears to me you're mighty busy these days, too busy to have a yarn even. What 'yer doin' anyhow with yer nose in a book all the time?'"

For a moment the idea of the extremely taciturn Merritt wanting a yarn almost made C. B. smile, but he suppressed the impulse and replied apologetically—

"I'm afraid I've been a bit selfish of late, but the fact is I've just found my way into a new world. I

never knew how much there was in books before, and I forget everything else but the people that seem to be all alive before me, doing and saying things that I never dreamed of before. You see, I've missed very much the long talks and pleasant society that I've been used to all my life till I came here, for no one here seemed to care about anything that I like, and I can't listen to their yarns at all: they're all dreadful to me because of the bad language."

Merritt looked at him keenly for the space of a minute, and then said as if thinking aloud, "I wonder what Pepe thinks of ye now since you saved his life. Don't seem overnabove thankful 's far 's I can see. Spoke t' him yet?"

C. B. flushed dark red as he replied, "Yes, I asked him the next day if I could do anything for him, and I found him as bitter as ever. He knows all about the business—how, I don't know, but he does—and he seems to hate me worse for it. What it means I don't understand, but I can't alter it, and so I must let him go his own way."

"I know," grunted Merritt; "he's a bad man, eaten up with jealousy of you. If you'd a ben a no 'count greenie that couldn't keep your end up, an' had to knuckle down to him in the half deck same as his other cronies do or did, you wouldn't had no trouble with him. I got no use for men like him except to make oil, for he's a pretty fair average whaleman—I'm not denying that.

"But what I like about you is that you're not only a good whaleman, but you're a good man. An' now I want to tell you somethin'. I ben achin' to get it off my chest for a long time past, ever since I took such a shine t' ye at the first lowerin'. I told yer I had a chum once, didn't I? Yes; well, I

picked him up on the beach at the Bay of Islands. He'd swum ashore from the *Guidin' Light*, a whale-ship that had the reputation in her day of being the worst of all the bad ships that ever went a spoutin'. He was pretty desperate, but he knew enough not to try and skip while she was anchor: the standin' twenty dollars reward would ha' put every Maori in the neighbourhood on his track in a fluke-twist. So he waited till she was under weigh, and then when she was well off the heads he slipped down a rope and put for shore.

"Well, he'd fetched round to Russell, an', mind I'm telling ye, they were pretty hard crowd there those days, so if a poor devil had no money he stood a gaudy chance of starvin'. Well, I was in a good homely ship, the *Mornin' Star*, the skipper's boat-header at that, an' we come into the Bay of Islan's to wood and water up an' give liberty as usual. I come ashore with the skipper as soon as the kellick was down, and while he was up at the store I strolled along the beach an' I finds Dick, the chap I'm talkin' about, lyin' on the sand half dead. I gives him a kick just to let him know he was liable for a sunstroke, and he gets up halfway and looks at me just like a dog I had once. That was enough for me. I gets him up, takes him to old Rowsell's store, and fills him full of good grub an' beer, and then when the skipper come along I puts in a word fer him an' he's taken aboard.

"We happened to be a couple of hands short, so the old man wasn't sorry to have him, and I—well, I don't know what it could ha' been, but I got so fond of that fellow you can't think. When he got into decent rig, and had two or three square meals, he was a different chap, quite handsome and a regular Jim Dandy. He was a white man too, some sort of

an Englishman I guess, an' he could talk like a hull box o' books. We was only about nine months out from New Bedford when he came aboard, an' before another three months he'd so twisted himself around me, one that had never had a pet before since I first knew myself, that I'd ha' died for him. He was after oarsman in my boat an' smart too, but, though I wouldn't see it then, he was a coward an' a sneak of the worst kind. I was in hot water the whole time takin' his part, for he was always in rows, an' used to run to me like a kid. I think I liked him all the more for that, an' beside a row has always ben a sort o' tonic to me.

"Looking back now I can't understand the hold that fellow had over me, for he was always playing some dirty trick or another, not on me, but other fellows, an' I had to get him out o' them. An' if ever I went for him real angry, he could always salve me over in a few minutes with that soapy tongue of his. At last I found him out. We went into Callao, an' it was the days when shanghaiing was carried on wuss there than anywhere else. No one was allowed out of the ship except on such business as takin' the skipper ashore, an' then we was forbid to leave the boat. But he had ben there before, an' knew Buck Murphy, the big shanghai boss, who used ter come down on the quay an' yarn with him very quiet. One afternoon while we was waitin' for the skipper, Dick persuades me to come up to a house not above two ships' lengths away an' have a drink with him, bringin' two hands out of the boat with us and leavin' a Kanaka in charge. It was only to be for a minute.

"Even t' this day I don't know what made me go. I knew better, o' course, an' I never did care much fer drink anyway. But that fellow could make me

do anythin' he liked, I believe, an,' so I went, like a silly goat as I was. I smelt somehow that all wasn't right when I got in, for there was as tough a lookin' crowd as ever I see sittin' about, an' half of 'em looked ready to begin on anybody they didn't sorter just cotton to. But I had my drink, three fingers of aguardiente, an' so did the two chaps as was with us, two Yanks they was. Just as I puts my glass down I sees Dick lookin' at me curious, an' in that moment I knew that he had sold me. I never want to feel like that again. The bottom seemed to have fell out of everything. I jumped up, knockin' the big table over; I heard an' awful crashin' an' bangin' an', then nothin.'

"When I came to agen I was bein' hauled along a deck by the neck, an' I was feelin' wuss nor ever I had felt in my life. I heard somebody yell 'up with ye, dirt; an' loose that maintgallant s'l,' an' I started, the sailor in me, I s'pose. But as I got on the sheer pole I looked around, for my head was gettin' clearer, and there, not more'n a mile away was the *Mornin' Star* at anchor, an' we flyin' past her at the rate o' knots before a fresh breeze under topsails fore and aft. Just one look was enough for me. I slued round and dived, comin' up headin' straight for the ole ship. And the skunk in charge o' that hooker that I'd ben shanghaied into stood on his poop an' took pot shots at me from a Winchester as long as he could see me. But he dassent heave to where he was'n I played the ole islan' game on him, boy, long swim under water, bob up an' a guts full of air, then down agen. Why, I'd run the blockade of forty ships if only the water was rough enough.

"Presently the old man sees me, he'd ben disturbed by the noise o' the shootin', an,' as he after-

wards told me, he ups with his glass an' makes out who it was. An' then he was that excited he couldn't keep still; but he had too much savvy to lower a boat until the ship that I'd jumped from was outer gunshot. Then they come an' picked me up. I was feelin' real good, for that swim had put new life inter me. When I got aboard the ole man was that delighted t' see me I thought he'd a cried, an' I was some glad t' get back. I told him all I knew, an' he says, 'Why that chum o' yours is wuss an' what even I thought him, an' you know I never did like him. He got down inter my cabin that day somehow and stole about two hundred dollars in money an' some bits o' julery as I prized, an' I hain't heard nothin' of him since.

"I didn't say nothin', I couldn't, but I reckoned that if ever I met Mr. Dick agen, no matter where or how, it'd be his last meetin' with anybody.

"I went an' had a good sleep an' a feed, an' that night as soon as it was dark I goes t' the skipper an' says I: 'I'm goin' ashore, sir, with your permission, but I don't want no boat, I'll swim.' He knew me an' he says, 'Well, if you must you must. But I don't want t' lose ye, try an' get back agen.' An' I says, 'You bet I'll be back before mornin'.' So I puts my ole bowie in my belt, slips down over the side, an' puts for the shore. It was only a couple o' miles off, so I was as fresh as paint when I lands, an' then I starts off on my search. I knew, of course, that my joker calc'lated on me bein' a good many miles away by this time, so I didn't dodge about, I went straight to the rum mill he'd lured me to. An' when I shoved open the door, there he is, a settin' with a big drink afore him, and Buck Murphy with two other boys o' the same class sittin' around with cards in their hands. They were playin' bluff.

“ I wasn't : I made one jump at him like a cougar. I knew I could a had him out o' the middle of a regiment of soldiers, an' as I went I knocked the kerosine lamp over that was on the table so that the only light that there was came from the burnin' ile lappin' around the wooden shanty. I got him by the neck, with my left hand. With the other I pulls my knife an' as I choked him I felt for anythin' touchin' me an' cut at it. The flame burst up high an' showed me the rest o' the crowd clearin', so I pulls up quickly an' has a good look at him. I thought he was dead, but I makes sure an' then has a peep round. An' in the corner of the room I sees a big hole. Bein' as clear in my mind as I am now I makes a breach for it, guessin' what it was, drops through it an' finds myself in the harbour which was all right.

“ So I takes a little journey, lands and get my bearin's on, then paddles off quietly to the ship feelin' quite easy in my mind. I got aboard agen at mid-night, and was very near shot by the mate who, seein' me climb inboard in the dark, thought I was some pirate or another. I jollied him a bit about his shootin', not much, because I ain't big on the shoot myself, then turned in, tellin' him I'd give the cuffer t' the skipper in the mornin'.

“ I was middlin' tired, an' I had to be called at two bells, an' as soon as I come on deck the ole man says, ' So you got back all right, Merritt ? ' ' Yes, sir, ' I says, ' an' I've squared the account. Mister Dick won't sell any more men, his pleasant little game is stopped for a full due. ' ' Why, you surely didn't kill him, did you, Merritt ? ' says he, holdin' up both han's as if he was scared like. ' Well, if I didn't, ' says I, ' it's a funny thing to me. But I don't think there's much doubt about it ; an' I went on to give him the story. Would you believe it, he looked at me as if I

hurt his eyesight, an' from that out I don't think he really ever liked me. Some men is like that, ye know. They know you've done the right thing, yet they hate ye for doin' it. But that didn't trouble me any."

All through the long recital C. B. had listened with mingled feelings of admiration and horror, and when Merritt had finished he held out his hand and said—

"Mr. Merritt, I feel that your deed was terrible, but I can't find it in my heart to blame you, except that you acted in revenge. But that man was a danger and needed killing, I know, and I feel that you were only the instrument in doing a necessary work. I couldn't think any less of you, for I believe you acted according to the light you had, and anyhow I love and admire you."

CHAPTER XII

C. B.'s Great Temptation

FROM that eventful evening the friendship between these two most strangely assorted chums deepened in force until every man in the ship knew certainly, what he had only suspected before, that whoever took it in hand to do despite to one of them would surely have to reckon with the other. And that knowledge had a wholly quietening and sweetening effect upon all hands. Every one knew by this time, knew intimately, that C. B.'s principles were of a high and noble kind, that he would always be on the side of the good and true, and would be ready to put up with much trouble and annoyance from anybody rather than assert himself. But they all knew also that his chum Merritt was of a totally different stamp. They felt that, given what he considered cause, he would as soon kill a man as eat an orange, and they were afraid that if they offended C. B. and Merritt got to know of it, he might suddenly apply his own method of chastisement to the offender.

And so the *Eliza Adams* became a most eminently peaceful as well as hard-working ship. Captain Taber used to gaze admiringly upon the quiet gangs working here and there, with never a voice upraised in anger, and say to his mate, "Winsloe, I've often said that the day of miracles was long past, but I ain't so sure now. You and me always looked upon the old hooker as a good ship, an' by jingo, she *was* a good ship compared with lots that we've known, a

perfect little galley of angels, but they was a good deal of rough house at times in order to keep her good, now wasn't they?"

"True 'nough, captain," sententiously assented Winsloe, "men must be kep' in hand."

"That's just my point, Winsloe," eagerly interrupted the skipper. "Ever since the weltin' that Merritt gave Pepe she ain't wanted no keepin' in order, she's been an abode of peace; y' haven't had t' raise yer voice above a whisper to get everything done on the instant. Whatever is it in this young fellow that makes such a change in everybody that comes near him? Some fellows hate him like pizen, others freeze to him like Merritt, an' yet he doesn't do or say anythin' except his plain duty."

"I guess I don't know, sir," yawned Winsloe as if tired of the subject. "S'long as a man does his work 'thout giving trouble I ain't usin' my brains on his character. Don't make no sort o' difference t' me."

"Ah, I see," murmured the skipper, and turned away, fully convinced in his own mind that Mr. Winsloe did not view C. B. with any favour, in fact, was a man of that strange mind calibre, that praise of any other man, whether affecting him or not, acted upon him like a personal affront.

Thereafter for a space of three months, during which they continued to cruise the off-shore ground with fair success, taking altogether some four hundred barrels of oil, no incident occurred worth making special mention of here. Only it could not escape the notice of any unbiassed observer like the skipper, how, with the exception of the other boat steerers and the three officers above Merritt, all the crew seemed to worship C. B.; their faces brightened whenever they saw him. And then there came another

explosion with Pepe again, who seemed to have grown moodier and more sullen, although he was just as good a whaleman as he had ever been.

It was during the trying out of some oil, just at the change of watches, that one of C. B.'s boat's crew, coming hurriedly on deck, charged into Pepe, who stood wiping his hands by the mincer, having just relinquished the baler to C. B., standing on the try-works platform. It was a pure accident, due to the quantity of oil on deck. And besides, the man, a Yankee from Vermont, was not in the best of health, for he was suffering from a severe outbreak of painful boils. But Pepe sprang to his feet and seized the unfortunate fellow by the throat, forcing him against the rail, and had already struck him a heavy blow in the face, when C. B. leaped from his place on the platform, and snatching Pepe's just descending arm cried, "Let the man alone!"

Pepe turned like a baffled tiger, all teeth and snarl, and grappled C. B., everything forgotten but his present desire to do harm to the one who had got in his way.

A serious smile was on C. B.'s face as he easily held the furious man who, lost to all sense of danger, strove to get at his knife. Seeing or rather feeling this, C. B. lost his temper and, freeing his right arm, struck at Pepe's face once, twice, with crushing force; then as if maddened beyond endurance he clasped Pepe in his arms and dashed him against the bulwarks where he lay limp and motionless. C. B.'s anger passed as rapidly as it had kindled, and falling on his knees in the oil by the side of the unconscious man he tore open the breast of his shirt and felt his breast, finding to his immense relief that his heart was beating, though feebly.

Then rising, he lifted the limp body in his strong

arms and bore it aft out of the way of the oil. He was about to get some restoratives when a hand was laid on his arm, and turning he saw Merritt who said—

“ Looky here ! no more foolin’ with that nigger. He ain’t hurt any worth speakin’ of, an’ you’re only spoilin’ him. ’Sides, your pot wants lookin’ after. Get back t’ yer work and leave him t’ learn his lesson.”

C. B. obeyed mechanically, but with a dull feeling of regret at his heart, for he was afraid of that demon that had so suddenly arisen within him, remembering keenly as he did the last occasion when it had done so. And as he went on with his baling, he prayed fervently to be delivered from what he felt was the awful danger of taking a fellow-creature’s life in anger.

All the while he was thus accusing himself the rest of the watch, with the exception of Mr. Spurrell, who was asleep and heard nothing of the fray, were almost beside themselves with joy at the thought that the gentle kindly fellow whom they all loved could on occasion use the great strength they knew he possessed not only in self-defence but for the defence of others. The man whom he had rescued, in particular, was from thenceforward his devoted slave ; no one could say a word even remotely disparaging C. B., but he was upon them like a faithful dog in defence of his master. And strangest of all, C. B. never heard another word about it from anybody. Pepe was all right to all appearance at the change of watches, and if the captain knew he never mentioned it.

Now I fear that there are many good people who will feel that C. B. was woefully lacking in what they consider should be the first attribute of the Christian

—the ability and grace to submit not only to any violence offered to themselves, but to witness any shameful oppression of others with the same meekness of spirit. I verily believe, I must believe, judging from what I read written by these people and what I have heard them say, that if they saw the last extremity of murderous outrage being offered to their nearest and dearest they would only drop upon their knees and pray that God would pardon the perpetrators; they would not dare to interfere, actively, nor if they were able would they allow others to do so. Nay more, if any person did interfere, and in defence of their children happened to shed the blood of the aggressors, they would be the first to call him or them murderers.

It is an attitude of mind which I do not pretend to understand, but one that is all too common and widespread to ignore. It is far removed from the spirit of the ancient martyrs, in that its professors are usually the very first to cry out for protection of their own bodies and property by the forces of the law. And I can only characterize such people by the plain old name of coward. More, I do not believe that God saves a man to make him a coward, but to make him as brave as was the Gentle Saviour when he scourged the infamous rabble out of the Temple, alone and unaided. But our curious weaklings would have reserved their wrath for the scourge wielder, their pity for the scoundrels. Would! nay do so every day, as the columns of our newspapers bear witness.

And now the time approaches when C. B. is to endure the heaviest temptation of all. The season was over on the off-shore ground, and the good ship was put under all sail for the Sandwich Islands, it being the captain's intention to visit Honolulu to refit there and replenish with wood and water. As

soon as the news became known all hands went nearly wild with delight, for in those days Honolulu was a place where, in spite of the efforts of the missionaries, scenes of the wildest licence and debauchery took place upon the arrival of a whaleship whose captain was kindly disposed enough to give his crew liberty and money. Reminiscences of former excesses were now on everybody's tongue, even the taciturn Merritt became almost garrulous in describing to his chum what he considered to be the attractions of Honolulu and its environs.

In his innocence and ignorance C. B. listened greedily to these tales, and asked many questions, which made Merritt grin and wonder loudly that any man should be so fresh and green as he put it. And there was no one to warn, nothing to give any hint as to the foulness of what was coming. More than that, there was an uneasy sense in C. B.'s mind of being gradually estranged from the high and holy thoughts which had always been his precious possession, even his prayers were becoming perfunctory as the scenes so vividly depicted by the conversation of his fellows rose before his mental vision and his curiosity with regard to them grew stronger.

They made a very fine and uneventful passage to the islands, arriving off Honolulu in the early dawn of a perfect day, and working into the harbour, where four other whaleships were lying at anchor, in the usual easy seaman-like fashion of those ships. The vessel was moored smartly, and the order given to furl all sail, and in carrying out this order an incident occurred which brings into my story for a little while a man who has not received any but cursory mention and that not by name—Mr. Allan the third mate. He was a jovial stocky little man of great vivacity and good temper, who interfered with no-

body and made no trouble as long as the work went on all right. Being in the other watch he had never had much to do with C. B., and regarded him as an amiable sort of crank.

Now it chanced that in the rush to get the sails furled C. B. found himself side by side with Mr. Allan on the main topsail yard, tugging furiously at the sail to get it furled before their rivals forrard, in the usual emulation seen in these vessels at sail furling. Now C. B. being so long and Mr. Allan so short, only about five feet four, the latter could only reach from the foot-rope, and sprang upwards from it grabbing at the sail and missing his hold. He was sliding backwards from the yard with a despairing yell when C. B., letting go the sail, made a grab at his left arm, caught it, and turning, held the whole weight of his body as it fell. The wrench was terrible, and C. B.'s stout sinews cracked, but exerting all his great strength he drew the third mate upward until he placed him on the foot-rope again in safety, when they both lay gasping across the yard and looked at each other.

When they had recovered their breath they finished furling the sail, being hopelessly beaten of course by the fellows forrard. But when they reached the deck Mr. Allan held out his hand to C. B. saying, "Put it there, young man, I reckon I owe you a life or so."

C. B. was about to reply, when Merritt with his dangerous grin on came between them and said—

"Now, Mr. Allan, what's you doin' with my chum?"

"Oh, don't bark," replied Allan laconically, "nobody's kidnappin' your chum. But I s'pose you haven't any real objections t' a fellow saying thank ye for having his life saved, have ye?"

“No, but we’ll let it go at that,” snarled Merritt. “When I’ve got a chum I don’t want no partners in him, ’n I won’t have ’em neither, see. You can thank all ye want to, but no chummin’.” And he turned away.

C. B. looked bewildered from one to the other, and then went on with his work, with a deep sigh of despair at his inability to comprehend this peculiarly selfish form of affection.

He could see, however, that it behoved him to be careful in his intercourse with others, no matter how friendly they might be, not that he felt the least fear of Merritt, but that he realized to the full that the latter’s love for him had humanized and made gentle a nature essentially savage and morose. He felt in a very special measure responsible for Merritt, having an indefinable idea that he might one day be able to hail him not only as a chum but as a brother Christian. Not that C. B. had ever attempted to proselytize ; he had absolutely none of the missionary spirit except that he always did live before his fellows as seeing Him who is invisible, and the example of such a life often preaches louder than any amount of spoken words. And his heart had greatly rejoiced when on several occasions during the night watches Merritt had asked him in a casual off-hand sort of way to tell him what Christianity really was.

But I am forgetting altogether that the ship is at anchor in the harbour of Honolulu, and that C. B., in a strange port for the first time in his life, became carried away, quite bewildered by the wonderful scene on deck. For the ship was overrun by both Kanakas from the shore and visitors from the other ships, all manner of island produce for sale was being continually hoisted on board, and all

round the ship, like so many dusky mermaidens, disported a very shoal of girls, forbidden to come on board by the captain's stern orders. That gentleman, however, seeing how impossible it was for his men to work under the present conditions, and being moreover of a very kindly disposition, gave orders that as soon as the decks were cleared up work should cease for the remainder of the day, so that the men should be able to enjoy the change without breaking any rules or getting into trouble. Then he called all officers and boat steerers aft and gave them stringent orders to watch that no women or liquor were allowed on board, as he didn't want any gratuitous trouble. Also to keep a good lookout that nothing of small portable size was left lying about for the natives to steal, and especially that no rope under any pretence was flung to a boat, since it is a frequent trick of theirs played upon unwary seafarers to haul as much of a rope flung to them as possible into a canoe and then—cut it off as high up as they can reach—which of course causes serious trouble the first time the rope is let go, if it is, as usual, a portion of the ship's running gear.

These orders required a great deal of energy and watchfulness to carry out, but nobody seemed to take them seriously except C. B., and in consequence he was kept extremely busy, especially as to his slight annoyance he was continually being addressed in the Kanaka tongue by natives who looked upon him as one of themselves, though not full blood. For the Pitcairn Islanders, handsome as they undoubtedly are, do show and probably always will show, both in complexion and feature, a striking resemblance to the stock from which their maternal ancestors were derived, and this by a well-known peculiarity is far more pronounced in the case of

males than of females. Now C. B. hardly knew a word of Kanaka, for he had not fraternized at all with the natives on board, having been early advised to keep his place, so when these dusky Hawaiians smilingly saluted him with "Aloha," to which he cheerily responded, and then went on to talk to him, his blank stare of non-understanding and his vigorous pantomime to that effect puzzled them beyond measure.

It was evident that they did not believe him at first, by their scornful looks. They took him for a renegade, a half-breed ashamed of his parentage, which is indeed an unpardonable offence in their eyes, they having a vigorous hatred of all forms of snobbery, until presently mixing with the Kanakas forward, they heard such an account of C. B.'s goodness, his prowess as a fighter and his ability as a whaleman, that they changed their minds concerning him, and were ready to accord him supernatural honours. He, of course, noticed the deference they paid him, the instant obedience to his lightest word, the anxiety to please him manifested on every side, but ascribed it to their innate kindness, to everything in fact but its true reason. It was not until they began to bring him tribute in the way of presents, fruit, eggs, fowls and vegetables, that he began to wonder whereunto all this was tending, and as he could make but little headway through his want of knowledge of the language he hunted up Merritt, who spoke the language very well, and asked him if he could ascertain the reason.

Merritt held a palaver, which, by the way, is a West African native word that has passed into our language, and then did what C. B. had never deemed him capable of, burst into a perfect roar of laughter. To C. B.'s puzzled inquiry as to the cause of this

sudden hilarity, he presently replied, wiping the tears of merriment from his eyes, in allegory and parable—

“Boys oh! boys, get sticks and beat the natives. By the great hook block ef this don't beat heavin' the anchor through the hause-pipe. What sh'll I hear next, I persoom? Well, never mind, this is the way of it. All these kotow, that offerings, them perlite inquiries that you don't savvy means that you're somethin' of a second mate god. I don't know what them Kanakas of ours has been tellin' 'em about ye, but it must a ben a pretty tall yarn, judgin' by what I've heard already. An' this is only the beginnin' of it.”

One of the crew-Kanakas was just shambling aft to the scuttle-butt for a drink of water when Merritt hailed him in his own language and asked him what sort of a game he had been putting up on “Seeby” as they all called our hero forrard. The man told him as truthfully as he knew how what had been said, at which Merritt laughed more than ever, and at last turning to C. B. said—

“Looky here, my boy, ef you ain't careful these yer Kanakas 'll be wiling you away to become the head boss of some new religion of theirs. I guess they hain't ever struck one o' your breed before.”

C. B. tried to laugh, but it was a failure. He had come up against a problem far too heavy for his simple mind to cope with. I know of no subtler form of temptation than this for a good man, unless gifted with an exceptionally large fund of common sense and much experience. Now C. B. was a sensible youth, and his splendid early training as well as his native grit had carried him grandly through his recent fiery trial, but nothing that he had ever heard or learned had prepared him for this.

His mind was chaos for a time, and then there emerged one idea clearly and distinctly, an idea sedulously cultivated by the fine old man McCoy—humility. He felt rather than knew that this would save him, this and the steadfast performance of his duty, from being carried off his balance, and unknown to any save his Maker his heart went up in prayer to be kept humble, true and diligent. It was all over in a moment; then he turned to Merritt with a bright and cheerful smile, saying—

“Please tell these foolish fellows that I am only a boat-steerer, who loves God, and that there’s nothing special about me except that I’m a bit bigger and stronger than ordinary men, which I can’t help being, you know.”

Merritt still grinning told them something that C. B. did not of course understand; if he had he would have protested, for it was not at all what he meant to be conveyed to them. It was to the effect that while C. B. was not exactly a godling he was a specially big man highly favoured by God; that he was half a Kanaka, but had never learned his mother language, and that the *papalangi* (white men) were all agreed in honouring him. So if they chose to show their appreciation of the honour done to their race in him it was not for him to baulk them, unless they worried him, when he would speedily inform them of the fact and they must instantly obey him. For Merritt, old in the knowledge of these light-hearted folks, foresaw that to occupy such a position as C. B. had been involuntarily lifted into meant not only a great lightening of labour for all the officers, but getting the best that life afforded by way of tribute, as a right and without any cost except to the donors.

In which, of course, Merritt was perfectly right

from his point of view, and from thenceforward the ease with which discipline was maintained among the visitors was wonderful. Only C. B. felt sorely handicapped by his inability to speak the language, although, as he always had Merritt to fall back upon to interpret for him, that was not so much of a drawback as he thought it.

The other boat-steerers and officers soon found that life was very easy for them, and took full advantage of the fact without worrying about the reason for it, until on the third day after their arrival the skipper said at dinner: "The Kanakas don't seem to be half as troublesome as usual on board, how is it?" There was silence for a moment or two until, seeing his seniors said nothing, Mr. Allan, the third mate, replied—

"It's all on account of that extraordinary boat-steerer of ours, sir. He seems to have got hold of the Kanakas in such a way that they'll do anything for him. They don't take a bit of notice of us as far as I can see, but if he so much as winks they're ready to fly. I heard him say to one the other day, 'The captain doesn't want any grog brought aboard and I hope none of you will do it?' That was all, but that Kanaka looked as if he had had a message from heaven. An' I don't believe there's ben a drop come in over the rail, an' that without our troubling at all."

The other officers went on stolidly eating, apparently without any interest in what was being said, but the captain, smiting his leg, said with great earnestness—

"In all my fishin' I've never met a man like this fellow. Whatever does it mean? He don't preach, he don't psalm-sing (I often wish he would after hearin' him that night aboard the *Matilda Sayer*),

he only just does what we all try to do according to our ability, his duty, an' yet he strikes me as bein' a miracle. I sometimes wonder whether we're lucky in havin' him aboard the ship or not."

Then Mr. Winsloe lifted his head with a dogged air and remarked—

"Don't see anything particularly lucky in havin' him aboard, sir. We hain't had only an ordinary cruise, we've had two or three nasty rows through him, and a pretty bad smash. I think there's too much fuss bein' made altogether over a half-bred Kanaka who's only a fair average boat-steerer after all."

There was another silence after this, until presently the skipper said with a half sigh—

"Ah well, I can understand you're not having any praise to waste on him, Winsloe. If I'd ben in your place, an' he'd used up my harponeer as cheaply as he has yours, I sh'd feel 'bout the same I guess. But Pepe hasn't made a good show, now has he?"

"Best harponeer I ever saw get into a boat until this 'ere speculation of yours came aboard. Now he ain't wuth a row of pins. I could pick a dozen men out o' the crew as good as him at any time."

"I think that'll quite do, Mr. Winsloe," answered the skipper quietly, but with a dangerous gleam in his eye. "I don't allow any man to talk t' me as your permittin' yerself to do. I k'n make allowance all right, but you don't need any allowance, you know better. Now don't let it occur agen, an' if Pepe is useless as you say he is, disrate him an' put another man in his place."

Nothing more was said, but all four men filed out of the little cuddy in silence thinking over the sudden turn affairs had taken. But Captain Taber

was not the man to allow any suspicion of injustice to taint his actions, and so he presently sent for Mr. Winsloe to his cabin, gave him a cigar, took one himself, and when they were well going he said quite casually—

“ Looky here, Winsloe, you’n me’s got on very well this last three years nearly, an’ I ain’t goin’ t’ let any misunderstandin’ spoil our relations if I can help it. Nor yet I ain’t goin’ t’ be unjust, to you nor nobody else—tain’t in me t’ put up with it or suffer it. Tell me, what ye got agen that young boat-steerer, ’cause if the matter’s serious enough to cause a breach between us on account of him bein’ in the ship, I’m goin’ t’ send him back t’ Norfolk; I ain’t goin’ t’ lose my mate. Though, mind ye, if that meant turnin’ a man adrift that had done no wrong just t’ save myself trouble an’ to please another man who’d taken a dislikin’ for him, I wouldn’t do it, no, not for the value of ship an’ cargo. Now, honest injun, own up, what ye got agen him? ” And lying back, calmly puffing his cigar, the captain awaited the reply. After a long pause it came reluctantly—

“ I ain’t got nothin’ agen him, only I hate the sight of his face ”; and here the speaker became transformed and gave vent to a string of awful blasphemies, which even then seemed quite inadequate to express the hatred he felt for C. B. Captain Taber watched this exhibition with an abstracted air nor showed any surprise. When the furious man had subsided, though still trembling with utter rage, the skipper said—

“ I guess you’re in a pretty bad way, Winsloe. You seem to me to be like one of them old-time folks that was possessed with devils. Here’s a man that never done you a mite of harm, never give

you a word o' sass, nor a minute's trouble, yet if I'm any judge you'd wash yer hands in his blood this minute if y' got a chance, an' feel glad. God help ye, I'm afraid it means that you're right down bad, an' he's about as good as they make 'em. Well, I must see about this." And Winsloe retreated on deck.

I must close this chapter with just a word of explanation to such dear gentle souls among my readers who, leading sheltered lives, have never had the misfortune to come across these terrible exhibitions of hatred without any cause save the natural antagonism of light and darkness. I beg them to believe that I am not exaggerating, but drawing from life, and to be thankful if they have never met such instances of the causeless hatred of the utterly innocent.

CHAPTER XIII

C. B.'s Narrowest Escape

THE life now led by C. B. was a most distracting one for him, and stirred his somewhat easy mind to its depths. He gave not one thought to the dark feelings of hatred with which he knew he was regarded by certain of his shipmates in the conscientious discharge of duties. He was much ashore and mixed freely with the Kanakas, who abated no jot of the reverence with which they had first heard of his doings upon closest acquaintance with him. It is pleasant to record that he came and went among them blamelessly. All sorts of gifts were pressed upon him, some of them such as we need not inquire into more particularly, but specially of drink and other forms of hospitality. He readily accepted food when he needed it, but kept his abstinence from intoxicants or tobacco without any effort, because having never known their taste he was not disposed to make a trial of them. Doubtless he was virtuous, but if he had been given to self-analysis he would have said that if it was virtue it was entirely unconscious on his part.

Which gave it its peculiar charm, for few persons are more offensive than the ostentatiously virtuous, who are usually Pharisees of the very worst type. His influence over his men was so great that he could always be depended upon to take a party ashore on a wood and water expedition and get the

work done without any trouble, while on the several occasions when the other boat-steerers went on similar errands there was always an aftermath of quarrels and fighting due to liquor. Then when the captain intervened and pointed out the difference between the behaviour of the men who went ashore with C. B. and those whose conduct was under review, the debt of hatred steadily accumulated.

But the work went steadily on until the ship was nearly ready for sea, and the captain gave liberty to the port watch. In it were Pepe and Louis and most of the Portuguese in the fo'c'sle, who, dressed in their best and with money to spend, left the ship early in the morning with leave until twenty-four hours later. C. B. spent a quiet day on board, there being little to do, until just after dark the captain called his boat away, and with C. B. in his usual place was pulled ashore to an evening party. There was the usual little group of loafers at the landing-place, and when the captain, dismissing the boat, ordered C. B. to return for him at eleven o'clock the information spread. Like a wise commander the skipper saw the boat on its way back to the ship before he left the beach, not that he could not trust C. B. to keep his men together, but from sheer force of habit.

Now the gang of Portuguese who were ashore, tired with drink, had waited all day in the hope of catching C. B. when he came ashore, and when they heard of the order given they chuckled hugely, for they felt that if they had luck they could get him out of the way once for all. And they laid their plans carefully to entrap him when he came ashore at eleven and kill him, trusting that under cover of the night none of them would be recognized. C. B., all unconscious of any danger, called away his boat's crew at eleven, and as he was about to step

into the boat himself he was surprised to find Mr. Merritt at his elbow, who said—

“All right, I’m comin’ with you. I’ve took a fancy t’ run ashore.”

C. B. said nothing, although he wondered much whatever Merritt could want ashore at that time of night. However, Merritt was his superior, so he merely said—

“All right, sir, will you steer?”

“No, my boy,” replied Merritt, “I’ll be the admiral for once.” And he lay back in the stern sheets with a grand assumption of luxury, of which there is none in a whaleboat, no seat of any kind being provided aft.

As soon as they swung alongside the little jetty, a Kanaka voice said out of the darkness—

“That *Liza Adam’s* boat?”

“Yes,” replied C. B. “what’s the matter?”

“All right, sir, cappen he say come up house, he want speak you ’bout some things.”

“All right,” responded C. B., “I’ll come,” and sprang ashore, saying as he did so—

“I’m glad you came now, Merritt.”

“So’m I,” muttered the fourth mate, unheard by C. B., as he watched the lithe form striding off into the dark after the Kanaka. He allowed him to get about fifty yards away, then, with a word of caution to the boat’s crew, sprang lightly after him and rapidly ran in his track. He was not an instant too soon, for C. B. had only just turned the corner of the first store when he was attacked by a group of men with clubs, who sprang at him as a pack of savage dogs might at a strange animal that had accidentally happened to come in their midst.

C. B., taken entirely by surprise and absolutely unarmed, did the only thing possible to him : warding

off the blows with his arms he sprang at the nearest man, caught him round arms and body and used him as a shield. It was a good move, for in their blind fury his assailants showered their blows indiscriminately, and the helpless man in C. B.'s arms came in for the full benefit of them. Then with a yell wild as that of an Indian brave a dark form leapt into the straggling group, and before its savage onslaught three men went down groaning one after the other. "All right, Christmas, my boy," shouted Merritt, for of course it was he, "drop that swine and get a club." Crash, crash went his own as he spoke, each blow accompanied by ear-splitting yells in Kanaka, which brought dim forms rushing from every side into the fray.

The fracas was very brief, for every one of the assailants had been laid low within two or three minutes. But C. B. also settled down, much to Merritt's dismay, who could not believe that he was badly hurt. Merritt tried to raise him, but found that he was a dead weight in his arms, and in great alarm he shouted for a light. Several Kanakas brought torches, and the inanimate form of C. B. was lifted with tender care and carried into the nearest store. It was there found that he had received two serious wounds, one in the fleshy part of the thigh, which had completely penetrated the great band of muscle and bled profusely, the other in the side laying open the cavity of the abdomen. A surgeon was immediately sent for, and in the meantime Merritt devoted all his skill to stopping the bleeding, at the same time issuing orders that every one of the villains who had committed this outrage should be secured and brought into the store.

It was done, but it was hardly necessary, for they were all so badly hurt that they could not

make their escape, Pepe and Louis especially being recognized at once by Merritt, although their features were battered into shapelessness, and their stertorous breathing pointed to brain concussion. Of the other five only one belonged to the ship, the third mate's harpioneer Carlo, the rest were beach-combers of the worst repute. There was not a Kanaka among them. As usual the Kanakas crowded around, volubly discussing the affair in all its possible details, but when the news spread among them that the attack had been made upon the man whom they had agreed to honour, almost worship, very ugly sounds began to arise, and but for the arrival of the surgeon, accompanied by the captain and a posse of police, the lives of those murderous wretches would hardly have been worth a moment's purchase. Certainly Merritt would have joyfully egged the Kanakas on to do any deed they thought fit.

But with the coming of the police order was soon restored and the offenders were carried off under strong guard to the calaboose, or lock-up, where with scantiest ceremony they were flung into a cell and left to recover or not as it might please them. C. B., though almost at the last extremity from loss of blood, made a magnificent rally, and in an hour had so far recovered as to be able to tell the simple story of his waylaying. He could not identify any of his assailants, for the attack had been so sudden and the night was so dark ; but here Merritt stepped in and took up the tale, filling in all the later details of which C. B. had been unconscious, and winding up grimly with the words—"An' we've got 'em all by the heels now. Besides, I guess they've got enough punishment to last 'em till next time. But if I'd had my way I'd a killed every last one of 'em. A little killin' 'd do that gang a power of good."

The captain's sympathy with his wounded harpioneer was very great, but it must be sorrowfully admitted that his annoyance was greater. It would have given him much satisfaction if he could have blamed C. B. or Merritt, but they were both utterly blameless. And so he had no one upon whom he could expend the rage he felt at what he now realized would mean considerable delay and expense, as well as alteration in the personnel of his ship. Again and again the cowardly thought arose, "I must get rid of this fellow, I shall never have any peace in this ship until I do," and he remembered Winsloe's attitude as well as that of the now discomfited harpioneers. But in any case he feared that they would be in no shape to resume the voyage from what he had heard of their injuries.

Whichever way he looked he could see nothing but trouble, and he weakly put it down to the presence in his ship of a man who, he fretfully muttered to himself, was too good for this world. At last, with a sigh, he rose to his feet saying—

"Well, doctor, I s'pose I can leave the patient to you; you'll oblige me by seeing that he's looked after, an' I'll be ashore again early in the mornin' to see him."

But before the doctor could reply Merritt stepped forward and said respectfully but firmly—

"I'll stay and look after him, sir, if you please."

"Ah, certainly not," testily returned the skipper. "I can't have any more of you ashore. It's bad enough as it is. You'll come aboard with me now."

Merritt looked keenly at his commander and replied in a deeper tone—

"No, sir, I wouldn't leave him to-night for the value of the ship and her cargo. I'm sorry, sir, to go agen your wishes, but he's my chum, an' I

want to look after his life. Nothing matters to me just now but that."

Such unexpected opposition on the part of the most docile and quiet of all his officers added to the annoyance he was already feeling nearly maddened the skipper. Besides, he was angry with himself for what he could not but feel was the injustice he was contemplating. He stormed and raged and threatened until the doctor said laconically—

"If you want to kill this man, captain, you can't do better than go on as you're doing."

That sobered him, and calling up all the self-control he had temporarily lost he replied more quietly—

"Oh, all right, it seems I'm bound to be wrong anyway. But as for you, you yellow image, I'll make you sweat for this. I'll let you see if you'll disobey my orders an' have your own way for nothing"; but there he stopped dead, for Merritt coming closer to him said—

"Don't talk like that, captain, you ain't thinkin'. You know you ain't got a more willin' man than I am in the ship, an' I know you're too good a man to mean what you say. You wouldn't like this man to be left here at the mercy of a careless Kanaka."

The captain looked at Merritt doubtfully, and then his better feelings conquered him, and holding out his hand he said—

"You're right, Merritt, of course. I'm so upset I don't know what I'm sayin'. But I feel that rattled that nothin' 'd please me better than to have a number one row with somebody, an' I only hope Winsloe don't get talkin' to-night. Good-night, I'll be ashore before breakfast." And he departed for the jetty, where his patient boat's crew

were still sitting, waiting through all the stirring scenes that had transpired. He stepped into the boat, crying, "Shove off! Pull two stern three, so, give way together," and off flew the boat to the ship.

Fortunately Mr. Winsloe was not on watch, and Spurrell was far too good a man to be caught napping, so as soon as the captain came alongside the officer was ready to receive him, the hands stood by the fall and the boat was immediately hoisted to her place. And in ten minutes all was quiet again on board, for the captain went straight to his bunk and turned in, determined to sleep off his annoyance.

During the night the captain had several long intervals of wakefulness, every one of them occupied by reflections upon the happenings of the day. And suddenly he remembered the promise he had made to C. B.'s mother at that meeting which now seemed to be so far away, and his conscience smote him, for that he found himself willing to sacrifice an innocent man to avoid trouble for himself. It is done every day and by people who ordinarily would scorn to do an unjust or unkind action, but under the plea of business exigencies they will perpetrate this basest of all betrayals. I hear now the voice of a good man, a man whose name stands above all possibility of defamation, saying to me—

"Young man, I know that you are perfectly in the right, that your conduct in the matter is above reproach, but—you are not indispensable to the business and the man you are in conflict with is. Therefore if he makes the condition that either you or he must go, you will have to go, or hold a candle to the devil."

I am quoting the exact words, for they seared my soul, and I swore then that at whatever cost I would

not do the same mean unrighteous thing: I would rather let the devil have the business than hold a candle to him in that way.

The outcome of the captain's white night was that he arose in the morning determined to do the right thing no matter what the personal loss might be. And besides there was just the chance that C. B. might die—another diabolical temptation to look to that solution of his difficulty as welcome—but if he recovered the perpetrators of the outrage should be punished, and the brave, innocent man protected. He went on deck as usual at sunrise for his coffee, and exchanged greetings with Mr. Winsloe, who reported that Mr. Merritt had not returned last night, and had indeed gone ashore without asking leave.

Then the captain said—

“ I know all about Merritt, the service he's been able to render excuses him from all breach of discipline. An' I gave him leave to stay all night. He's nursing my boat-steerer, who was nearly killed last night by your friend Pepe.”

Strive as Winsloe would, he could not help a momentary gleam of triumph in his eyes, and Captain Taber, keenly observant of him, saw it. The simmering wrath within him awoke and, growing pale with rage, he burst out—

“ Yes, I know that's pleasant intelligence to you, Winsloe, and I want to tell you right here that, though I don't believe for the honour of our name as Americans that you were mixed up in this infernal cowardly scheme to kill one of the best fellows that ever lived, I know you would have been glad to hear of his death or disablement or anything that would keep him out of this ship. I've been a bit of a cur myself over this business, though I never suspected it

before ; but I've got over that, thank God. If that chap gets well he's comin' back here as boat-steerer, an' if you or anybody else aboard dares to pick on him except in th' lawful way of discipline in case of his doin' wrong, you'll have to reckon with me. I never did play no favourites, nor I won't now. But as I don't want to spoil a good ship or a fairly good man (though y' ain't half as good as I thought ye was), I'll give ye yeer option : treat that man square, white man fashion or skip. I won't have ye in my ship if ye can't be a man."

Winsloe was beaten—let us hope that he felt ashamed—and he replied after a pause—

" Captain Taber, I own up, I ben goin' wrong. I don't love the feller a bit, but I can't gainsay that he's a good man, too good for me in fact. If I'd ben skipper I'd ha' give big money t' get rid of him, or I'd ha' driven him out. But I didn't try ner I wouldn't ha' tried, t' kill him, an' I thank ye for exoneratin' me from that. An' I'll put up with him an' try to get over my natural dislike fer a man whose whole life makes ours look bad by comparison. An' I'm ready to apologize for acting ugly t' you, Captain Taber, whom I've worked with and liked so long."

A hearty handshake was all that followed, but it spoke volumes. Then the skipper called his boat and went ashore, making straight for the store where he had left C. B. and Merritt the previous night. But long before he reached it he was aware of a huge concourse of natives gathered around it, and, wondering greatly what all the excitement was about, he pushed through the crowd and gained the store, to find the German proprietor in a state bordering on frenzy because his trade was being ruined, he said, nobody could get near the shore to do business.

Inside the captain found Merritt sitting by the side of the patient looking exceedingly dangerous.

Upon seeing the skipper Merritt's brow lightened a little but still he looked black, and when Captain Taber accosted him, inquiring after the welfare of the patient, he growled—

“He's off his head and no wonder, what with that mob outside and this infernal Dutchman fidgeting about in here 'cause of his half-cent trade. Let's get him aboard the ship, sir, at once, or he'll be worried to death, an' then I shall have to kill a few of these animals to ease my feelings.”

The skipper looked dubious at this proposition, and yet knowing how immense is the recuperative power of men like C. B. if left to nature's own restorative processes, he felt that probably Merritt was right. So at last he said—

“Look here, Merritt, go down to the boat and get aboard as quick as you can. Rig up a stretcher to carry him on an'——”

“Beg pardon, sir,” interrupted Merritt, “but they's plenty o' stuff here in the store to do that with, an' I can rig somethin' up in less than a quarter of the time it'd take to fetch it from the ship. An' whatever's to pay let me pay it, sir, if you will; it'd do me good to.”

“All right, all right,” assented the skipper testily; “you're right again as usual. Now I'll go an' have a yarn with the Dutchman an' see if I can't put him in a better humour. Hello, here's the doctor. Good mornin', doc.; your patient isn't anything to brag about this mornin', he's in a high fever, an' I'm not surprised after the way this gang has been yelling around here all night I'm told. So I'm goin' to shift him aboard the ship as soon as my fourth mate can rig up something to carry him on.”

"Now, my dear sir," interjected the doctor hastily, "you surely don't want to extinguish the feeble flicker of life, do you? If you move that man in his present condition, he'll die before sunset, now mark my words. But let me see him." And passing in the doctor examined the suffering man, shaking his head gravely at each new symptom. When he had concluded his examination, during which Merritt watched him as if prepared at a moment's notice to fall upon him and do him grievous bodily harm, he turned to the captain and said deprecatingly—

"Just as I told you, sir, to move him now must be fatal. He has a good sporting chance of life now; move him, and it's gone."

Merritt sprang to the captain's side and hissed, "Don't take no manner o' notice of him, sir. He don' know th' first thing about it. You know I'd rather die forty times than my chum should, an' I say that his only chance is to get him aboard. I'm willing to risk it, the rig is all ready, an' if you'll let me hire four o' these Kanakas, we'll have him out o' this an' inter a safe place 'thout him bein' a cent the worse for it."

"All right, Merritt," agreed the skipper; "I feel sure you're right."

"Thank you, captain," sneered the doctor; "my fee is fifteen dollars, which I'll trouble you for."

Out came the skipper's wallet on the instant and the money was paid. Not another word was exchanged between the pair, and the doctor strode off in high dudgeon.

Meanwhile Merritt had enlisted volunteers, and poor C. B. was lifted gently on to the improvised ambulance and carried down in the midst of a huge procession of natives, all looking as if they had lost

their dearest friend. With the tenderest care he was placed in the boat, and presently was laid in Merritt's cabin on board the ship with one of the hands on watch to fan him and keep off the flies, while Merritt went to break his long fast.

The captain had some difficulty in settling up with the proprietor of the store, and only succeeded in doing so by threatening him that if he did not accept the offer of five dollars for the use of his premises for the night, he would get nothing but by process of law. The money was then taken and they parted unfriends. Then the skipper, feeling considerably easier in his mind, went off to his friends of the night before and enjoyed a substantial breakfast, interesting his host, who was the American Consul, mightily in his recital of the stirring circumstances.

As soon as the meal was over, they went down to the calaboose and learned that the prisoners were in an exceedingly bad way bodily, and quite unlikely to be fit to stand their trial for some time to come. This intelligence decided the skipper on a course of action that had been hazily floating in his mind—he would ship three more harponeers (several had offered), make his season on the Japan grounds, leaving bonds for payment of the shares due to the offenders, and then call back again on his way south. In this resolve the Consul supported him heartily, and within an hour three more harponeers had been shipped, all of whom, strange to say, were Americans, who from some misfortune or another had got stranded in Oahu.

The rest of the business took very little time to clear up, and by midday all was in train for the departure of the ship, if only the authorities could be got to agree. This the Consul was able to manage by leaving the charge against the ill doers as only that

of a drunken brawl, and declaring that he held all funds necessary for payment of their fines and maintenance until they could be shipped away. So expeditiously were matters settled that at sunset that evening the *Eliza Adams* was under weigh, stealing out of the harbour westward bound for the coast of Japan, and her skipper bearing a lighter heart than he had done for a very long time as regarded the conditions of life on board of his ship.

When all was settled and shipshape the skipper paid a visit to C. B., finding to his amazement and delight that the patient had taken a long stride towards convalescence. He was sane and cool, and was eating with good relish some boiled rice and molasses with which his nurse was feeding him. So far from being any the worse for his removal in the morning he was demonstrably better, and when the captain sat down by his side and commenced to talk with him, he turned a bright and intelligent eye upon him and listened intently to what he had to say. The captain proceeded to tell him all that had occurred in the short time that had elapsed since the uproar of the previous night, but when he described the parlous condition of the Portuguese aggressors and explained that they had been left behind in prison, C. B. looked away sad, saying—

“ I do pity those poor fellows with all my heart, sir. I can't in the least understand why they hated me so, and, of course, I feel very angry that they should have waylaid me as they did, but I expect it was the drink that did it. I really don't believe they would have done it if they had been sober.”

The skipper gave a dissatisfied grunt as he replied—

“ Don't, don't ye? Well, if I should be asked what I think, I should say they had planned the whole

business long before we got in, an' that they was only waiting their chance to get you out of the way once for all. But now I hope we'll have a happy as well as a smart ship. You've only got to hurry up and get better, because I can't have you laid up now, ye know. We may raise whale at any minute between here and the cruisin' grounds, an' I know it wouldn't be good for you to be lyin' here while we're havin' all the fun. So give your mind to gettin' well."

The skipper had hardly gone when Merritt appeared, and sending the attendant forrard, proceeded to make C. B. comfortable, renew the dressings on his wounds, etc., with infinite patience and tenderness, looking all the time as grim and savage as if he were meditating murder. At last C. B., laying his hand affectionately upon his friend's arm, said—

"Thank you so much, dear man, for making me so comfortable, but why are you looking so mad? I wish you wouldn't, it grieves me to see that terrible look in your eyes."

"All right," growled Merritt, "I'll try and look as pleasant as my ugly mug will let me, for your sake. But when I see how you've been served, I can't help feeling sorry that I didn't put all them Portuguese dogs beyond the possibility of ever doin' any more harm. Anyhow, I got one consolation, they'll probably die as it is. An' if I only knew they would, I'd be easy in my mind."

"Oh, chum, chum, don't talk like that, you don't know how it hurts me. If I thought you were joking I could smile, dreadful though the words sound. But I know you mean every word you say, and I feel so sorry because—because I love you and wish you knew how good a thing, how happy a thing it is to forgive."

Merritt stared blankly at his patient for a few

moments and then snorted, "Forgive, hay! Yes, I'd forgive 'em when they was fixed so's they couldn't do any more harm. But if forgivin' 'em means lettin' 'em loose again to go on the same as before an' murder some chap that's worth a whole regiment of 'em, why then I calls that such silly nonsense that I won't talk about it, not even to you. Never mind, I've often wondered what good I was in the world and now I know—to look after a great soft-hearted baby like you, who'd almost lie down and let anybody walk over ye an' thank 'em for doin' it. But that's enough now, you go to sleep an' get better more quicker."

CHAPTER XIV

A Momentous Passage

THENCEFORWARD the speed with which the wounded man got better was marvellous except to those who knew how the body of man under primitive conditions and perfectly healthy can recover from what in civilization must be fatal injuries. I have alluded to this in one of the earliest chapters in dealing with the accident to Philip, C. B.'s father, although his injuries were far less dangerous than those that his son had just sustained. But in four days after the ship had left Honolulu, C. B. was able to come on deck without assistance, and to take short walks up and down the deck until pain within, along the track of the newly-healed wound, warned him to rest.

As the captain had hoped, the ship was now the abode of peace, as far as could be seen, and there was perfect harmony between all hands, even Mr. Winsloe having regained his original placidity of temper. All that now seemed in doubt was the capacity of the new harponeers, who, however, as far as their ship work went, shaped thoroughly well. So day after day slipped away and the vessel drew gradually near the turbulent Japan grounds without as yet a single spout having been seen.

The captain was just beginning to get fretty,

for his average was falling faster than he liked, when without intimating that such was his intention C. B. turned up one morning in the gravy-eye watch and told Merritt that he had come to stay. He was a bit trembly and weak still, but felt no pain whatever from his wounds, which had perfectly healed, and he therefore argued that he would be much better at work than lolling about. Merritt fully agreed and at first break of dawn C. B. climbed aloft into the main crow's-nest, Merritt, whose lookout it was with him, staying behind to finish a new lance-cap he had been making. C. B. was somewhat surprised to find how the climb made him pant, forgetting the recent strain upon his bodily resources, but got into the rings and, leaning over, began to feast his eyes upon the glory and majesty of the sunrise, nowhere more impressive than when seen from such a vantage point as this.

He fell into a reverie while gazing, thinking of the splendours of the New Jerusalem, when he was rudely aroused by the mellow call of Merritt far below him "Blo-o-o-o-w." He gazed wildly around endeavouring to see where the sighted whale could be, but it was not until looking down to see if possible in which direction Merritt was looking that he saw to his intense chagrin that there were four whales almost alongside the ship. Then in accordance with custom he added his call to Merritt's, and the two at the fore joined in the long minor cry.

Of course the captain was immediately on deck, and at his sharp incisive orders the whole of the ship's company flew into a state of violent activity. Then suddenly his voice was heard pealing upward, "Way down from aloft all but Christmas! You stop there and look after the signallin'; I'm goin' t'

take the boat." It was a bitter pill for C. B. to swallow in spite of his certainty that the skipper was acting in the kindest and most thoughtful way. But he was so keen upon his work and so anxious to show how completely fit he was that for a little while he felt quite unhappy. Then as the boats pushed off and set sail he recovered himself and remembered how important were the duties he had to perform.

For he was now in sole charge of the ship, being entrusted with the task of keeping her to windward of the school with the aid of the shipkeepers, that is the carpenter and cooper, cook and steward and four hands. There are also many well understood signals to be made by manipulating the upper sails, signals which are eagerly watched by those in charge of boats whose sphere of vision is very limited as compared with that of a man elevated so far above the sea as a ship's topgallant mast-head. These signals tell of the whale's sounding or re-appearance, of the direction in which he heads, in fact, all his or their movements, and of course the watcher is enabled to follow the progress of the work and regulate movements of his ship thereby. Consequently it was no sinecure post that C. B. had been appointed to, but rather one that would test to the full his newly gained acquaintance with the art of ship handling.

As he stood there watching the departure of the four boats, which from his lofty position looked like tiny specks of white dotting the glittering surface of the sea, he could not help passing mentally in review the events of the past few months. He had recently had many opportunities for introspection and reverie, but somehow all his musings had been mixed up, unmethodical and leading

nowhere. Now, however, realizing as he did the novelty of his position, he was led to trace backward step by step the way by which he had been brought thither, and the recollections affected him deeply. A strange sense of exultation seized him, delight in that he had been so signally favoured of God in all his undertakings, gratitude that he had been kept from falling, but never once did he feel puffed up with the false idea that it was his strength of character, his goodness that had kept him.

That of course was owing to the simple, sensible, Christian training which he had received, drawn direct from the fount of Infinite wisdom. That teaching had always been valued by him, but never more than now when he could see whither its results had led him. And then he thought of the miserable men that had assailed him, had hated him without a cause, and remembering how barren their lives must have been of the advantages he had enjoyed, his heart swelled with a great pity for them.

All this time he watched the boats receding, spreading out as they went, and deeming it time to get a little nearer to them gave the order to keep her away for a little as with the stiff breeze blowing the ship could sail faster than the boats. He watched the whales settle, gave the signal that caused the boats to heave to—hove his own ship to, and waited intently watching until they rose again to his great joy quite close to the boats. It was truly wonderful to watch from that height the stern conflict going on, where the combatants were apparently reduced in size to pigmies and specks. So I should imagine would a battle between two armies look from a balloon or a great hunting scene with lions and tigers as the quarry, except

that here there was nothing to obstruct the view. Presently he saw all four boats starting off in different directions without sails or the use of oars, and he knew that each one had gotten fast to a whale. Now he began to pray for guidance as to what he should do in the event of the whales running like that for long, since the simple rule of keeping to windward would hardly suffice. Then he noticed that one of the boats was being towed by its whale directly towards the ship at such a speed that the monster was raising a great bow wave almost like that ahead of one of our bluff bowed tramps going full speed.

But also to his amazement and almost consternation he noticed that the fast whale was accompanied by two loose whales, one on either side, who were evidently determined to keep up with him, but whether with the notion of helping him or not it was impossible to tell. C. B. had heard of such things, and had put them aside as we often do the matters we do not know whether to believe or not, but which certainly appear to us incredible. It does not do, however, to be too sceptical with regard to what is done or attempted by whales, because we may thereby lose some hints which may be most useful to us in an emergency.

Now he saw that the swiftly coming craft was his boat, and that the skipper was in the bow. Nearer, nearer, nearer she came, and C. B.'s pulses quickened as he noted they were heading straight for his broadside. "Hard a starboard," he cried, "let her come right up. Let go starboard main and cro'jack braces, haul all after yards round." And as the ship swung up into the wind, bringing the advancing boat head on to her, C. B. saw Merritt fling the turns off the loggerhead, letting the boat

fly by only a foot or two clear of the stem. And the ship slowly filled round to the starboard tack, C. B. filling the fore yards as she did so. If any sailor objects that he never heard of tacking ship this way, let me tell him that many acts of seamanship are performed or were performed in whalers that not only were never heard of, but would have been impossible anywhere else, just as it would be impossible for many of our long lean four-posters to back and fill up a river like a Geordie brig on a good flood.

Keeping his eager eyes upon the scene below him, C. B. noted that rapid as the whale's progress had been on the surface he was now moving very sluggishly downwards and so he turned his attention to the other boats which he found were scattered widely, but all three evidently having some trouble with their whales. He became very anxious as to his position and was about to keep away again when he saw that the whale his skipper was fast to was coming up at a great rate. And when he reached the surface he was still accompanied by the other two whales, who seemed determined to put every obstacle in the way of his being killed that they could. Both Captain Taber and Mr. Merritt were fully alive to the danger of injuring a "loose" whale while fast to another one, but something had to be done, so Captain Taber fired a bomb lance at one of the loose whales which was between him and the whale he was fast to. C. B. heard the crack of the shot and the boom of the exploding bomb, and then saw, just as if a submarine mine had gone off, a tremendous upheaval in the water where it was evident that the intruder had got his mortal wound, and had gone immediately into his death flurry.

There was no question as to the danger of the situation, danger, too, which no amount of energy or skill could avert. The three huge beasts, apparently maddened by pain and fright, and mixed up with the line, which was a mass of entanglement, fairly surrounded the boat. Even if she had not been threatened with being smashed every moment by the writhings and plungings of the mighty creatures, it was obvious that she was only kept afloat by incessant baling, owing to the immense amount of water which was hurled over her in the struggle.

The apparently inevitable end came soon after C. B. had shouted from his perch an order to man the spare boat and keep her in instant readiness for lowering. One of the whales rose by the side of the hemmed-in boat with widely extended jaws, fell over upon it sideways, at the same time clashing those awful jaws together. Boatmen and whales disappeared for a moment in a wallow of crimson flecked foam. C. B. waited no longer. Snatching at a backstay, he glided to the deck, shouted as soon as his feet touched the rail—

“Take hold, Chips, an’ keep as near me as you can.”

Into the boat and with a whirr of the falls they were off, not a moment too soon. Two whales were dead and a third was still moving about as if unable to leave the spot; but clinging to fragments of the destroyed boat were the crew, all hurt and hurt badly, and the skipper, sustained by Merritt, looked almost as if he had fought his last fight.

Disregarding entirely the urgency of securing the whales, all the men were saved and brought on board with utmost speed. Then it was found that three of them were absolutely helpless as far

as work was concerned, while the skipper needed instant attention if his life was to be saved. Merritt, though sorely bruised and fatigued, took upon himself this duty, and with C. B. to help him they made an examination of the captain's body. They found that his left arm was broken in four places, most of the flesh was torn and lacerated on that side of his body, his left thigh was out and his left foot crushed. Yet so great was the man's vitality, and also because there had been but little loss of blood, that the good fellow was really not so nearly gone as might have been expected.

"Now, boy," said Merritt, "you got your hands fuller'n ever you had 'em. Git on deck an' sen' me the cook and steward, an' tell 'em t' bring a handy billy with 'em. I must get that thigh in fust off. Then you gotter get hold o' the' whales. Get 'em alongside; they's two hundred barrel on 'em, I do believe, and then dig out fer the other fellows. They'll be all right, I guess, fer I've noticed that things like these scarcely ever gets too bad for a *man* to handle. Now *git*." And C. B. got, climbed to his lofty perch again, finding however that when he reached there he had a strange giddiness come over him for a few moments. He sent up a swift prayer for strength under his heavy burden, remembering how recent had been his great weakness.

Then he sprang up like a giant, and shouted the necessary orders to bring the ship down on the whales, which were lying almost side by side. He did not want to lower a boat, so conned the ship with utmost care, and when he headed straight for them he had the yards backed to deaden her way a little. Then taking an iron prepared with an ordinary towline attached, he darted it as she came near enough, and hauled one whale alongside at

the same time as one of the shipkeepers performed a similar feat on the whale which lay at the opposite side of the ship.

Technicalities about any business are bound to become tiresome, no matter how interesting the business may be in itself, or I would explain the enormous amount of labour and skill expended upon getting these two whales properly secured by a length of chain round the small of their bodies and a hawser attached to that. A small cut would explain it better than a page of letterpress. All hands worked nobly (ah, how nobly do the rank and file often work for honourable reasons, knowing that no recognition ever comes their way), and at last the two vast bodies were well secured astern, and C. B. had now to solve the problem of getting his ship to where the other boats were waiting for him, with those two enormous masses hanging to his stern.

Somewhat wearily he mounted to the crow's-nest again, only remembering as he did so that in the excitement of his manifold duties he had forgotten to eat, and it was now nearly noon. So he hailed the deck and ordered all hands to snatch what bites they could, but be ready to trim sails as needed. He received the usual answer, and went on with his scrutiny of the vast blazing expanse spread out before him. At last to his great relief he located the three boats, each certainly fast to a whale, and as far as he could judge with the whales dead. Fortunately, I had almost said providentially, but remembered C. B.'s persistent efforts to keep his ship to windward, the boats were all well to loo'ard, which simplified his task considerably.

But oh! the weary, weary wait of it all. A whaleship's best gait is slow, with two whales towing

it is hardly perceptible, and presently with a delightful start, as if he had made an original discovery, C. B. decided that he might relieve himself of his duty without any harm or hindrance, having set the course. So he came down and was astonished to find how the food set before him revived him and made him take quite a roseate view of difficulties which a few minutes before seemed almost unsurmountable.

When he had been thus refreshed he gave orders for all cutting gear to be got ready, knowing that there would be plenty of time and that the hands were all rested. Then he went below, where he found his skipper bandaged and swathed until he looked like a mummy sleeping soundly with only a light flush on his face, and Merritt, a half emptied plate of food by his side, sitting almost bolt upright, fast asleep, but looking as ghastly as a dead man. But then with people of that complexion you never can tell. They are not to be judged by ordinary rules at all.

Feeling that in both cases the men were better without interference on his part he went on deck again, and seeing the carpenter and cooper standing by, he went up to them and said—

“The captain and Mr. Merritt are both doing well, they’re fast asleep. Have you had your dinner? They both nodded and he then went on, “I’ll look after the ship now if you’d both like a little rest, for I reckon it’ll be another hour before we are up to the first boat, and it will be hard enough for us all then.”

The two old tradesmen looked at him and then at each other, finally muttering—

“I guess we’ll keep you company. What you can do we can, and anyhow you ain’t half a bad chap.” That was all, but it meant a good deal.

Now of the subsequent proceedings in picking

up the three whales I need not write, except to say that as soon as Mr. Winsloe got on board C. B. handed the control of the ship over to him with a full report of what had happened since he had left the skipper's company. The story of the next week is just one of savage unremitting toil, only to be compared to the way in which men work for the saving of their lives. Mr. Winsloe developed in a direction that C. B. had never suspected him of, he became a bowelless taskmaster, apparently needing no rest himself nor imagining that anybody else could want any.

Merritt took his place in the fighting line the next day, apparently none the worse for his awful experiences, although a keen observer might have seen in his sunken cheeks and hollow eyes indelible signs of the great struggle. But the poor skipper was in evil case. Only the natural vigour of his constitution and the tremendous force of his will pulled him through. For four days he lay alternating between stupor and delirium, never left by night or day, of course, entirely unconscious of how the great business of the voyage was being carried on without him.

When at last he emerged into the land of sense Winsloe was with him, having snatched a few minutes from the work to come down and have a look at his suffering chief. And when he found that the captain was sane again he felt a great lump in his throat, a weight lifted from his chest, for with all his undoubted faults he loved the skipper and would have felt his loss, in spite of the immediate benefit to himself, as a blow for which there could be no adequate compensation. Captain Taber raised his sadly attenuated hand and groped for that of Mr. Winsloe, saying feebly—

“ Well, Winsloe, how goes it ? Are all the other boats back ? ”

“ Yes, sir,” replied Winsloe, “ and nobody hurt to speak of but yourself. But you’ve had a pretty bad time, sir, an’ I guess you don’t know that it’s the thick end of a week since you was brought aboard. You’ll be glad to know, an’ I think it’ll do you more good than all the doctors’ stuff in the world, that we’ve cut in five whale, an’ I’m figurin’ that there’s between four an’ five hundred bar’l of oil very nearly ready to run down. So we ain’t done so mighty bad after all.”

The effect upon the wounded man was magical. His eyes sparkled, and he even made one effort to rise, but Winsloe put out a restraining hand. “ Well,” the captain cried in quite a strong voice, “ I feel like shoutin’ ‘ Glory Hallelujah ! ’ If that ain’t great ! But say, you ain’t told me how long this job took ye ? ”

“ It’s just seven days to an hour since we started, an’ pretty late in the day it was, for Christmas was mighty slow in getting down to us, bein’ handicapped by your two whale——”

“ Two whale,” almost yelled the skipper. “ D’ye mean t’ say that we saved two ? ”

“ Yes, sir, that’s a true bill. I ain’t heard all about it, but Merritt can tell ye, or Christmas. They was on in that piece, I was about six mile to looard, an’ wonderin’ pretty bad what all the waitin’ meant. An’ before I go, sir, as I don’t think you orter be tried too much, I wanter say that these yer new harponeers of ours is the whole thing. I don’t want no better men, an’ I ain’t goin’ t’ wear mournin’ fer Pepe and Louis any longer. Both at strikin’ whale and steerin’ boat they’re the limit, an’ as fer work, well, they suit me, an’ I ain’t the

easiest man to please in the matter o' cuttin' in an' tryin' out. Now do try and get a sleep agen, sir, an' don't put in any time worryin', because everythin's goin' jist as it orte." And he slipped on deck.

But in spite of the mate's cheery words he was far from satisfied with the condition of things. Both Merritt and C. B., though neither of them made any complaint, showed unmistakable signs of the enormous strain that had been put upon them lately, C. B. especially, who was, as we know, hardly convalescent when the pressure began. Besides that, the other members of the captain's boat's crew were hardly fit to go on much longer, although with rare fortitude they had stuck to their task until work was almost done, and then were given lighter jobs—in fact, the general routine of the ship was relaxed in view of the recent great effort. So when Mr. Winsloe took his usual rough sights for position and found that they were only about a couple of days' sail with the present wind from the Bonin Islands, he determined to steer for them, and in the absence of any positive command on the part of the captain, to go in and take a few days' rest.

And as, in any case, he was not going out of his way, he shaped his course for Peel Island and carried sail to the fair wind then blowing, with the object of making as much headway as possible, although under ordinary circumstances, being now really in the great northern haunt of the cachalot, he would have been in the usual cruising trim which I have described as being pursued on the offshore ground. But much to his relief the captain, though still remaining very weak, kept his faculties and a clear head, so that when Winsloe broached the subject to him of making for Port Lloyd in order to give the

crew and himself a chance to recover, he gave the plan an emphatic sanction. "For," he said, "I ain't as young as I uster be, an' a smash up such as I've had ain't calculated to make me feel any spryer. And although I've got no shadow of doubt as to your ability t' carry on, Winsloe, t' the end of the chapter, I really should feel happier with the kellick down in the ten fathom hole. Moreover, tain't as if we ain't earned a rest. That last catch of ours hez pulled our average up bully."

It was therefore with a light heart that Winsloe saw the bold outlines of Peel Island standing out against the clear blue of the sky on the third morning after the above conversation, and he noted with much satisfaction how cheerful all hands seemed to be at the prospect of a few days in harbour anywhere, whether it was possible to get any of the so-called luxuries usually craved by sailors or not. Only two of the crew had been there before, one of them being Merritt, and he showed interest almost amounting to enthusiasm as he described the wonders of the unique harbour to C. B. It was also, he said, almost like his native place to him, for there he would certainly find some people of the same strange mixture of races as he was himself, Chinese, Japanese, Spaniards, Italians, Kanakas, and Americans having settled in the strange place at different times, and their descendants being now fairly numerous.

Captain Taber being still too weak to be moved with safety, and Mr. Winsloe never having been into the place before, Mr. Merritt became pilot, and C. B., who was well able to criticize, was charmed at the consummate ease with which his chum took the vessel in under all sail in spite of the baffling winds, which necessitated constant attention to

the braces and halyards. Port Lloyd is nothing but the crater of a mighty volcano, extinct ages ago, and by some awful convulsion of nature sunk down low enough for one breach in it to form the entrance with a general depth of over twenty fathoms, while the remaining sides of the crater tower up to a height of seven or eight hundred feet. As might be expected there are many reefs and ledges within the harbour, but they are easily seen from aloft when coming in, and the central anchorage, into which a vessel must needs be warped by kedges, is a natural dock with an almost level bottom of ten fathoms depth, secure from every wind that blows and with splendid holding ground.

Into this beautiful nook the *Eliza Adams* was taken and secured to the immense satisfaction of all on board, and especially to Mr. Winsloe, who now felt able to take that rest which he badly needed, and, as there were several whaleships there, to get advice from other commanders about the state of his captain's health. Besides, it was an ideal place for all those things that a ship like a whaler needs, good water, plenty of fruit and vegetables, and swarms of excellent fish.

The sails were hardly furled before the captains of three of the whaleships, the *Phoenix*, the *James Arnold*, and the *Coral* were alongside and coming on board were received by Mr. Winsloe with great delight. They heard of the adventure which had laid Captain Taber low with grave faces, and after Mr. Winsloe had first ascertained that Captain Taber was fit to receive them they descended to his cabin and greeted him with that deep cordiality which used to be so marked a feature among these men, brothers in arms, knowing and respecting one another from a thorough knowledge of the

high qualities that went to make up the complete whaleman.

But when they saw the wreck of their old friend, and had made a careful examination of his injuries, they decided that although it was nothing short of a miracle that he had made so good a recovery, it was hopeless his attempting to finish the voyage. It was evident, they said, that he must for at least a year to come have complete rest and immunity from worry, and they gave it as their decided opinion that he should give up the ship to Winsloe and go home. And although they did not say so to him, they were also of opinion that George Taber would never again be fit to command a ship in the great and strenuous business of sperm whaling.

CHAPTER XV

Farewell to the Ship

IT would be difficult if not impossible to convey to the reader the consternation that fell upon Captain Taber's mind when the decision of his fellows were made known to him. How he fought against, not only their sentence, but his own convictions, for during the long hours that he had lain there sensible that the strength and vigour that he once possessed had gone from him and gave no sign of returning, he had been compelled to acknowledge that at last he had, as he put it, come up against a difficulty that he could neither get around nor leap over. And as soon as they were gone, he turned his face to the bulkhead and shed the bitter tears of a strong soul compelled to admit complete defeat.

And then came a gleam of comfort. In his dire distress of mind he thought of C. B., the gentle Christian man, who without making any special effort had twined round his heart strings, who through great and undeserved trials had still retained his serenity of soul, and he felt that here indeed was a man that he could turn to in his hour of need, one who would be able to impart to him some of that inner calm that seemed proof against all outward disturbance however great. Man fashion he hardly thought of the source of that calm, as we enjoy the warmth of a fire in winter without feeling

grateful to the elements which make the fire possible. But for that we may not blame him, since he is in this respect so completely at one with the great majority of mankind.

A dim indefinite purpose was shaping itself in his mind, but he did not try to bring it into concrete form, he just laid back upon his pillow exhausted and went to sleep, being indeed almost made worse by the mental strain of the last few hours. And Mr. Winsloe, coming down softly to inquire after his welfare, seeing that he was resting, tip-toed up again. He, the mate, was quite insensibly bettered by this series of happenings, for although, like all other mates, he had ambitions, longed to command a ship, he actually forgot all about the possible benefit to himself, forgot the strong words addressed to him by the skipper in Oahu, forgot all his previous bitterness against C. B. in sorrow for the sympathy for his sorely stricken friend. As yet, however, he had refused to contemplate the possibility of Captain Taber becoming a helpless invalid for life. Terrible though he knew his injuries to be, he had been accustomed to seeing so many what we should call miraculous recoveries, that the fact of his skipper being alive and his wounds healed seemed to him the best evidence that presently he would resume command as if nothing had happened.

None of the visiting skippers had said anything to him about the decision they had come to, so that at the most he only contemplated an enforced holiday for the skipper on shore here while he took the ship for a cruise and came back with a big catch of oil to find the skipper awaiting him in the very prime and vigour of health. These ideas of his were to receive a rude shock that very afternoon.

While all hands were quietly busy and a party

ashore were filling casks with water, the soft musical cry of "Sail ho!" was raised. And round the North Head came one of the dandies of the high seas, a British corvette. She had just paid a visit to this out-of-the-way place in the course of a surveying cruise, because—well, because it is necessary in the interests of the world's commerce that British men-o'-war shall thus patrol the seas and record their observations, an immense duty imposed upon the British Navy which is all too often forgotten by its calumniators, and those who clamour for its starvation and eventual abolition. Poor little one-idea'd men, what a pity it is that their power for harm isn't limited as is their power for good.

She had not been at anchor very long before Captain Swift of the *Coral*, deputed by his brother-captains, boarded her and begged that her surgeon would have the goodness to visit the *Eliza Adams* with him, and give an opinion upon the state of her suffering captain. With that ready courtesy so characteristic of British Naval officers, the request was immediately complied with, and presently Mr. Winsloe saw approaching the *Coral's* boat with the captain of the *Coral* and a Naval officer, who on mounting the side was introduced to him as Doctor Devine of the British warship *Fame*. Informed of their errand, Mr. Winsloe gravely led the way below, where the doctor made an exhaustive examination of Captain Taber, at the conclusion of which, and after hearing the history of the accident, he gave it as his opinion that it was hardly short of miraculous that Captain Taber was alive at all, but that he certainly would never be able to pursue his calling again.

Captain Taber then, in a firm voice, requested

the doctor to tell him how long he had to live. "That, my dear sir, is a question that I would answer you as frankly as you have asked it were it in my power. But I cannot tell. There have been most extensive internal injuries in addition to those that are apparent, and what their effect may be in the future is a matter of conjecture only. You may live to a green old age with great care and attention, and you may only live a week or two. All I can tell you I have told you, and I should certainly advise you to relinquish your command at once and proceed homeward by easy stages and in as much comfort as you can get. I am deeply sorry that I can say nothing more hopeful and pleasant, but I can see that you are a man who is well fortified in the best possible way against any fortune. Good-bye, sir, and may you have a pleasant and easy journey home." And the genial doctor was taken back to his ship with a story for the wardroom that attracted the deepest attention from his fellows.

He had been gone but a very short time when Captain Taber, having made up his mind, sent for Winsloe and said—

"Now, my dear fellow, I'm going to hand the ship over to you, and hope with all my heart that you'll have a rattling good time for the rest of the cruise. Everything is in order, and you know quite as much about the affairs of the ship as I do, so there is no need for me to worry you or myself with going over them. Next, I want you to send C. B. to me. I feel that as I cannot travel alone there is no one to whom I could more safely entrust myself than him, and I want to arrange with him."

Winsloe signified assent, and going on deck passed the word for C. B., telling him that the captain

wished to see him. C. B. obeyed on the instant, and seated himself at the captain's side at his request.

"Christmas," said the suffering man impressively, "the doctor has confirmed what my friends the captains of the other ships have told me, that I am done, my career as a whaling skipper is over, and I am bound to agree with them; for I mustn't betray the interests of my owners by spoiling the ship's voyage. They have also told me that the sooner I get home with as little exertion as may be, the better chance I have of life. Now, I can't travel alone, and I sent for you to learn whether you are willing to take the burden of an invalid broken man on your young shoulders, and give up your chance of making a good pay-day here. Will you come with me and look after me for such small pay as I am able to offer you, nothing in comparison with what your services are worth; but I am a poor man, and I have a wife and three youngsters in Fairhaven, who will need every cent that I can scrape together for the lean years I see before me?"

It was some little time before C. B. could answer, for, like all real Christians, he was exceedingly tender-hearted, and the sad spectacle of the suffering man before him touched him very deeply. But he recovered himself and answered—

"Captain Taber, I thought you knew how little store my people set by money. I did not come with you with any idea of making money, only that I felt that I must see the world and at the same time earn my own living. And if by doing what you ask I can repay your kindness to me, money need not be mentioned between us as long as I can get food enough to keep me alive and clothing such as is necessary. I shall be glad and

proud to serve you with all my ability, and though I may be clumsy at first I hope to learn quickly."

"Ah, my dear fellow," faintly murmured the skipper, "there is far more than just body service I want from you. I want to learn the secret of your quiet happiness and I believe you can teach me. I've watched and wondered at you for a long time, envying you the peace that I saw you always enjoying, the power of living blamelessly in the midst of us ruffians and yet doing your work with the best of us. Perhaps the Almighty has given me this stroke in mercy because He saw that I would not give myself time to learn His ways without it. I don't know, but He knows I'm willing to learn now, and with the prospect of having you with me I am quite resigned to what I at first felt would break my heart. So that's settled. I'll make inquiries now as to the method of getting from here to the States, to San Francisco, and thence across the Continent home, and as soon as I find out I'll let you know. Now, I'm very tired again and I think I could sleep a little. God bless you, my boy, and I thank you with all my heart."

As C. B. left the cabin to go on deck again he met Merritt, and one glance at his face gave him a feeling of terrible compunction. A flood of recollections rushed into his mind, the stern hatred and bitter jealousy that Merritt had shown to any one who he suspected of coming between him and the man he loved with an affection resembling that of the tigress for her cubs. What would *he* say? More painful and important question still, what would he do? In this trouble he went to his unfailing resource. Sitting down on a spar in a dark corner he buried his face in his hands, and prayed for

guidance in this most difficult matter, and for poor Merritt. He felt a keen pang at the thought that he had never been able to return the affection the fourth mate had lavished upon him in anything like the same measure. He had loved Merritt only as he had loved the skipper and a little more than he had loved any other member of the ship's company, the only difference being that he had cherished a belief that he had been the means of humanizing that stern and vengeful nature by becoming the object of its fierce affection.

He lifted his head refreshed by his communion, and there, quite near to him, sat Merritt, having stolen up noiselessly. As soon as he looked up Merritt edged towards him and said in a hoarse, constrained voice—

“What's the matter with ye, chum? Ain't ye feelin' good?”

“Oh yes, thanks,” replied C. B. somewhat wearily, “but I'm worried about you. I don't know how you'll feel when I'm gone.”

There was a painful pause for at least a minute and then Merritt said—

“Gone! Then I was right. I thought I heard the skipper say somethin' to ye 'bout comin' with him to look after him. So you're goin', an' I shan't see ye any more. Well, they's one thing about it, you've softened me a lot, my boy, I k'n tell ye that; for if I was now as I have ben, I'd a killed you fust an' myself after, I wouldn't a ben separated from you. Now I don't feel able to say a crooked word t' ye. But I feel all gone in here, an' I know for certain that I shall peg out mighty quick after you're gone. I hain't got nothing t' live fur an' I don't want t' live anyhow. When are ye goin'?”

“I don't know,” answered C. B.; “it depends

upon the skipper getting a passage, I suppose ; but don't, chum, don't talk like that."

"Like what?" inquired Merritt harshly.

"About dying because I'm going away. It sounds awful; I can't understand it."

"Very well, I won't because ye wish it, but as t' yeer understandin' it—how should ye? Never mind. Jest ask yer God t' make it as easy fer me as He can an' keep me tame, fer I feel as if I'd like to die fighting, run amok like a Malay. And for your sake I'd rather not do that." And he rose and walked abruptly away, leaving C. B. bewildered and full of grief, yet on the whole relieved that Merritt had taken the tidings so quietly. And he lifted a heart full of thanksgiving to God.

Early the next morning Mr. Winsloe was considerably startled by seeing a smart boat from the *Fame* coming alongside, and going to the gangway, he received a gentleman in uniform, who introduced himself as Captain Silchester of the *Fame*.

"I would like, sir," said he, "to see your captain, who I regret to hear is so seriously ill." And Mr. Winsloe immediately led the officer below.

Captain Taber was awake and glad to see his visitor, who, after exchanging compliments, proceeded to state the object of his visit. "My doctor has told me of your sad condition, and I have come to offer you a passage in my ship to Yokohama, which is our next port of call. From thence you will be able to get a steamer to San Francisco."

Captain Taber smiled wanly and said—

"You are most kind, sir; you have greatly relieved my mind. I really did not see how I was going to get in the track of a fairly rapid passage home without wasting more of my owners' time, which I am very loth to do. But I have a personal

friend and attendant who is going with me to look after me in my helplessness, can you extend your hospitality to him?" he inquired anxiously.

"Oh, I see no difficulty in that," breezily answered the British captain; "in fact, I anticipated something of the sort and so was prepared for it. But will you be able to come on board to-morrow, for we sail in the afternoon?"

"Oh yes," eagerly assented the skipper, "my preparations are practically all made. And now, sir, if you'll allow me I'll send for my friend, who is one of the finest fellows that ever God made, and let you see him." And blowing a whistle that hung by his side the steward appeared. "Tell Christmas I want him," ordered the skipper.

"Aye, aye, sir," responded the steward, and in a couple of minutes C. B. stood before them.

In as short a time the skipper had explained matters to Captain Silchester, who greeted C. B. warmly and said—

"I believe I have seen you before when you were a boy of about ten. My visit to Norfolk Island in one of Her Majesty's schooners is one of the happiest recollections of my life. Your father's name, I believe, is Philip Adams?"

C. B.'s face brightened as he gladly answered, "Yes, sir, and did you meet my beautiful mother?"

Captain Silchester smiled at the eager, loving question and replied, "Yes, I had that honour and privilege, and I congratulate you upon your parents, young man. They are, I should say, the very salt of the earth. Well, I must not hinder you, sir," to the captain; "you'll have much to set in order, and I shall expect you on board sometime before 4 p.m. Good-bye." And turning sharply he hastened on deck to avoid being thanked again.

But he was in no hurry, for once on deck he charmed Mr. Winsloe by asking to be shown over the ship and have her strange appliances explained to him, showing so much interest and appreciation that Winsloe was delighted and when he had gone, said to Spurrell, "Well, if all the Britishers was like that one I shouldn't have no quarrel with them, I'm dead sure of that."

"Ah," said Spurrell, "there's some good Britishers, but there's an awful lot of shysters. Still, there's good and bad of all sorts, I s'pose, and Britishers ain't the worst by any odds."

Then the whistle blew and Winsloe hurried aft to find the skipper quite excited at the near prospect of beginning his journey home. It took but little time to acquaint the mate with the British captain's courteous offer, and then, with C. B.'s aid, the preparations for departure were begun. Neatly and methodically everything belonging to the skipper was packed, except his charts and navigational books, all of which he left to Winsloe. And so swiftly was the work done that by the time the skipper was wearied, that is in about an hour, everything was practically ready, and the two men left him to sleep again.

As they went softly on deck Mr. Winsloe said, "Well, Christmas, I needn't ask you to do your best for the skipper, because I believe that no one could or would do better than you. I've never been able to like ye, for yeer too goody goody for me. But I'm free to admit that if I'd a had ten thousand men to pick and choose from, I'd have chosen you; this sort o' thing's right in your line. I s'pose your packing won't take long?"

"No, sir," cheerily answered C. B., "five minutes 'll see me through; but I'd like if may to go forrard and say good-bye to the boys. I'm very fond of them

all, and I hope none of them has got anything against me. I'd be very sorry to leave any hard thoughts of me behind."

"Oh, certainly," said the mate, "go an' hold a prayer meetin' if ye like, I'm sure I don't care now. I can't say that I saw any signs of yer wantin' t' do such a thing before, but if I had I should have stopped it, for I don't want a crew too tender-hearted t' kill a whale in this business. There, get along, boy, an' make the most of yeer time."

C. B. felt that he hardly understood the mate's curious remarks, but he was glad of the permission, and going forrard he slipped down into the dark triangular space where the crew lived, a funny abode as shore-people would think for thirty-two men to spend all their leisure time in for nearly four years. To his modest surprise he was welcomed as if he had been an admiral, every man trying to show him some attention. And when all had settled down and had riveted their attention on him he said—

"Boys, I'm going to leave you, to look after the poor skipper on his long journey home. But I felt as if I couldn't go without coming into your midst, and telling you how thankful I am to have got on so well with all of you. I feel that I haven't done my duty by you in one respect: I might have tried to tell you something about the God I love, I might have tried to show you how much He loves every one of you and would, if you would let Him, make up to you the loss as you think it of most of the good things that people have ashore.

"As it's too late to do that now I'll ask you to forgive me for not doing it before, for being so selfish as to enjoy my communion with Him and not try to get others to share it. And if you'll let me I'll kneel down in the midst of you here and pray that

you may all learn from him direct, how good He is in all His ways and how not one of you is forgotten by Him." And without any further preliminary C. B. fell on his knees on the black planks, and said—

"Dear Father God, bless the good shipmates I'm leaving. They come from all parts of Thy world, but whether they know Thee or not, whether any one has ever spoken to them about Thee or not, they are all Thy well beloved children. Show Thyself to them in all Thy love, keep them in the hollow of Thy hand at all times, give them the assurance that Thou art their Father, and that Thy dear Son Jesus Christ is their Saviour. Bless all my dear shipmates, for Christ's sake. Amen."

It was over, and Yankee, Portuguese, and Kanakas stared at C. B. and each other with heavily throbbing hearts, as wondering what this might mean. Evidently they were half expectant, half afraid of some supernatural visitation, but as C. B. rose from his knees with a streaming face and they all followed his example, a big slab-sided Vermonter came over to C. B. and held out his hand saying—

"We're all a lot of heathen, I'm afraid, but you've give us a better idea of God Almighty than any of us ever had or likely to have. This ship's been better for you bein' aboard. We shall be better for your little prayer here to-day. Now we'll bid you good-bye," and turning to the crew he said—

"Boys, all of us can say to him God bless you and keep you the same good clean strong man you've allus been amongst us. Ef you hain't preached or prayed, you've done what's harder than either, I guess. You've lived such a life as we've never seen lived before, and if we ain't the better for it, 'tain't any fault of yours. Good-bye and God bless ye."

C. B. could only brokenly echo the blessing, and shaking hands all round, looked lovingly into each face with their variations of expression or utter want of expression. Then he climbed on deck again, feeling as if he had been through an ordeal of the toughest kind. And then he found he had to face his berthmates, who all appeared strange to him. It was just the old story—they had taken but scanty interest in him while he was one of themselves; now he was about to leave them they recalled numberless instances of his lovingkindness, patience, courage and industry, and were in danger of going to the opposite extreme. The three Yankee boat steerers shipped in Honolulu held aloof entirely. They knew very little of C. B., and probably felt some little pride of race, looking down on one whom they ignorantly took to be a mere Kanaka. But Chips, the cooper, cook, and steward, were for them unusually demonstrative, and each pressed upon C. B. some little memento, some piece of scrimshaw work to show that they remembered some act of kindness long ago forgotten by him.

When this part of his ordeal was over he was tired out and turned in, falling asleep on the instant. But he was aroused almost immediately as it seemed to him, though it was at 3 a.m., by a trembling hand laid upon him. He sprang up in his bunk with his hands outspread, and one of them was seized by the intruder, who said—

“It’s me, Merritt. Come on deck, I want t’ say good bye t’ ye.”

C. B. leaped out of his bunk and hurried after his chum, who drew him to a seat on a spar and said in a hollow strained tone—

“You’re goin’ away to-day, and before eight bells to-night I shall know whether the God you’re so

fond of talkin' about is as good as you say He is. Now don't be skeered, I ain't goin' t' kill myself, kase why—it'd hurt you. But I know I'm goin' out as soon as I've seen the last of you, an' I do think I've got a good opinion of your God because of knowing that. He knows my life ain't worth livin' an' He's takin' it away. If I wasn't a poor ignorant heathen I'd tell Him how thankful I am, but I guess He'll know."

To attempt any description of the talk that ensued until dawn would be an impertinence, for one of the men, though such a Christian as the greatest exponent of Christianity among us might envy, was, in all his ideas and knowledge, simple as a little child, while the other, deeper in darkness than the most debased Pagan, could only see one fact, for such it was to him, that he was to die immediately after the parting. It did not trouble his thoughts for one moment, any more than it would that of the faithful dog who only lives in his master's life, and dies of a broken heart when that master is removed.

"So they sat hand in hand till dawn, they took the five o'clock coffee together, with dim ideas in C. B.'s mind of it being a sort of sacrament, and then as the mate's loud call of "Turn to" echoed along the decks Merritt simply rose from C. B.'s side and said—

"Good-bye, chum. I'll be glad to find that what you say is true, an' that I sh'll see you again in another life. I don't understand it, but it sounds good. Now I shall keep out of yer way till yer gone, so good-bye."

At three o'clock p.m. the skipper was carried from his bunk well wrapped up, and placed in his boat, which was lowered with her gunwale level with the rail for the purpose. C. B. jumped in by his side and stood by to steady him as the boat was lowered. The

crew followed and the boat shoved off, but as she did so all hands but one swarmed to the rail and rigging, and gave a round of cheers, at which both the skipper's and C. B.'s eyes brimmed over. But C. B. noted what Captain Taber did not; that in that crowd of faces Merritt's did not appear. He was found four hours later in his bunk, dead, without a sign about him to show why he had gone.

CHAPTER XVI

Popularity

AND now behold C. B. launched upon a totally new series of adventures, but still with that same quiet mind which accepted the events of each new day as being all ordained by God, and consequently fraught with blessing, no matter how hard it might be for him to see the benefit at the time. Hitherto I have said nothing about his feelings with regard to those whom he so fondly loved and from whom he had of course heard no word. But when he left them both he and they had resigned themselves to a complete separation without any communication until God should please to reunite them again. Letters never came to that isolated, self-contained little community, who indeed seldom had any interest outside of their own boundaries.

Yet it must not be supposed that for one day, hardly for a waking hour, he ever forgot them. In his lonely vigils at the mast-head, or when by himself at night, he looked out over the wide expanse of sea, he always formed a mental picture of the peaceful happy home he had left, saw his mother and father and friends at their simple tasks, heard their united praises arising in the sweet evenings, imagined their discussions concerning his whereabouts, until he almost fancied himself among them in spirit, so vivid was his inner vision. And often it was with a physical pang that he came back to his present surroundings.

It must not for a moment be supposed either that he felt great delight at leaving the ship, for he was in no way weary of his life on board. But he calmly awaited each development as being just the right thing for him, and indeed felt that in this latest move he was likely to be of more use than he had ever been before. Besides, as I have before hinted, he and his fellow-islanders were passionately attached to the mother-country which they had never seen, and had consequently idealized almost out of all reasonable recognition. The nearest approach to realization of Britain that they could get was found in a British man-o'-war, and when he stepped on board of the *Fame* and saluted the invisible presence on the quarter deck, he felt strangely uplifted at the thought that he was privileged to sail in one of those wonderful vessels.

With greatest kindness and courtesy Captain Taber had been carried to a cabin specially prepared for him; everything that he could want as far as was in their power to supply it was at his disposal, and when C. B. had got him comfortably bestowed and his belongings all safely at hand he said—

“Thank ye, dear fellow, now go and leave me to sleep, for I feel very tired, and you'll be glad, I know, to see what's going on about the deck, all so different to what you've been used to.” So C. B. slipped away and watched with a queer feeling of pride, as if he had a share in the great business, the ordered method of getting under weigh, the rapidity which characterized every evolution and the perfect discipline.

Seaman-like his fingers itched to be helping, but he knew better than to interfere, and moreover everything was so utterly strange and new. Not the least wonderful of his new surroundings to him was the steam engine. It is hard indeed for us to

realize what it meant to this intelligent man, British to the back-bone, and in some directions well educated, but in others, notably in the appliances of civilization, as ignorant as any savage from the island homes of his maternal ancestors.

His gentle ways and pleasant speech soon made him a prime favourite, and though the lower deck was mightily puzzled at his strange dislike to grog and tobacco, they put it down simply to his want of acquaintance with those luxuries. Anyhow they made a great pet of him, and listened to his simple stories of island life and whaling, interspersed as they were with loving reference to the Fatherly care of God and the happiness of knowing Him, with growing interest and appreciation. Nor was this interest confined to the lower deck. The officers were just as keen, and though thoughtless and careless as so many sailors are who feel that religion enters officially into their lives at stated times, but need not be bothered about except then, they all admitted that this young man was to them a new type altogether outside their experience. Some scoffed at the idea of his being genuine, saying that it was all put on for a certain purpose, and watched him keenly to detect hypocrisy. But it was impossible to maintain such an attitude towards him for long, in view of his perfect devotion to his charge and his absolute lack of pose.

He fell eagerly into his new rôle of nurse and valet, and the captain grew to lean on him more and more each day, to long for his pleasant words and to enjoy, in a measure that seemed to him amazing when he thought about it, the simple reading of the Bible stories and the common-sense comment, often quaint beyond description, that C. B. indulged in. Only it made the matter real and vivid to the mind

of the listener as it had never been before, brought him face to face with the actors in the great world drama unfolded in that amazing series of stories, and above all made him wonder how it had been possible for him to live so long in ignorance, and with so much time on his hands, too, of the treasures contained within the covers of the ordinary little volume. For let them deny it who dare, the most talked of and the least intelligently read of any book in the world is the Bible. And from the point of view of literature alone it does not deserve to be so treated.

In consequence largely of the novelty of the position to the passengers and the interest felt in them by the crew, the passage of the *Fame* to Yokohama, though rather long in point of time, was felt to be short by all, so much so that a distinct sense of disappointment was felt by all as the time for parting drew near. The sick man, though the object of devoted attention by the ship's doctor, fully justified that gentleman's prediction by making little or no progress. He could not be said to be any worse, but his strength would not come back, and he had many hours of severe pain internally. But his appetite was fairly good and his spirits had recovered their normal serenity. He had become very much attached to the ship where he had been so kindly welcomed, and endeavoured to express his gratitude, but his genial hosts pooh-poohed the idea of his being under any sort of obligation to them; they said that his company had been a boon conferred upon them, and that they had learned more of little understood sea-ways since he and C. B. had been with them than they had ever dreamed of being possible.

And so they parted with the best of good will on

both sides, and a certain definite effect of goodness impressed upon all hands by their contact with C. B., which none of them were ever able to forget quite as long as they lived. Very gently and tenderly the helpless skipper was conveyed ashore, and to the best hotel in the City, there to await the coming out of the steamer that sailed between Hong Kong, Yokohama, and San Francisco. The American Consul had been apprised of Captain Taber's coming, and paid him an early visit of condolence and comfort, promising to do all in his power to aid him, and to convey to Captain Silchester his most cordial thanks for the timely help rendered to his suffering countryman.

C. B. was full of wonderment at the new and strange scenes around him, but saw little of them, for nothing would persuade him to leave his friend for more than a few minutes at a time. He did not lightly construe the terms of his service, and when ordered with playful vehemence by the skipper to go away and leave him to himself for a few hours he never went beyond an easy call. But he got a great deal of interest in observing the quaint manners of the Japanese, who seemed to him to be almost denizens of another world to that which he had hitherto known. Their courtesy, cleanliness and ability appealed to him very much, but he wondered with painful intensity how they could be apparently so happy and good without knowing anything of God. And then he had an interview with a clerical gentleman belonging to the Established Church, who was on his travels round the world, and being an inmate of the hotel called upon the captain.

The latter introduced C. B. as his friend as well as personal attendant, and Mr. Vinter, the clergyman, made the almost unpardonable mistake of treating

our hero as if he was an ignorant Kanaka, that is without a touch of kindness or sympathy as of a being infinitely high and wise, but without love, to another very low and foolish. C. B. not being at all sensitive and full of reverence for the man of God as he thought him, began to talk freely upon the things of God as he had never been able to do since he left his home, where they were in everybody's mouth as the most frequent topic. To his utter amazement and to the captain's indignation the clergyman listened for a while with a gradually contracting brow, and presently said severely—

“ You should be less fluent and more reverent about holy things. You cannot understand them, it is not possible that you should. You must learn to leave such discussion as you have ventured to indulge in to those who like myself are set apart as chosen ministers of the Gospel.”

Had it not been so sad it would have been ludicrous to see the open-mouthed stare of utter amazement with which C. B. regarded his new mentor. For what he now heard from the mouth of a man whom he was ready to regard as directly commissioned by God was to the effect that the whole teaching of his life had been wrong. He dimly felt that this man wished him to understand that so far from a close acquaintance with and an intimate knowledge of God and the things of His kingdom being right and according to His will, it was necessary to regard Him as unapproachable except through a certain specially ordained class, and that the sweet familiarity with Jesus which he had always been taught and had understood from his Testament to be the end and the aim of the Saviour's teaching was irreverent and wrong.

And then, to his great relief, the helpless skipper

came to his rescue, saying with clear and energetic voice—

“Forgive me, Mr. Vinter, if I seem rude, and allow me the privilege of a man with one foot in the grave. I’ve learned more of God in a few months’ acquaintance with this dear man than in all the rest of my life. You gentlemen talk about God mostly too in language that a plain man can’t understand, this man lives Him, has done ever since he came aboard my ship. I’d rather have him with me, as far as the education of my soul is concerned, than all the priests and clergy in the world. And you call him irreverent! But so I s’pose you would have done Peter an’ James an’ John, an’ as for Paul, well there!”

Mr. Vinter made no reply, but rose with majestic gesture as of one who finds the air polluted and passed out, nor did they ever see him again. But the captain said cheerily—

“Git your Bible, Christmas, and read me that beautiful story again, beginning with ‘Then drew near all the publicans and sinners for to hear Him?’ I bet they did. They recognized the real thing same as I do, they’d had enough of Pharisees same as I have. And then people will be foolish enough to wonder why the Gospel don’t spread among the heathen! Why a man like that might easily make heathen, he’d certainly never make a Christian, he doesn’t know how to begin. Go on with your reading, dear boy.”

And in the comfort of the reading and the fellowship of his friend C. B. felt the wound that had been made in his soul by that foolish and injudicious man heal over. But he often returned to the subject and asked many questions of the skipper concerning the ways of the religious folk in America, and whether

it was really true that the great bulk of the people could be so foolish as to deny themselves so great a pleasure as he had always found it, and those whom he had grown up with, but was at last compelled to admit that it must be so though it was a profound mystery to him.

Happy man, knowing nothing of the thousand allurements of the civilized world, its mad rush after fortune and no less mad lavishing of its gettings upon things of no value. Happy in the coarse shirt and trousers, bare headed and shoeless, but well nourished and healthy, how could he understand the myriad artificial cravings that shut out from the soul all desire for true happiness, or how in his perfect faith in the love of God and His creation could he realize the awful fear of eternal punishment that prompted men into excesses of religiousness in order to escape from what they felt was the inevitable due of their misdeeds. Not knowing how great had been his privileges he was entirely unable to comprehend the difficulties of highly civilized man in matters of religion, and so was an ever fresh source of interest to the crippled man dependent upon him, who felt that he had never had leisure to think upon these things until now.

But gradually and unconsciously, as was his wont, he had endeared himself to all with whom he had come in contact in service at the hotel, so that when the big steamer arrived and the summons came for them to go aboard he had quite an ovation, all the little yellow men and women crowded around him in their gentle courteous fashion to wish him "Sayonara" and to offer him tiny souvenirs of their affection for the big kindly simple man who was so unlike any other stranger they had yet seen. In his modesty and utter absence of self-conscious-

ness he wondered much at his popularity, the real reason of it never occurring to him, for he had formed no friendships, had gone scarcely anywhere, feeling that his duty was always to be within hail of his beloved skipper.

And so in leaving he had no regrets, but cheerfully and hopefully assisted to carry Captain Taber on board of the *Golden Gate*, where by the influence of the Consul a special cabin had been reserved for the pair and all sorts of privileges arranged for also. She had a great many passengers going eastward to the Pacific Coast, wealthy folks travelling for pleasure, keen business men intent on making money, adventurers, but all apparently flush of money and eager for excitement. Amid this motley throng C. B. secured a good place on deck for his patient's long chair, a point wherefrom the wonderful panorama unfolded as the ship steered seawards could be fully enjoyed. Here C. B., standing by the skipper's side, guarded him from inquisitive intrusion and kept him amused by the quaint and original comments he made upon the novel scene.

But very soon, in spite of C. B.'s earnest efforts, the captain's chair was the centre of a sympathizing and wondering group of Americans, who, having learned the skeleton of his sad story, were keen in their desire to help in any way they could a countryman whom they dimly suspected of being a hero, and that alone is sufficient with the most hero-worshipping people in the world to have made them flock to him. At last their attentions became so importunate and the questions so incessant that Captain Taber, holding up his attenuated hand for silence, said—

“Ladies and gentlemen, as you may see, I am not equal to the strain of satisfying your legitimate

curiosity, for I'm weaker than I care to admit even to myself. But if you'll let my friend here, who, in spite of his dusky complexion, hasn't got any of the nigger about him, but is a sure enough Englishman of the purest stock, tell you the story just as it happened, I can enjoy it as well as you. An' I guess that he knows a good deal more about it than I do anyhow."

The young ladies, who, as most people who have been in the United States know, are the usual arbiters in such cases, guessed "it would be perfectly lovely," and with national promptitude settled themselves around at once and looked expectantly at C. B. He looked somewhat imploringly at the skipper, who only beamed on him and replied—

"Part o' your duties ye know, Christmas, an' I guess I don't know anybody better qualified to perform 'em."

That was quite sufficient for C. B., who, having seated himself by the skipper's side, commenced the story at the point where he had returned to work. He had not been speaking a minute before he had everybody spellbound, for like so many other simple-minded unselfish men he had a natural gift of plain effective speech, not oratorical or rhetorical, but what the Americans call heart to heart talk.

For upwards of an hour he held the company almost breathless, and when at last he ceased with the simple remark "and so through the goodness of God we are thus far on our long journey," there was a long breath and then an irrepressible burst of applause. Many of the ladies made no attempt to hide the fact that they had to wipe their eyes, and it would have been hard to say which of the two in their estimation was the greater hero, the skipper

or C. B. And then the skipper brought matters to a climax by saying—

“ You’ve heard the story, ladies and gentleman, beautifully told as I knew it would be, but far too favourable to me, in spots. As soon as I’m fit I’ll tell you the parts ’at he’s left out, and a few more things that you oughter know about him. Mean-time let me say before God and this company that I believe the hull earth don’t contain a better man, a better Christian, with all that I’ve learned lately that means, than my dear friend Christmas Bounty Adams.”

Even this short speech, because it was delivered with rather more energy than usual, exhausted the enfeebled man, and he lay back in his chair breathless. C. B. immediately attended to him, looking round imploringly at the onlookers, who, taking the hint, at once melted away. But they carried away with them material enough for conversation to last them the passage apparently, the human interest in it entirely eclipsing that of the usual travel talk. But it must be admitted that the chief object of interest was C. B.; in the absence of accurate information concerning him the ladies formulated all sorts of fantastic theories, the excitement rising almost to fever heat during the luncheon hour.

At last, when the captain had been conveyed below, one of the girls, the only daughter of an immensely wealthy American, who was travelling with her mother and father, came up to C. B. who was resting himself, looking over the rail at the swiftly receding coast line. With that sweet insouciance which is the most charming feature of the American girl, she said—

“ Say, Mr. Christmas, or is it Mr. Adams? we’re all just afire to hear the rest of that story of yours.

We don't want to trouble that poor captain, it would be too cruel to expect him to talk, but won't you take pity on us and tell us your beautiful story?"

C. B. gazed down into the eager face with its big brown eyes and saw no vulgar curiosity there.

So after a moment or so of hesitation he replied, "Miss——"

"Oh, May Stewart's my name," she hastily remarked.

"Thank you, Miss Stewart," he gravely interpolated and went on: "My dear mother always taught me to try and please people who didn't want me to do anything wrong, and I am sure you don't want me to do anything wrong. So I'll tell you my story as far as I can, on the understanding that I'm free to leave off at any moment my captain wants me, for he is a sacred helpless charge."

"That's agreed on the instant," she replied, "and I'll bring the crowd along right now. I'm real glad, and I think it's awfully good of you, for I do hate to be kept waiting for something that I feel I ought to know."

"One moment, Miss Stewart," said C. B., holding up a restraining hand. "If you've been weaving a mighty romance out of my story and making me its hero you'll be gravely disappointed. All right, I'm ready whenever you are."

Away fled the young lady, while C. B. took the opportunity of visiting his patient's airy cabin to make sure that he was sleeping soundly and that everything about him was comfortable. Then he returned to the promenade deck, where such had been the energy of Miss Stewart that practically every passenger in the ship was present with the exception of half a dozen inveterate poker players who, I believe, would keep on at the monotonous

business if the first notes of the last trump were ringing in their ears. As soon as Miss Stewart saw C. B. she sprang impetuously towards him, dragged him through the crowd to an elevated seat she had got the quartermaster to prepare for him, and having seen him comfortably installed, sat down on deck by the side of her mother and waited for him to begin.

You all know the story, but of course as he told it much of the interest attaching to his doings evaporated because he would not say I did this or I did that, a modesty which he shared with many far less estimable men. But he did tell them all he could put into words about his lovely island home, his origin, the pursuits of the islanders and their happiness under the simple gospel of love. He told this with a manly simple eloquence which captivated his hearers and made even the most cynical and case-hardened of them feel that here was an idyllic state of things which was unknown to their cheap and feverish philosophies wrongly so called. And when at last he finished, so great was the interest that many questions were put to him by the elder men and women, all of which he answered with ease or owned that he didn't know. How long this would have gone on only those who know the insatiable avidity of Americans in acquiring information upon some new topic could imagine, but happily for C. B. there suddenly appeared on the scene a Japanese waiter with the news that the captain was awake. And immediately C. B. slipped away.

Thenceforward this quiet unassuming child of nature was the idol of the ship. "Guess it's a complete rest-cure to be near him," was the verdict of one sallow owner of about a million dollars, who was fascinated by C. B. to such an extent that he

forswore poker, and courted every chance to get a few words with a man whom he felt had the true secret of happiness. "Now," said this keen business man, "ef this chap was advertising himself or startin' a new religion, I'd be on to him in once, bigger 'n a elevator. But he ain't, 's far 's he knows he's the most ornery cuss there is around. 'N 's far 's I know he's about the newest breed o' man there is, an' I'd like t' get the recipe for a few more like him."

But the girls gave C. B. the most trouble. It was hard to convince them that he was not the descendant of some dusky island potentate. That he was but the offspring of a common English seaman and some nameless Kanaka woman two or three generations back seemed impossible for them to believe, for they were never tired of descanting upon the stately grace of his form and the perfect unstudied beauty of his language. Secretly too they were all piqued by the fact that he paid none of them any special attention, was only gravely polite in a perfectly general sense. To the men though who sought him out and talked with him he was extremely open and genial, telling them frankly that he felt honoured by their condescension, until one day the captain, hearing him speak like this took him to task about it.

"Christmas," he said, "they's such a thing as bein' too humble, makin' yerself too cheap. You've no call to be so humble to these men. I ain't got nothing to say against any of 'em, but I should say they ain't one of 'em that's fit to shine the boots of a good man like you are. Why, they don't talk of nothin' else, mornin' noon or night, 'cept they're talkin' t' you, but dollars and cents, how to pile 'em up as fast as they kin no matter by what method. Money's their God, Christmas, and his worship means some practices that you'd shudder at. No,

keep yer head up, my friend, you'll never git too big fer your boots I'm sure, for I declare you're the equal of any and the superior of most men in this world. And the excited man sank back in his chair exhausted, while C. B. gently reprov'd him for thus exerting himself, and as soon as he was rested again told him quaintly how bashful he felt before the girls, especially Miss Stewart, who continually sought his company.

"How should I behave to them?" he inquired, at which the Captain laughed and replied—

"Ah, there I can't give ye no advice, except to be mighty careful not to fall in love with one of 'em. I guess you wouldn't want no lessons in humility if once you did that. For companionable as all these folks seem to be and eager to make a fuss of ye, if once you lifted your eyes to one of their women folk so as to desire her for a wife, they wouldn't have words enough t' cuss ye in, an' they're pretty glib as a rule."

"Well, captain," said C. B., "there'll be no occasion. I am not at all likely to fall in love, as you call it, until I get back to Norfolk Island again, and certainly not while I have the happy privilege of taking care of you, God bless you."

CHAPTER XVII

A Troublesome Appreciation

AFTER all, the most important work of C. B.'s life was steadily progressing without hindrance of any kind, the spiritual education of Captain Taber. That fine man, in spite of his late advice to C. B. about humility, was now exceedingly humble himself and ready to admit his absolute indebtedness to C. B. for his present peace of mind, and what in religious terminology would be called his growth in grace. He certainly was in some respects an entirely changed man since his accident, although it must not for a moment be supposed that he was ever anything but just, kind and brave. It was only in the one thing needful that he was then lacking, and that had now been supplied through the agency of his friend, so that he had become a centre of spirituality from which continually emanated a sweet aroma of content and love of all mankind.

The captain and chief officer of the *Golden Gate* spent much time with Captain Taber, although it must be said that they did not take to C. B. very much. The sea tradition was strong with them, and as they looked upon C. B. as a sort of menial in his personal attendance upon the captain, they felt that discipline forbade them giving him any opportunity to impose. He never noticed their reserve, in fact he was almost impervious to the slights that most of us resent so much, because of his want of

self-consciousness, which went a long way to account for his happiness. As soon as either the captain or the mate came to have a yarn with his patient he would, first making sure that all was in order, retire on deck, where he was always in request, and remain there until his friend was alone again. In this way he made the acquaintance of nearly everybody in the ship and enjoyed himself very much, especially when the vessel drew into the bad-weather zone, and gales of wind with heavy seas kept the passengers below. But one afternoon, as he was engaged in earnest conversation with one of the quartermasters whose turn it was to look after the promenade deck, he saw with a thrill of horror a female emerge from the saloon, cross the deck to the lee rail, deliberately mount it and topple overboard. As soon as he had seen her making for the rail he started to run towards her, so that he was on the spot almost in time to catch her by her clothing. He just missed her, however, and with a roar of "Stop the ship!" that was heard high above the gale, he plunged after her. A few mighty strokes and he was by her side, only just in time to snatch her long hair and fight his way from the ship to avoid the indraught of the propeller, which if not stopped in time means awful mutilation to a body in the water, and the strongest swimmer coming within its vortex is entirely helpless.

The ship was stopped so promptly that he was but a couple of hundred yards away, but the sea was running very heavily with breaking crests, and great as was his strength and skill, the burden of a woman to support who could still struggle was a task that could not be endured for long. As usual in merchant ships, especially steamers in those days, the boats were secured as if they were never intended

to be used ; not only so, but because of gross neglect the lashings and gripes were rusted and clogged with paint, while the boats themselves, never having been in the water for months nor having any water in them through being carefully covered in, were leaky as sieves.

Consequently it was nearly twenty minutes before the boat was in the water, and when she was, for lack of ability to handle her it looked for some time as if her lowering was going to cost several more lives. And all this time Captain Taber in his berth was suffering mental tortures, having been informed of the cause of the uproar by the Japanese berth attendant. Nor was his anxiety selfish. He could not bear the idea of his faithful friend being done to death like that, he to whom the water was as familiar as the dry land. At last in his agony he betook himself to prayer and was immediately comforted. Not only so but the quiet that had reigned for some time gave place to tramlings overhead and shoutings, showing that something had been or was being done.

It was fortunate that the vessel had stopped so promptly, as well as that she had such little way on her at the time, steaming as she was head to sea. Otherwise it would have been impossible to save the two lives owing to the bungling in boat handling. As it was, when the boat did reach them C. B. was just at the end of his resources, and when lifted into the boat was almost as far gone as the woman he had saved. Getting back to the ship, although she was handled with much skill, was a series of wonderful escapes, and but for the promptitude of the second mate, who suggested pouring a lot of oil over the lee bow as the boat was brought alongside, which smoothed the turbulent sea and permitted

them to hook on the boat with comparative ease, there must have been disaster.

The two rescued ones were lifted out of the boat in the presence of all the passengers, who had entirely forgotten their seasickness and debility in their anxiety. The bodies were borne below and the doctor worked upon the woman with the greatest perseverance, being at last rewarded by feeling her heart beat and some warmth come from her breast. From thence the task was easy, and the first to convey to the anxiously waiting skipper below was C. B. himself, who apologized for causing his beloved charge so much anxiety, but explained that he could not see the woman drown.

Then the skipper broke down, for he was very weak, and cried like a child, sobbing out that he had felt that if he had lost his friend he must have died too, and that he could never be sufficiently grateful to God for sparing him. While they were thus enjoying their reunion came the captain of the ship, who was visibly moved, and, holding out his hand to C. B., said—

“ Young man, I’m proud to have you aboard my ship, for you are indeed a man. You may hardly believe it, but the husband of that lady whose life you have saved is only just aware of what has happened. Both he and she have been shockingly ill, for it seems that they are very bad sailors. And she, in addition to horrible seasickness, had a raging toothache, which must have driven her mad for the time. She says that she quite remembers jumping overboard, says it seemed to her to be the only way out of her misery, but she is very sorry indeed to have given so much trouble. Neither she nor her husband realize yet what the trouble has been, but their seasickness has left them and I guess you’ll

hear from them to-morrow. Hope you're none the worse for your anxiety, Taber, now you've got your chum back again. Now I must be off, for the weather's pretty bad still." And he strode away.

Next morning the weather had become beautiful again and C. B., having seen his patient all right, was about to take a stroll forward when he was seized by a man with red eyes and wild air, who said—

"Are you the hero who preserved my dear one for me?"

C. B. was completely taken by surprise and stammered out something, he knew not what in reply. But almost immediately there came bustling round a crowd of the passengers, as full of excitement as if the ship had been on fire, and poor C. B. wished he was anywhere out of it. Still the man who had first accosted him kept hold of his hand, occasionally patting it and murmuring disjointed sentences, until at last the captain of the ship burst into the group, saying—

"Now, ladies and gentlemen, this isn't fair to our friend. As for you, sir," turning to the man who was still holding C. B.'s hand, "you must think of yourself for your wife's sake as well as your own. We shan't be into San Francisco for three days, and you'll have plenty of time between now and then to thank Mr. Christmas all you want."

C. B. cast a grateful look upon the captain and fled forward among the crew, where he was received as one of themselves, no fuss being made over him, but lots of questions asked about his swimming powers. Here he was quite at home, for such was the respect that every one down there felt for him that they modified their usual full-flavoured speech because they knew it was unpleasant to him, although the boss of the fore-castle, a burly Californian, said after

he had gone that he felt quite weak with the strain he had put upon himself in the matter of speech. "But," he added, "I don't grudge it him, for he's the whitest man I've struck for a long, long spell, if he can't stand a cuss word."

The husband of the rescued lady having perfectly recovered begged to be allowed to meet C. B. again, and tender his thanks in company with his wife. So the meeting came off, when it appeared that they were a wealthy American pair, named Ogden, traveling in search of health, childless and most tenderly attached to each other. At first the gentleman's proposal was to adopt C. B. as their son with all the advantages of such a position, but to this our friend returned so decided a negative that it was not again mooted. Then the pair wished to make C. B. a present of a large sum of money, to which he replied that he had no use for it, that he had done nothing that he would not have done for a beggar, and that he hoped they would think no more of the matter.

Thus coming to a deadlock there was no means of ridding themselves of their almost intolerable burden of gratitude, until C. B. said—

"I cannot take anything from you, not because of pride, but because I don't want money; I hate the idea of getting fond of it, for I have learned how evil a thing it can be. But if you must do something to please me, help the poor whom I hear so much about and don't know anything of. Our Lord says that the poor ye have always with you, and so you can never be short of means of doing good if you have got a lot of money. In any case, I won't take your money; I've done nothing for it, and the only thing it could do for me would be to make me discontented with what I now see to be

the happiest life on earth, that is, my dear island home."

Gratitude and the business instinct struggled for the mastery in Mr. Ogden's breast, coupled perhaps with a little resentment at C. B.'s attitude, for he was one of those men who hate being under an obligation. At last he went to Captain Taber and asked him to take C. B. in hand and show him the error of his ways. Of course Captain Taber flatly refused, knowing C. B. as he did, while his own fine honest pride gloried in the same quality being possessed by C. B., as he thought. So then Mr. Ogden was compelled to give up, and went about among the other passengers discontentedly airing his grievance and causing much mirth at the unusual spectacle of a man growling because he couldn't get another man to accept his money.

The passage drew near to its close, and C. B., after rather anxious watching of his patient, came to the conclusion that there was some slight improvement in his strength. In consultation with the doctor that gentleman pronounced him as strong as he could ever expect to be, and that it would entirely depend upon his treatment during the long crossing of the Continent whether he would have a short or a fairly long lease of life with his friends. Upon this information C. B. devoted all his time to getting news about the travelling, best methods, little tips about accommodation, hotels, etc., secretly grieving for his lack of experience which might prevent him doing the best possible for his friend. The gentleman to whom he applied for information, purely by accident, was the millionaire father of Miss Stewart, who was apparently delighted to be of service to him. And during their conversation C. B. said in perfect innocence—

“ I hope Miss Stewart is well ; I haven't seen her about the deck lately. I suppose I notice it more because she used to be the life and soul of the ship.”

Old man Stewart bent his shaggy eyebrows upon the speaker and replied very slowly and distinctly—

“ Yes, I guess her health's all right as far as we know. She isn't what she used to be though, an' I'll admit that her keeping down as she has done is more than a little puzzling to her mother and me. And I'd about half made up my mind to ask you if you could give us any idea of what ailed her ? ”

The face that C. B. turned to Mr. Stewart was a study for a picture of complete blank astonishment. For a few moments he could not speak, but sat with his mouth partly open, while Mr. Stewart never relaxed his steady gaze into the young man's face. Then he found his tongue and said with a sort of burst—

“ Why, Mr. Stewart, what can you mean ? Except at the outset of the passage, when she arranged for me to tell the story of my life, I have not exchanged a dozen words with your daughter, nor have I for the last fortnight scarcely had her in my mind. It suddenly dawned upon me as I talked with you that I had not seen her about in her usual lively fashion, and on the impulse of the moment I asked you of her health. And now you say you thought of asking *me* if I had any idea what was ailing her ! ”

Mr. Stewart's brow relaxed, his grim mouth formed a smile, and he said cheerily—

“ All right, sonny, I'm glad to see I hain't made no mistake in ye. Forget what I said and put it down to an old man's anxiety for his only child. An' now about that journey of yours, I should recommend ”

—and the old gentleman went off into minutest details of trains, hotels, etc., in which C. B. followed painfully after him, feeling at every word how far from this wonderful world of struggle and stress he was removed. But what the reader will think of C. B.'s density with regard to Miss Stewart I do not know. It is hard for us to believe in a fancy free, unconceited youngster now, one who could have such a question put to him by a father concerning his daughter, as Mr. Stewart had just done to C. B., and not feel flattered and more conceited than before. But the old man showed his wonderful knowledge of human nature in dealing with C. B. as he did. In spite of his cynical disbelief in most, if not all, his fellow-men he paid unconscious tribute to C. B. in taking the step he did, and when he found his estimate justified he was inclined to be puffed up and say, "I told you so, I knew he was twenty-four carat stamped on every link. My judgment against the world."

Many people, however, would exercise their privilege of sitting in judgment and call C. B. just plain fool. They are welcome, since such an *ex parte* statement does not affect the case. I must go on to say that C. B. dismissed the whole matter from his mind, which indeed, as the distance from the Golden Gate of its mamesake was measured by hours, became more full of anxiety concerning his helpless charge than ever he had known it before. Then came the arrival, the breaking up of pleasant little coteries such as are formed in a few days on ship-board, and in many cases the parting from people whom you would long to spend your life with but have to part from and usually see no more.

In accordance with a pre-arranged plan C. B. made his friend comfortable and did not worry him

until the rest of the passengers were out of the vessel, so that he could take a quiet, unhurried farewell of his friends the officers of the ship. Everybody had gone; none, however, without a hearty handshake and a pleasant word for C. B., many assuring him of what was really true—that they would never forget him, when a shore boat came alongside bearing a man in some sort of a uniform, who as soon as he came aboard inquired for Mr. C. B. Adams. It took some little time for the unaccustomed address to be realized, but at last the message was handed to C. B. and the messenger said with easy nonchalance that he'd wait for an answer. And subsiding into a deck chair produced his toothpick and made himself comfortable.

The missive was brief and businesslike. It ran—

“Private Car Mary A. Stewart waits at the *dépôt* to receive Captain Taber, Mr. C. B. Adams, and any two friends they may select for through transportation to New Bedford, Massachusetts. All charges are paid through to destination, and all railway men are advised to render any aid or service needed. It is advised that the party start with the least possible delay though no time is fixed. OLIVER P. STARBUCK, Gen. Mgr.”

C. B. simply could not believe the plain statement made, though it was impossible to misunderstand it. So he handed the letter to Captain Taber, who read and murmured, “Thank God. You see,” he went on to C. B., “that money can do something. I was dreading in every fibre of my bones that awful journey home, and here with a stroke of his pen one of our many wealthy friends, who does not think enough of the act to let us know who he is so that we may thank him, makes the way smooth and

plain for us from the Pacific to the Atlantic. Ah me, I'm being highly favoured, and I more than half suspect that I ought to thank you for it. Now don't get up on your hind legs and make a fuss, because I feel sure I'm right."

The skipper of the *Golden Gate* was called in consultation, and he agreed that this royal courtesy must have been paid by one of the passengers who wished to remain unknown. And he said that he could not help wishing that he was coming with them, for his wife was in Liverpool, and he had not seen her for three years, while such a chance might never occur again as long as he lived. Be sure that C. B. cordially echoed the captain's wish, for he dreaded the ordeal which he felt awaited him more than he had ever feared anything before, but only because of his anxiety for the helpless man under his charge.

However, as in all such cases, there was little time for regrets or speculation, the time pressed and departure could not be delayed. So gathering all together C. B. and his charge were conveyed ashore, and through the turbulent life of the city to the station, or *dépôt* as it is called in the United States. The driver of the conveyance they chartered upon getting ashore knew his business thoroughly and took them straight to where the private car was standing in lonely majesty, side tracked. And as they drew up alongside of it there appeared, to their intense astonishment, the gaunt form of Mr. Stewart, who was accompanied by his daughter.

A look of perfect satisfaction was upon both their faces which changed into an amused smile as they noted the stare of perfect bewilderment upon the countenance of C. B. It remained there until Captain Taber said, "Come, Christmas, what's wrong with

ye? have ye seen a ghost? Then C. B. started, apologized, and explained that somehow he had never expected to see any of the ship's late company again; he felt that they were scattered far and wide. Then Mr. Stewart, having seen the captain carefully placed within the palatial car and made comfortable on the beautifully upholstered lounge with plenty of soft cushions, sat down by his side, while C. B. stood looking around him in dumbfounded amazement at the somewhat crude splendours of the car.

Beckoning his daughter to a seat by his side the worthy American began his explanation by saying—

“When I learned that you had been invited to make the journey across the Continent in a private car I hoped that you would have had company that would be helpful to you. And just as I heard that you were going alone I received a telegram from Boston, calling me over there on urgent business, so I calculated that perhaps you wouldn't mind my daughter and myself being your guests for a week. We may be of some use if you can put up with us.”

Captain Taber turned upon the speaker a look of grateful affection and murmured—

“Don't be afraid, Mr. Stewart, that I shall make a fuss, but do let me say God bless you for your lovingkindness in lending us this car, for I knew it was yours as soon as I heard the name, and for watching over us since. He,” jerking his thumb in C. B.'s direction, “won't bother you, I know, won't bother his head a little bit to whom the car belongs, looks upon the whole affair as just another instance of God Almighty's particular care. I confess I can't think yet that the Lord looks after me to that extent, and yet I don't know but what I will before long. If anything could make me it would be association with that fellow. He's—but there, I

can't talk about him without kinder choking! Must be getting weak in the head."

Then they passed to other topics, Mr. Stewart proving himself to be a golden talker upon an immense variety of subjects, while the car, having been very gently attached to the engine, began to glide out of the station with an easy motion almost akin to that of a ship, the great machine being beautifully balanced upon many springs so that even the casually laid road-bed did not make it jolt, only sway and roll slightly, keeping up the nautical comparison. Meanwhile Miss Stewart had taken C. B. out upon the observation platform and was pointing out to him the various wonders through which they were passing, finding intense enjoyment in his utter bewilderment and childlike curiosity. And when it dawned upon her that he had never even seen a railroad before, hardly realized that such a thing existed, she experienced all the pleasure of a generous nature at being able to give another such a novel series of delightful new sensations.

And such sensations! C. B. was always so calm and satisfied with the way that he believed God was leading him that any one, even his intimate friends, might have been forgiven for calling him stolid, unimpressionable, really not competent to feel very much. But then no one could enter into the quiet sanctuary of his mind where sat enthroned his Eternal Friend and Guide. Occasionally, as Miss Stewart pointed out to him some new marvel of Nature, such as travellers have long chanted the praise of, on that wonderful railroad line from San Francisco to New York, he would hold up his hands and murmur—

"How wonderful and glorious are your works, O my Father." And at such times she would gaze

upon him with awe as feeling that he was in a very special sense favoured by the Most High.

Then when the train flew along some swaying cobweb-like trestle bridge with the mist beneath hiding the awful depths and a suggestion of impalpability, of travelling upon the track of a moon-beam, was impossible to avoid, she would cling to him in real terror, feeling, as all sensitive intelligences must in those situations, how tenuous a thread separated them from the next world. But she always failed to see any change in the steady gaze of his eye, or to feel any tremor in his firmly knit muscles, not even when they swung out around some tremendous curve on the scarp of a mountain and the struts beneath them sprung and complained at their weight.

At last she felt a little piqued ; it seemed so strange that this entirely inexperienced man could be so free from any apprehension where she who had seen it all so often before trembled to her heart's core. Was it insensibility or inability to grasp the wonderful facts, or was it superiority of mind to all things happening upon earth because of intimacy with the Creator of all things ? And so she asked him why he seemed so unimpressed with all these marvels that all other people held in such awe and reverence ; did he not really think them very wonderful and inspiring ? And he, turning his deep eyes from her, answered—

“ My dear young lady, it *is* all very wonderful, but when I look up at the stars and the sun, or out upon the sea, I feel more impressed at these glorious works of my Father. And I feel very small but very happy ; I think that He who does all these things by the word of His Power condescends to notice me, to assure me that I am precious in His sight. I am

not unconscious or dense really—I do admire and wonder, but I cannot for one moment forget the Glory of God which is to this amazing show as the substance is to the shadow. I feel much more than this, but I cannot say, I only love and worship.”

Alas for Miss Stewart's happiness, she had grown to love this simple stalwart man with an intensity that frightened her, as she had felt that she was absolutely proof against any feeling of the kind. To all her openness and kindness he responded respectfully yet almost as her equal, but though the invitation to do so was almost palpable he never overstepped an invisible line drawn between them. Old man Stewart was indeed wise when he decided that this was a man to be trusted to the limit.

And so the great car sped on through freezing cold and scorching heat, parched up desert and glowing prairie, until it drew near to the young giant of the West, Chicago, that centre of the marvels of the United States, humming with evil, fragrant with good, but in any case fully, luxuriantly alive.

CHAPTER XVIII

A Hero in Spite of Himself

IT must not be supposed that in all these long conversations with Miss Stewart, while her father told stories turn about with the contented Captain Taber, C. B. ever forgot his friend for one moment. The memory of Merritt had faded almost entirely, or only came now and then with a little pang of contrition that such devoted love as he had been shown by that strange man had been so little requited. Had he been given to reasoning these things out he would have known that the secret of his love for Captain Taber was that he had been able to give himself up entirely to his service, for it will ever be found that the deepest love is that which gives itself to the beloved object. True love is self-sacrificing, not passively recipient, and so even in this beautiful journey, surrounded by all luxury and associated with so charming a personality as that of Miss Stewart, C. B. never for one instant wavered in his deep affection for his charge.

One night within a hundred miles of Chicago they suddenly felt the flying train slow down, and then with a couple of heavy jolts come to a standstill. C. B. was with the captain at the time rendering him some personal service, and at the shock they both looked inquiringly around and at one another.

"There's something wrong," said the captain. "I wonder what has happened?" He had hardly uttered the words when through the unnatural silence there came a faint shriek, and C. B., with one glance at his friend, rushed out into the body of the car and main saloon.

There were Mr. and Miss Stewart seated in two armchairs with a truculent looking man clad in the picturesque garb of the cowboy standing before them holding a heavy revolver pointed at them, while both man and woman held their hands high above their heads. At the sound of C. B.'s footsteps the intruder wheeled and shouted, "Stop right there," but he spoke to the wrong individual. Without an instant's hesitation C. B. sprang at him, there was a flash, a stunning report, and a crash of glass, and there upon the floor lay the intruder with C. B. on top of him easily tearing the revolver from him with one hand, while with the other clutching his throat. At the same moment Miss Stewart and her father disappeared. But they returned almost instantly, each armed with a revolver, and Mr. Stewart bringing in addition a length of gay cord torn from the heavy curtain before his sleeping-place. With this C. B. bound the hands of the villainous-looking fellow he had captured so securely that he could not move them and looked around for another piece for the feet.

But Mr. Stewart said sternly, "Never mind that. Mary, watch him, and if he moves, shoot him. Come, Mr. Christmas, we'll get the others." And at the word C. B. followed where Mr. Stewart led, finding in Miss Stewart's apartment two more men, who caught unawares submitted to be bound as the first one had been, under cover of Mr. Stewart's revolver.

"Now," said Mr. Stewart, "we must look out for the rest of the gang, who are probably walking up and down outside. But first, out lights," and touching a switch the whole car was immediately in darkness. But as soon as they stepped out upon the observation platform they heard a couple of shots. Mr. Stewart, fully cognizant of all these Western tactics, carefully marked the direction of the flashes and fired there twice, sinking down at once and dragging C. B. with him.

After waiting about a minute and hearing a low groan from the darkness, he said—

"I don't think there's any more of 'em about, and we must go and see to the engineer and his fireman," finding them both cruelly tied up. They released them, and Mr. Stewart curtly ordered them to put on all the speed they could for Chicago, where explanations might be made in quiet. Then turning to the car they hunted up the attendants, who they found had all been treated similarly to the engineer. They released them, and putting the captives in charge of the conductor in the baggage car they returned to their quarters, finding Miss Stewart still in charge of the scoundrel they had forgotten.

She was soon relieved of her watch and then, with a heightened colour, turned to C. B. and said—

"Forgive me for what I said to you."

C. B. stared at her and asked—

"What can you mean, Miss Stewart? How can I forgive you when you have never done me wrong?"

Then the young lady bursting into tears sobbed, "Oh, yes, I have. I thought you were dull, stupid, and hardened because you didn't make a fuss, as I expected you to. And now you act like this—its heaping coals of fire on my head."

At this Mr. Stewart came along and said—

“Come, my girl, get to your bed, we shall be in Chicago in about an hour and you need all the rest you can get.”

She obeyed with a look full of gratitude at C. B., who stood quite bewildered at the sudden and strange march of events.

He was not relieved when Mr. Stewart, holding out his hand, blurted out, “Mr. Christmas, you’re the whitest man I know. And if you can believe me, there isn’t anything that lies in my power to do for you that I won’t do on the word. So give it a name and let me show my gratitude.”

It was then Mr. Stewart’s turn to feel astonished and set back, for C. B. with some dignity replied, “Mr. Stewart, I don’t understand you. I really haven’t done anything but what any man would have done. I can’t imagine what makes you American gentlemen and ladies try and spoil a poor man like me. Surely there is nothing wonderful or strange in my behaviour, nothing that any man among you would not have done under the same circumstances.”

“My good boy,” answered Mr. Stewart solemnly. “Of course you don’t know how your conduct appears to us, any more than we know how to regard you. I can only say that I feel very humble and ordinary alongside of a clean-souled man like you, and I know you’re worthy of any appreciation that can be tendered you. But hark, there’s the skipper’s bell, he’ll be anxious to know all about everything and you won’t tell him, but I will, whatever you say, so get along with you.” And C. B., still in a mental mist of wonder, rushed off to his charge.

Captain Taber was naturally in a feverish state of excitement through wonder. He had heard the

shots and the rushing to and fro, imagined all kinds of happenings as he lay there helplessly fretting and yet ashamed of his want of confidence in the goodness of God. And now when C. B. came swiftly gliding in, his face all aglow with eagerness, a great wave of thankfulness rushed over him, and he held out both his hands, saying, "Thank God you're all right; my boy, do tell me what has happened?"

Then, first having seen that the captain wanted for nothing, C. B. told him the stirring story in his own quiet, unexaggerated fashion, his simple eyes brightening and his breath coming short as he realized the danger they had all gone through and emerged triumphantly from, for their assailants were of that desperate class who value life at less than the smallest coin, are ready to dare anything in order to gratify their desire for plunder, and who in this case felt quite certain of securing a rich booty. They had lashed a huge log across the rails, and erected by its side a pole with a red light upon it, which made the engineer of the train slow up until he brought his engine butt up against the obstruction, and immediately found himself threatened by a couple of revolvers held at his face by desperate-looking men, who threatened him with instant death, unless he obeyed their command. Helpless to resist, he threw up his hands while they bound him and his mate, then boarded the train itself, with the result we know.

Presently, with a clanging of great bells and a hideous jolting over badly laid points, they rolled into the great station, where a little crowd of officials who were awaiting them sprang into the car as it came to a rest, and greeted Mr. Stewart with that mingled air of equality and deference which is so

peculiarly characteristic of the States between employés and their employers. In a few curt sentences Mr. Stewart informed the new-comers of the events of the last couple of hours, and then led the way to where his prisoners were lying, glaring like trapped wolves. In a few minutes they had been removed to a patrol wagon, which rumbled off with them to prison, and then Mr. Stewart turned to confront a couple of night reporters, who, with the keen scent for a story that all their class in the United States are noted for, begged to be "put next" to the adventure, whatever it was.

With a grim smile Mr. Stewart led them to the main saloon, bade them be seated, ordered a steward to bring them refreshments, and then sent for C. B. When our friend arrived Mr. Stewart introduced him to the reporters as the hero of the night, assured them that he would tell them all about it and, excusing himself, disappeared.

It is impossible for me to convey any adequate idea of the contrast between C. B. and his interlocutors, whose picturesque slang, eager faces, and ravenous pencils all seemed to him so strange. He could not imagine their errand, they were equally taken aback by his calm, straight gaze and transparent simplicity. But presently, after a rapier-like question or two, one reporter said to the other: "Hank, we're up against a mighty big scoop. This hold up's only a tail-piece, the story ahead of it's the thing, and our friend here hain't no idea of the height of it. Now less go slow an' take it between us an', hold on a minute——" He darted off and got the attendants to seal up the car to any outsiders, declaring that Mr. Stewart would see nobody till the morning, then returned to the feast.

So C. B. told his story to the reporters, who took it down with heaven knows what fantastic additions. They had never had such a lovely subject before, a man who answered all their questions straightly and simply, making no reservations. Many times they paused and looked at him, feeling uncertain whether some colossal joke was not being put upon them, but were reassured in spite of their brazen scepticism, and when at last they raced off to their offices with the spoil they both felt that they had had the time of their lives.

C. B. was rather glad when they went, for he was tired, and went straight to Captain Taber, whom he found sleeping sweetly. And, as all the car was quiet, he too went to his comfortable bed, and, entirely unexcited by the stirring events of the day, fell into a deep, dreamless sleep. When he awoke it was to have thrust into his hand by one of the car attendants two newspapers, each with flaming headlines, describing in American journalese the happenings of the past night. Glancing through the two and a half columns of gush he felt his blood surge up into his head to find himself portrayed as a hero of the highest eminence, his life history sketched out, in fact all his quiet, open talk with those two guileful strangers transmogrified into something that took his breath away. And even then he was unable to grasp more than the remote fringe of the significance of those two newspaper reports; he did not dream of the millions who would read his story all over the United States and Canada within the next twenty-four hours, or the fact that within a week or two the whole of the civilized world would be talking about him.

At present his feeling was one of extreme annoyance at seeing his name in print, and making a

hurried toilet he hastened to his friend, Captain Taber, whom he found propped up in bed eagerly devouring the story, and occasionally chuckling with laughter as he came across some exceptionally turgid piece of description, or a sentence of such extraordinary jargon of slang that even an educated American could hardly translate it. It gave him thrills of great joy, and when he saw the face of C. B. as he stood holding the two papers before him, he laughed as C. B. had never heard him since his disaster.

When at last he had ceased C. B. said quietly, "I don't know why you are so amused, sir, for I see you have been reading what those two men wrote from what I told them last night. I think it was very wrong of them, and I feel so ashamed of myself. I do wish I had known that they were going to print it, I wouldn't have told them a word. Besides, there's a great deal of it that isn't true at all. It seems that where they couldn't remember what I told them they made up a bit to join the story together. I must say though that it is wonderful how they can have done it at all. It seems only a few minutes ago that I was talking to them and here it is all in the newspapers."

"My dear, innocent Christmas," burst in the captain, "as I've so often told you, you're too good for this world. To think how utterly out of touch with all these things, railways, telegraphs, newspapers, etc., you are. But try and see if you can what a lot of good your story will do. Your life lived without effort in the sight of God has had much more influence than you ever dreamed of or would imagine, think then of the benefits that even this poor presentment of a bit of that life will confer upon millions of people who will read it. I hain't

afraid that you'll get above yourself by hearing yourself praised, I know to whom you'll give all the glory, but I do hope that you won't refuse to see any more of these fellows, who are sure to be after you directly. And look here, if I know my countrymen, an' I think I do a little, they'll be lots of other folks after you to-day. You'll be offered big money to lecture and show yourself—but I don't think I can spare you," and the helpless man looked upon him wistfully.

That brought C. B. to his side in a moment, saying—

"Dear friend, I've often told you that I don't want money, and as for making a show of myself or talking about what I've done the idea's horrible. Since you wish it, I'll see the newspaper men and talk to them, but please remember that I'm not leaving you while you want me, and when I do leave you because you don't need me any more, I'm going straight back home."

"All right, my boy, I never had any real doubt, only the mere thought of losing you was so dreadful to my poor selfish heart. I've got to lean on you so that I feel I couldn't live without you now. For to-day, anyhow, I'll get one of the attendants to look after me; you'll be wanted all day long by one person and another. Oh me, I wish this affray had never happened; I don't know how long we may be kept waiting——"

Just then there was a firm tap at the door, and to the captain's "Come in" Mr. Stewart entered the room. As soon as greetings were exchanged the captain inquired eagerly—

"Is this thing going to delay us long, sir? I'm so anxious to get home."

Mr. Stewart's brow contracted as he replied—

“Not if I can help it, captain. It wouldn't hinder you anyhow, because you know nothing of it; but your friend's a principal witness. Still, I know how knit you are together—you can't do without him. My influence is not here what it is in San Francisco, but I'll use what I've got to get the trial expedited for your sake.” Then turning to C. B., he said, “Well, Christmas, you've got fame by the bucketful this morning, haven't ye? How do you like it?”

“Not a little bit, Mr. Stewart,” interrupted the captain; “he came in here to me this morning with his face all afire. An' but that I don't think he can get real angry, I believe he would have been mad with me because he found me laughing over the story. However, I've soothed him by telling him what a lot of good it will do, and now, I think, he'll be quite reconciled to the next batch of reporters that comes along.”

“That's principally what I've come in about, captain,” said Mr. Stewart. “So far, the report has been all right and there's no harm done, but I'm a bit afraid that the gang that will surely arrive presently will try to mix up Mary's name with it, invent some fool story about her and Christmas that'll hurt us all like the devil. Now, what I wanted to do was to warn you, Christmas, on this one point. Tell those fellows everything you can, for the more you tell 'em the less chance they'll have to invent; but try and make 'em keep my girl's name out of it, won't ye?” This last almost imploringly.

C. B. drew himself up a little as he replied—

“How could I tell them anything about Miss Stewart beyond what has been already printed, unless I told falsehoods, invented a story like a reporter does? I know nothing, and if I did I

should refuse to say anything about another person's business."

Mr. Stewart looked doubtfully at him as if mistrusting, not his truthfulness or honour, but his ability to prevent those reporters from turning him inside out like a glove, and gave a sigh, which Captain Taber noticing, made him remark, "I think, Mr. Stewart, that you can trust C. B.'s invincible honesty and truth to be a match for men who are so accustomed to deal with the opposite qualities that they will be hopelessly overmatched."

At that moment an attendant knocked at the door, and entering, said—

"Three gentlemen to see Mr. Adams."

"All right, Billy," answered Mr. Stewart. "Go on, my boy; we can't do better I'm sure than leave you to yourself in this matter. I was a fool to try and interfere." And he gave C. B. a playful push out of the door.

The attendant was waiting for him and ushered him into the main saloon, where there sat three of the most divergent types of men one could imagine. One had, in spite of his good, well-cut clothes, an air of seediness about him, want of brushing, cigar ash, up all night kind of appearance; he was a reporter. The next was obviously a parson of sorts, yet with a keen business air about him too, which rather belied his white tie. The third was the most objectionable person of the three, as far as looks went. He was gross, with a great belly and bulbous nose. His rather dirty hands were loaded with heavy rings, and a massive gold watch-chain lay across the big rotundity of his stomach. His clothes were of a violent pattern check, his broad-brimmed felt hat was worn at the back of his head, a gaudy *boutonnière* adorned his coat lapel, a fat

cigar was between his purple lips, he fingered a huge roll of bills ostentatiously, and spat frequently wherever it pleased him.

As soon as C. B. appeared all three arose and extended their hands in greeting. They all began to talk at once, but the reporter, holding up his hand, said—

“Gentlemen, please less start fair. We can’t do a thing like this. I was here first, but I’m willing to meet you any reasonable way, and I propose to shake for the first deal.” Before either of the others could reply C. B. said quietly—

“Are all you gentlemen reporters?”

“Me every time,” answered the reporter gaily, but the other two expressed their feelings at the question by a very decided negative.

“Then,” went on C. B., “I think if this gentleman,” nodding to the reporter, “will have a moment’s patience, I can promise him I will not keep him waiting long. What do you wish with me, sir?” to the parson. That gentleman said immediately—

“Oh, my committee have authorized me to invite you to preach at our church in — Street to-night and incidentally tell the story of your late experiences. They are prepared to meet your views as to the honorarium, within limits, of course.”

“Thank you very much,” replied C. B. “No. And you?” turning to the gross man.

“Wall, I guess I’m the representative of the Mammoth Vaudeville Syndicate of the United States, and I’m prepared to book you for a hundred nights at \$100 a night to reel off that yarn of yours on the stage an’——”

“Thank you,” interrupted C. B. “No.”

“And now,” turning to the reporter, and abso-

lutely ignoring the other two. "I am at your service."

The reporter gave a wicked little snigger at the two discomfited competitors and plunged into his business.

From thenceforward throughout, the whole of the time of C. B. was thus occupied, but to every other class of persons beside reporters he returned the same curt answer "No." All, however, did not take it as the first pair had done, the photographers especially being almost painfully persistent. But, having made up his mind to a certain course of action, believing it to be right, there was no hope of turning C. B.; he was adamant, although as kind and yielding as could be in anything that he felt did not matter.

At last, as he was dismissing the fiftieth interviewer, Mr. Stewart came in and laying his hand upon C. B.'s shoulder said kindly—

"Come on, dear boy, and have some food, you must need it. Billy, if anybody else calls and wants to see Mr. Adams, tell them that he is engaged until 6 p.m., and that no one is to see him until then. Now you understand what I mean. No one, whatever their business may be."

"Yes, sir," replied the attendant, and C. B. left to wash his face and hands and have a comfortable meal.

It was, except for C. B., the happiest luncheon any of them had taken for a long time, for C. B.'s solemn description—he had hardly any idea of a joke—of the various demands of his visitors made them rock with laughter. Especially Captain Taber; but Miss Stewart was quite sympathetic, except that she could not help smiling at the simplicity of C. B.'s supposition that the majority of

these people would take "No" for an answer. He said—

"We were taught, 'let your yea be yea, and nay, nay, for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil'; and yet some of these people wouldn't believe me, though I said no as plainly as I could say it more than a dozen times."

"Ah, well," said Mr. Stewart at last, "your best time is yet to come. This afternoon you are to be at the Court to give evidence at the trial, and then, if I mistake not, there will be fun. Hallo, what's that?" as an attendant came hurriedly in with a dirty envelope which he handed to C. B., saying—

"I wouldn't have brought it, sir, but the guy that give it me held a gun at me head and said if I didn't he'd empty it into me."

Not a word was spoken as C. B. opened it and read—

"There's a thousand dollars in gold ready for you if you say in court you never seen the prisoners before, that you don't recognize 'em. There's another thousand if they get acquitted through your evidence. And there's sudden death for the hull gang of you if they get sent up. Bearer waits."

C. B. then handed the note to Mr. Stewart, who quietly tore it in pieces and handed the little pile to the attendant saying—

"Give him that. And call Simpson in." The man disappeared and a minute later a big pleasant-looking man came in and walked up to Mr. Stewart, who said—

"Simpson, Mr. Adams here has just received an offer of a thousand dollars to refuse identification, two thousand if the road agents are acquitted, and sudden death to all of us if they're not. I've torn

the note up and given it back to the man, but that doesn't matter, of course. Just attend to it, won't ye."

And Simpson bowed and retired, while the party resumed their luncheon. But Miss Stewart looked grave and said little, though she looked at C. B. occasionally with keenest concern. Otherwise there was no apparent change of demeanour in any of the men. And after coffee, while the two Americans smoked, C. B. sat in calmest mood and meditated over the events of the morning.

CHAPTER XIX

C. B.'s Awakening

AT 2 p.m., a hack being in waiting, the two men and Miss Stewart were driven to the Court through the swarming streets, C. B. remarking once or twice that he never thought there were so many people in the world. He also inquired earnestly what they were all hurrying so for, and Mr. Stewart told him that all the people he saw were divided into two classes, the one class rushing after money to add to their already overfat store in order to get more power, the other, and by far the larger class, were being hunted by the gaunt spectre of want. They had to rush or starve, and when one of them fell by the wayside there was little hope of him ever rising again, his fellows would trample him to death.

C. B. heaved a great sigh and thought sadly of the lot of these poor people as compared with the happiness of his own folk, and a great longing came over him for that peaceful isle. The next moment he repented of the feeling as being cowardly. He thought if these poor folk had to bear the burden of what he took to be intolerant misery, he could surely endure to look upon them doing so. And then they pulled up at the Court.

Like a man in a dream C. B. was conducted to a place where he and his friends were allowed to seat themselves, and there he gazed around and listened uncomprehendingly, his mind in a whirl of wonder.

At last their case was called, and the prisoners, each guarded by a warder, stood up for identification. There was some little trouble about the oath, which Miss Stewart and her father took unhesitatingly, but which C. B., after having it explained to him two or three times, resolutely refused to utter. His attitude was reported to the judge, who said sharply—

“What religion do you profess?”

“Christianity,” respectfully replied C. B.

“Yes, but what sect, branch, or denomination of Christianity do you belong to?” snapped the judge.

“I do not know of any,” calmly replied C. B.

“Come, come,” the judge went on, growing irritable, we must have no paltering with the time of the Court. If you are a Christian you must take the oath, unless you have any conscientious objections. Why do you object to swear?”

A bright ray of intelligence lit up C. B.'s face as he realized the question, and he gravely answered—

“I was taught in the Bible to swear not at all, but to let my yea be yea and my nay nay, for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.”

“I see,” sneered the judge, and, turning to the Clerk of the Court, “let him affirm. He's only a new kind of crank after all.” So C. B. was allowed to make his affirmation to tell the truth, Miss Stewart gazing at him with wonder-filled eyes as she realized how immeasurably above these keen-faced unscrupulous men of the world and of law was this quiet young man with the peaceful face standing among them like a visitor from some other world.

The preliminaries being completed he was asked for his story of the “Hold up,” and gave it in a manner that impressed every one in Court, especially the judge, for it was clear, succinct and unbiassed,

not a needless word or repetition. When he had concluded he was asked if he identified the men before him as the intending robbers, and unhesitatingly answered yes. Then the prisoner's counsel took him in hand, a man with a great reputation for compelling the most innocent of witnesses to contradict themselves and look like perjurers, a master of that vile practice of making witnesses suffer more than the criminal. But for once he had met his match. To his thundering invective, abuse, sarcasm, and crafty suggestions C. B. presented his unconscious integrity and perfect innocence. He could not be terrified or made contradict himself, and his past life, that bug-bear of so many witnesses who are perfectly honest and truthful as well as desirous of aiding justice, had no dark corners in it. And after a few minutes the loud-voiced advocate retired discomfited, not having been able to shake C. B.'s evidence in the least, but having conclusively directed the attention of the public to the wonderful sincerity of the witness.

Mr. Stewart's evidence was taken more briefly, as it was in effect but a repetition of C. B.'s, and Miss Stewart, in accordance with the chivalric American custom, was spared as much as possible. In these later days I see that woman is no longer immune from insult and contumely as a witness, even in America, but at the time of which I write it would have fared ill there with any lawyer who should have dared to browbeat a woman in a witness box. So that the trial really took very little time. The addresses of counsel were brief, for indeed the abominable gang, of which the three men in the dock formed the principal part, had for long terrorized the district where at last they were caught, and except among their own class, which, however,

is a very numerous one in Chicago, they had no sympathizers.

So when the judge rose to deliver his charge to the jury he was brief and incisive. "We have here," he said, "three road agents who have been caught by their intended victims. There is no manner of doubt as to their intentions or identity. They have attempted to bribe the principal witness, and failing in that they have threatened his life if he does his duty to society, both courses, I am glad to say, being signally unsuccessful. I await your verdict with confidence, because it is high time that we in Chicago show the rest of the States that they have no monopoly of justice, a statement which has rather frequently been made of late."

Without retiring the jury returned a unanimous verdict of guilty, and the judge immediately took up his parable again to the effect that he entirely agreed with the jury's verdict, and that he sentenced all the prisoners to ten years in the State prison. "And," he added, "if either of these innocent persons who have so manfully done their duty here to-day are molested in any way, I trust that the State of Illinois will rise to the occasion and hunt the vermin who would commit such a crime from the face of the earth."

In ten minutes they were all in the carriage again and driving back to the car, a stranger to C. B. seated beside the driver. Before they had reached the car, however, there was a little tinkling noise in the carriage which made them all look at each other in wonder, until Mr. Stewart pointed quietly with his forefinger to two tiny round holes in the windows, showing the passage of a bullet. Miss Stewart turned very pale, but as she looked at C. B. and saw how absolutely unconcerned he was, her

colour came back and she softly murmured what had become a sort of litany to her, her thanks for having been privileged to know such a man.

They reached the car without further incident, to find it besieged by a crowd of people who wanted all sorts of things, principally interviews and photographs, and others who only wanted to gape and shake hands, for which somehow Americans have a mania. But the man on the box, leaping down, made a way through the crowd for the three friends, and as soon as they were within the car Mr. Stewart said—

“As soon as we have ‘line clear’ tell the engineer to get out of this, and let us have dinner as soon as you will, with the blinds and shutters down. I don’t want any potting at me while I am having my food.”

In ten minutes the attendant returned with the news that the engine was now backing on and that in a few seconds they would be on their way out of the great Lake City at a good rate.

All this time Captain Taber had been suffering tortures of suspense. He had not learned the secret possessed by his friend. “Thou shalt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee.” To C. B.’s inquiry how he felt he replied hastily, “Oh, my dear man, don’t bother about my health, that’s as usual, but I’m et up with longing to know how you got on in the midst of all them Chicago sharks. Do tell me, but say, first, are we gettin’ out o’ this?”

“We’re off in a minute, I believe,” answered C. B., and as he spoke the car began to move.

“Thank God,” breathed the skipper, and C. B. settled down to the task of telling him the whole story in his easy, simple style. It took but little time in the telling, and as soon as he had finished the skipper, beaming on him with a smile of intense

satisfaction, pointed to a pile of newspapers lying on a chair, and said with a touch of pride, "There's American enterprise for you, you seem to be the best talked-of man in Chicago to-day."

C. B. made a small grimace expressive of his utter want of desire to read more about himself and replied—

"I am only grateful to get away. It is all very wonderful, but I don't like it, and I am sure it is not good for you, you don't look nearly as well as when I left you last. Ah, there's nothing like the peace of God for soul and body, and I'm afraid there's little room for it among your people."

"Don't say that," eagerly interrupted the skipper. "In dear Fairhaven there is peace, and please God we'll soon be there. Then you'll see the difference between the welter of Chicago and a New England village." Just then Mr. Stewart and his daughter walked in, and after warmly greeting the captain, Mr. Stewart said drily—

"Well, we've escaped, and now if we have luck we'll be in Boston in about thirty-six hours. I hope so, for I begin to feel my fingers itch for business again. I haven't got the hang of you fellows' minds quite. I want to be in the midst of it all again. But you wouldn't understand, so I shan't try to explain. Mind, I'm not saying that you're wrong, but I can't feel as you do, that's all."

Then Miss Stewart chimed in quietly—

"Daddy, you know they are right. What good do we get out of all this fret and hurry? Mr. Christmas seems to me to know better than any of us how to live, and as far as I am concerned I am willing to learn of him both how to live and die."

"That's all very well," rejoined her father lightly, "but in the meantime in order to live at all we must

have some food, and I guess it's about ready now. The car's going a good lick, near forty miles an hour, and I don't think the friends of our late guests have got much chance to molest us." And in pleasant mood they all sat down to a comfortable meal.

After dinner C. B. retired with the captain, leaving Miss Stewart and her father alone. They sat silent for a few minutes, and then Miss Stewart, rising, came over to her father, who sat meditatively puffing at his cigar and murmured—

"Daddy, what shall I do?"

"How, my dear?" responded her father, with a look of deepest love in his eyes as he bent them upon her. "I've always talked to you about everything since ever I can remember, and I am so glad because it helps me to say what I want now, for I could not even say it to mother."

"Go on, dear one," murmured the old man soothingly.

"I love that young man, daddy, with all my heart and soul and strength. And I know that I am not doing wrong, because all that I love in him comes direct from God, the God whom he's always talking about and knows so well. But he doesn't love me, I'm afraid, at least he doesn't show any sign that he does, and what am I to do?"

Her father looked at her seriously and said nothing for a minute. Then he said—

"My darling girl, you can't throw yourself at a man, not if he was half an angel. I love the young fellow too, and if he came to me and asked me for you, I should forget all about dollars and send him to you. But he hasn't, and if I know anything of him he won't. I don't believe he's ever had a thought about marryin' or givin' in marriage. In fact, I'll

own to you that I can't make him out. He's a different breed of man to any that I ever met before. However, dear one, believe this, your father's with you, heart and soul, and short of going to him and askin' him if he'll be kind enough to take my daughter for a wife, I'll do anything you ask me. Your happiness, my love, that's what I live for."

And the train sped relentlessly onward until in thirty-four hours from Chicago the big car rolled easily into the huge station at Boston, where by some mysterious means another coterie of journalists were awaiting them. Again poor C. B. was chosen as the medium whereby the Bostonians could acquire the information that apparently they thirsted for. But as no man can possibly have such an experience as he and remain quite ignorant of the task imposed upon him, so C. B. rose to the occasion, and surprised the interviewers by the astuteness of his answers. Of course he had been coached by both Mr. Stewart and Captain Taber, and something was due also to the difference between the methods of the journalists of Boston and those of Chicago. At any rate an hour after their arrival they were all safely installed in the comfortable Parker House, and feeling more at home than they had done since they left San Francisco or rather the *Golden Gate*.

And now for the first time Captain Taber sent a telegram acquainting his wife and children with the fact that he would soon be among them. He had not done so before, so as not to prolong their suspense, and as to writing, it had been quite out of the question as they had come more swiftly than a letter could have done. So that now while they were imagining him sailing about looking for whales in some unfrequented ocean on the other side of the world, there suddenly came to them the shock of

his being quite near, and their hearts sank beneath the apprehension of calamity.

The news fled from one end of Fairhaven to the other, and over to New Bedford and its environs with great swiftness, for it was felt that something serious must have happened to the ship or her skipper would not have come home. And such excitement as these stern New Englanders ever allow themselves to feel steadily rose until it affected the whole neighbourhood.

Meanwhile the little group at the Parker House had come to the parting of the ways, and Mr. Stewart, remembering his daughter's earnest appeal, was almost at his wits' end what to do in the matter. He felt that to offer to go farther with the two men would be superfluous and obtrusive, and yet he could not bear to part from them like this. For not only had he his daughter's happiness very near his heart, but he had grown to love the patient suffering skipper, whose career had thus been cut short in the prime of his days, and he felt that now if ever was a time to make some good use of his great wealth. In his perplexity it suddenly occurred to him to do the straight thing, go to the skipper at once and tell him his trouble about his daughter, and then lead from that up to his intentions or desires about the skipper himself. Here was a case he felt where any diplomacy would fail.

And while he was thus deciding, his daughter in an agony of doubt and apprehension had locked herself in her cabin. She felt so helpless, so little confident that even her good and powerful father would be able to help her, and yet she seemed certain that unless she became the wife of C. B., life for her would be henceforth a dreary blank. And she was no foolish girl, but an extremely level-headed young

woman, only—she had hardly all her life known what it was to have a desire thwarted, and now in what she felt must be the one object of her life there appeared no way of obtaining it. She had seen C. B. put aside with calm dignity offer after offer of wealth, she had listened to the kind level tones of his voice and noted that the ring of passion never came into it, and had sometimes wondered whether he was not an abnormal man in whom love was so diffused that it could never be concentrated upon one single object. Then with a despairing little moan she flung herself on her knees and prayed to God for this good man's love. In this she felt a thrill of sympathy with her beloved one, who in reply to a question of her one evening as to what he did if he wanted something very much and saw no way of getting it, said—

“ I should ask God for it, but I should ask Him too not to let me have it if it were not good for me.”

So she prayed with deepest fervour but without the proviso, and never felt that she might be doing so without any warrant, not feeling at all inclined to resign herself to the will of God, but feeling that unless she got what she craved for she was aggrieved. A very common attitude, an easily explainable one too, but oh, how sadly illogical. Because it is certain that if we believe in the Infinite Wisdom as well as Infinite Power of God we must be contented to be refused our requests sometimes. And all of us who have prayed earnestly to God for something we wanted very badly as we thought, have known what it is to get our request granted, and afterwards, it may be many years after, to repent bitterly that ever our prayer was heard. It is one of the experiences of all Christians, yet few indeed are there of us who learn to pray with absolute sincerity, “ Thy will be done.”

Captain Taber, lying waiting for the summons to the train, recognized the firm tap on the door announcing Mr. Stewart, and cried heartily, "Come in." His friend entered, noting with satisfaction that C. B. was not present—he had gone to see about the baggage. So advancing to Captain Taber's side he held out his hand and said—

"I've come to bid you good-bye, my friend, for you are practically at home, and urgent business calls me away. But before I go I want to ask you one or two things in confidence. We know one another pretty well now, and I feel I can trust you with my life if necessary. First my daughter has confessed to me that she's in love with that noble chap who has nursed you all the way home. I sounded him on the subject carefully when I felt inclined to suspect him of having designs, as a money grubber like myself would, and he satisfied me that his soul was as white, his mind as pure of any intention of the kind as an angel's might have been.

"Then, as you know, I took no further precautions to keep them apart, for I felt I could trust my girl, and I knew he was sound. But she has been in love with him all the time, and at last feeling she was going to lose him came to her old daddy. And her old daddy, who would die for her, can't help her here. The man doesn't seem to understand love as ordinary men understand it. That he's got no money and doesn't want any doesn't matter to me a straw. I've got a good deal more than is good for me, and I know to my cost just how little happiness there is in a lot of money. Tell me, dear man, could you find out for me soon, and let me know whether you think he has any of the love for my daughter that a husband ought to have, and if it is his modesty holding him back?

“Then about yourself! I know you’ve been a man who has used all the energy and wit you’ve had to good purpose as far as you were able, and that it’s very probable that this disaster that has overtaken you has found you but poorly fixed to face what may be and I hope will be a long life, but of enforced leisure. Now I have often made more money in an hour than you have in all your life by the hardest of hard work, and I am going to ask you as an act of kindness to me to let me do an act of justice, that is to settle upon you a sufficient sum to keep you and your wife in decent comfort all your life.”

Captain Taber was about to speak, but Mr. Stewart raised his hand saying—

“Hold on a minute! what I am proposing is not, cannot be, at all derogatory to your independence. It shall be known to none but you, and alas, that I should have to say so, I cannot claim it as a virtue, for in the first place I shall not miss it from my bank account, and in the next it will give me more real pleasure than anything else in the world except seeing my daughter happy. Now then.”

Two big tears rolled quickly out of Captain Taber’s eyes and down his cheeks as he strove to speak. At last he said—

“Stewart, I would refuse if I could, but how can I? I’m a broken man and all I have been able to save, having been a fairly lucky whalerman too, is five thousand dollars. I have three youngsters, two boys and a girl, none old enough to begin the world, and I have been worried about the future. But Christmas taught me to pray and rest in the Lord, and since then I’ve been happier, feeling that He would see me through in His own way.”

"That's settled then," replied Mr. Stewart going to the bell and touching it. "I'll fix you \$750 a year so tight that you can't give it away or lend it to anybody except quarterly, and I guess that'll see you through in Fairhaven without making you feel too wealthy. Now about the other matter. Here I'm in your hands and I feel that there's nothing I wouldn't do to straighten this out. If you can help me to a successful issue I'll feel eternally grateful."

"Stewart," solemnly responded Captain Taber, "I can assure you that I've often felt that I could pray that your daughter and Christmas would come together. I've watched them together, and I've watched him, and I've watched you, little as you think it, and I've just wore my head thin scheming. But I felt that you wouldn't have it at any price. I wasn't quite sure of Miss Stewart, and as for him, I often felt that I could shake him for not having more get up and git. But oh, Stewart, we need to reconsider our position when we think of him, so brave, kind, gentle and loving—I swear I haven't yet been able to lay my finger on a sore spot in him yet, except maybe his temper, which has boiled over twice and made things hum. Now, honest injun, I don't believe he loves your girl a bit more than he does me, and I feel sure that he loves her in the same way. That's no good to her. She wants a husband as well as a friend. I may be wrong, Anyhow, I'll know soon, and as soon as I know you shall. I cannot promise more honestly, because I have no more influence over him than the wind, nor I believe has anybody in this world unless it is some of those folks of his in Norfolk Island."

Just then there came a tap at the door, and in walked C. B., his face bright and keen, saying—

"All is ready now, Captain Taber, and we've nice time to get to the *dépôt* I'm told."

Mr. Stewart looked up quietly and said—

"Well, you haven't left us much time to bid you good-bye, Christmas!"

A look of blank amazement stole over C. B.'s face as he said slowly—

"I had no idea that we were separating, it never occurred to me. Please forgive me," and he looked so distressed that Mr. Stewart said kindly: "Don't worry, of course you didn't know. Captain Taber didn't know until I told him just now. But it's a fact all the same, and anyhow long farewells are bad for anybody. Mary will just come in and say good-bye, and we shall end a very pleasant trip in the usual way."

C. B. still stood looking like a man who had received a very heavy blow when Miss Stewart came in through the half-open door looking very pale and worn. Her heavy-lidded eyes were full of tears, and the sight of her completed C. B.'s discomfiture. Sinking into a chair he covered his face with his hands and sobbed like a boy. "I didn't know, I didn't think," wailed he, "or I would have been kinder, more thoughtful, more thankful. Oh, I am so sorry we are parting."

Miss Stewart could bear it no longer, but rising swiftly from the chair she had sank into on first entering she rushed across to him flung her arms around his neck and cried—

"We need never separate unless you want to. If you only knew how we, well yes, I, love you. . . ."

At this the young man lifted his face and looked at her. All his long dormant love towards her awoke at that gaze, and he reached for her with his long powerful arms, while she, blushing crimson

from her hair to her collar, laid her dear head upon his shoulder.

The two men in the background, looking on, felt their hearts swell, their eyes grow moist, and their throats become husky at the scene, but they turned solemnly to each other and shook hands. At that moment there was a loud rap at the door; it opened and a rough voice said—

“Th’ hackman says ye’ve just got time to get ye’re train if yez come now.”

They all sprang to their feet except the captain, and in two minutes were all seated in the hack being rattled at breakneck speed towards the station. On the way Mr. Stewart said—

“Well, I guess that business of mine’ll have to wait after all, for I can’t leave ye now until I see ye safe in New Bedford. But then I *must* leave and attend to things. I’ve neglected them too long already.”

At this all laughed merrily, for the three of them had noidea of the magnitude of the interests involved, and the principal actor, Mr. Stewart, behaved in the fullness of his joy as if a million or so of dollars more or less could make no possible difference to him.

CHAPTER XX

C.B.'s Task Concludes

AS they sped away through the pleasant New England scenery towards New Bedford, Mary Stewart was entirely happy. She sat by her lover's side on one of the seats in the crowded car, entirely oblivious of the admiring glances directed at her by the men and at him by the women. She had all the literature of that stern historic coast at her tongue's end, although this was her first actual visit, and vividly remembered now, as she had never done before, how deeply the story of the Pilgrim Fathers would touch her beloved one. And so she chatted away, interesting him beyond measure, but with all a woman's tact, keeping back the painful side, the cruel intolerance, the witch burnings, whippings and other cruelties practised in the name of the gentle Saviour by a community which had only just escaped from the same sort of treatment.

So the time flew by until the train drew up at the funny little old station at New Bedford, much the same then as it is now, for the American railways do not believe in spending much money either on permanent way or stations. And as the train stopped, a bonny but sad-eyed woman pressed her face to the window of the car, and Captain Taber, forgetting his pain, rose up and tried to open the sash, for it was his wife. The effort was too much

for him and he sank back into C. B.'s arms, ready to receive him, while she, having also recognized her beloved one, though so sadly changed, came gliding round with the swiftness of love up the aisle, and dodging under C. B.'s supporting arms laid the dear head on her breast. "My boy, my love, what have they done to you? My pet, my own!" At this sacred scene all eyes turned away, and most of them were wet.

But C. B., who had only yielded a little from innate delicacy, now said (he had never taken his eyes off his friend's face)—

"Dear lady, your husband is well but weak. Please let us get him home where you can be in comfort together, and then you shall have him all to yourself."

She turned a grateful eye upon C. B. and said—

"He evidently isn't very well, will you help me to get him to a hack?"

C. B. looked round and caught Mr. Stewart's eye, who standing outside the car, made signs that he had engaged a conveyance to take their friend up. So they carried the half-fainting man to the hack, which was roomy and comfortable, and were joined on the way by his eldest son and daughter, a stalwart pair of twelve and fourteen years old respectively. And then C. B., having seen his friend comfortably bestowed, and ascertained that his wife and children would have no difficulty in getting him into their house at their journey's end, stepped aside and allowed them to drive off, his native modesty refusing to allow him to suggest that he might accompany them for fear of seeming to intrude.

And as he watched them drive away a sense of great loss and loneliness fell upon him. For the

moment he forgot his good friends the Stewarts, forgot everything but the salient fact that he had faithfully fulfilled his task, and now at the end of it stood penniless and deserted in a strange town thousands of miles from his home. A man came up to him and asked him if he wanted a hotel, and he shrank back bewildered as he realized that he was in very truth homeless. Then with a joyful tide of recollection he thought of the Stewarts, and turned and rushed back into the dépôt meeting them just coming out.

And then the beautiful bright face of his beloved looking so searchingly at him as if she knew what he had just felt, and the knowledge of all that he possessed in her made his heart leap and his eyes fill. Mr. Stewart queried kindly, "Have ye disposed of our friend satisfactorily—handed him over to his folks?"

"Yes," replied C. B. "His wife and son and daughter came for him, and as they said they could look after him all right and he was still half unconscious I stepped aside and let them drive away with him. I didn't realize until they were gone how dependent I have been on him in another way. And then I remembered you and Mary here and I was full of gladness, because apart from our love I should have been very lonely in this big town. And I have no money. I am beginning to see that out in the world one must have money, and that it cannot be despised as I thought."

Mary's face glowed as she caught at C. B.'s arm and cried—

"Ah, you dear unselfish love, I am so glad that you will never need to know the value of money or worry about it. It is a good thing in its place, and I'm never going to run it down, for my dear

daddy has taken care that I never needed any, only I do know so many people who are eaten up with the love of it, I've seen and heard of so many horrible things being done for it, that I dread its power."

"All very well, my dear," interposed her father drily; "in the meantime I'd like to suggest that this isn't the most convenient place to hold forth on economic topics. The hack is waiting and we'll get along to the hotel if you don't mind."

Mary laughingly assented and the old gentleman led the way to the hack, which speedily whirled them off to the comfortable old hostelry on Purchase Street, the Parker House, where in a few minutes they were quite at home, much more so, in fact, than they had been in the immense and luxurious building of the same name in Boston.

They went to their respective rooms and again C. B. felt the sense of loss that he had experienced when first the captain was taken away from him. He had realized that sooner or later they must separate, but in his constant fashion he had not anticipated trouble of that kind and now it seemed almost as if a limb had been lopped off. It was hard work too to keep down a rising feeling of resentment against those innocent ones who had claimed their own, not being aware what C. B. had been to him. While he thus thought a bell boy came up to him and asked—

"Are you Mr. Adams?"

C. B. answered courteously that he was.

"Then," went on the messenger, "thar's a boy here says he'd like to speak to ye," and turning beckoned into the apartment the same lad whom C. B. had met at the station and known as Captain Taber's son.

"Yes, my lad," said C. B. kindly, "what can I do for you?"

"Father's better now," responded the youth, "but he's in a terrible takin' about your not comin' to our house, we don't know how t' pacify him. The only thing would do was for me to come off at once and bring you along."

C. B. immediately decided to go of course, but bade the youth wait while he informed his friends. Having done so and excused himself till dinner, he announced to the lad that he was ready, and in two minutes they were on their way to sweet Fairhaven. As they drove along, the youth, getting better of his shyness, asked question after question, the principal point of which was "How did you save my father's life? he says he owes his life to you, and talks as if we'd pushed you off our doorstep." This last in a somewhat aggrieved tone.

C. B. was hard put to it to explain to this keen lad all the circumstances of the case, but he did his best, and by the time they reached the captain's modest home the lad knew nearly as much as he did himself about the matter.

As they pulled up at the porch they heard the captain's voice within crying, "Run, Delia, see if that's him; Lord, do make haste, do." And Mrs. Taber came rushing out on the veranda with her face flushed, but as she saw C. B. she extended her hand saying—

"If I'd only known, but you didn't let on a word; to think that in the first hour of that poor dear's home-coming we should nearly quarrel over a stranger. Forgive me, won't ye, I didn't know." And she literally dragged him into the room where, spread out to best advantage, the most valued possessions of the family were displayed. And in

the midst of it all lay Captain Taber, in an easy chair, a high flush upon his cheeks and a glitter in his eyes that made C. B. look very serious as he came towards him.

As he stooped over his friend, the skipper made a feeble grab at him with one hand and at his wife with the other, and in a voice broken with tears he exclaimed—

“Here, Delia, look at him! but for him you’d never seen me again, I know it. He’s borne with me with such overflowing, never-failing love from the other side of the world—I can’t ever tell you what this beloved fellow has been to me. An’ then to think that he should be left standin’ at the station like a hired man, it’s just heart-breakin’, that’s what it is.”

“Now, dear friend,” broke in the gentle voice of C. B., “you’re doing yourself harm and giving us all pain for nothing. Nobody was to blame. You were unconscious, your wife didn’t know me, we were all anxious that you should be got home as soon as ever it could be done, and of course I couldn’t stop to explain. Besides, I set out to bring you back to your wife and children, and once you were there what better thing could I do than step aside and let them rejoice over you?”

As he ceased the skipper looked up, his eyes still humid with love, and after gazing for a moment into C. B.’s clear eyes he turned to his wife with a happy sigh and said—

“Darling, don’t be hurt, forgive me if I’ve wounded you, but you can never know all that I and you owe to this man. He’s not only brought me back to you, he’s brought peace to my soul, he’s made me acquainted with God the Father. You know how you used to harp at me to get religion; you said it

was the one thing wantin' to make you happy. Well, I'd never got it your way. I didn't like your preachers, shan't like 'em now any better than before, but I've seen Christ lived from day to day before my eyes, I know what lots of things in the Gospel mean as I never hoped to do, and I'm satisfied to be a child of God. But I'm afraid if I come across any of them cantin', drawlin', fat-mouthed, camp-meetin' religionists I'll have to tell 'em what I think of 'em. I've seen the real and it's made me more fierce against the false. An' it seems to me that the one thing that I can't learn from this beautiful friend is patience and toleration."

He sank back exhausted, and Mrs. Taber, looking reproachfully at C. B., said—

"There now, you are making yourself ill again. I wonder your friend, if he's got so much control over you, doesn't stop you from going on like that."

C. B. was entirely unsophisticated, but his ear detected the note of enmity in the good woman's voice, and he thanked God with all his heart that he had something to fall back upon. Nothing could have induced him to remain where he saw that he would be a daily bone of contention, even had he been as helpless and alone as for a few minutes that afternoon he had felt he was. He did not know, he could not explain, but he could feel that Mrs. Taber, though in other respects as good a woman as ever lived, would forget at once all his services to her husband in the jealousy of him occupying even a remote corner of her husband's heart. And his mind was swiftly made up. Squeezing his friend's hand, which indeed he had never released, he said—

"Mrs. Taber and dear friend, my job here is finished. I undertook to bring the captain home

at his request, and by the help of God and ever so many human agencies He has used I have succeeded. I never could have done it if it had not been for that. And now I must leave you. If the captain needed me God knows I'd stay as long as I could be of any use to him. But he has now some one to look after him far better than I can, his dear wife, and he knows that I have found dear friends, so he has no need to worry about what is to become of me. And I think that now is a good time to bid him good-bye, knowing how safe he is."

"Stay," cried Captain Taber, whose mind had been working fast as C. B. spoke, "I feel you're right; I feel, too, that when you go out of this room I'll never see you agen. But before you go pray; commend my dear wife and children and me to the God you've taught me to know and love."

In an instant C. B. had slid to his knees, and amid a tense silence he lifted his streaming face and cried—

"O dear Father, take all this household into your loving keeping. Let them always know how good and kind and thoughtful you are, especially how you love them. Keep them in that knowledge day and night until the day dawn and the shadows flee away. Keep them happy, contented and useful, but especially kind and loving to all who are about them. And may we all meet again in the new world where Jesus is the Head of all and all are good like Him. For His sake, dear Father. Amen."

Then rising to his feet he stooped over his friend and kissed him as men kiss the dying, turned and shook hands with Mrs. Taber and the three children, and turning swiftly left the house before they had so far recovered as to try and stop him. And as he went he knew that his duty to that fine fellow was

done and that he would never see him again. We too have done with him, except to note that Mr. Stewart fulfilled his promise to the captain in fullest measure and so put him and his beyond the reach of want or that half dependence which is so painful to a gallant spirit that has to accept it for the sake of its dear ones.

It is a good step from the middle of Fairhaven back to the Parker House, but C. B.'s long legs made little of it. He was now free of his charge, free to go to the love that awaited him, and he could not help feeling grateful to God that such a termination had been reached, because he saw full well how hard he might have found it but for the Stewarts, how unconsciously he might have become a burden upon those whose load was almost more than they could carry themselves.

Filled with these reflections he did not notice the distance and reached the hotel before he was aware that he had travelled nearly as far. Mr. and Miss Stewart were sitting on the veranda talking, but Mary's eyes, ever on the alert, saw him coming, and as he strode up the steps she came to meet him with both hands outspread, recognizing with the lightning intuition of love that now he was all her own. For she like Mrs. Taber had unconsciously resented a share in her loved one's heart being held by anybody, although her claim was much slighter. And the first words she said to him were—

“Back so soon? don't they want you any more?”

“No,” he replied gaily enough: they can do without me now of course, and I am free. It was a bit of a wrench at first, but I soon felt that it would be a very wrong thing for me to stand for a moment between a man and his wife. So I have bid them

good-bye, and do not suppose I shall ever see them again."

By this time they were up to Mr. Stewart, and so she did not reply but squeezed his arm as she released it, in that act saying—

"I am so glad, for now you are all mine, my very own." And yet such a bundle of contradictions are we, that she felt quite indignant that her king of men should, as she thought, be so cavalierly treated, flung off as she felt like an old shoe that is worn out and therefore wanted no longer. But no trace of this was to be seen in the bright face she turned to her father as C. B. sat down by his side. Without giving either of them time to speak she said—

"Just think of it, daddy, Christmas is free, they have bidden him good-bye, and we can leave now if you like."

Mr. Stewart took a meditative puff at his cigar before he answered, then he said—

"A good motto, dear one, is never to be in a hurry. Don't you know that since Christmas has been away there has been a whole raft of people here wanting to see him, and hear him talk. We've been followed from Boston, and I know he won't want to disappoint all these eager folks who'd like to hear what he's got to say." And the deep-set eyes twinkled beneath their bushy grey lashes.

"Indeed, Mr. Stewart," broke in C. B., "I don't want to see another reporter. And unless you wish it I won't. All I want now is to be left alone to enjoy the company of Mary and yourself.

You might have left me out I think without hurting your reputation for truth, but never mind. Now I think as you don't want a lot of newspaper stuff written about you, it's time I admitted that I

don't either, and if you are quite willing we'll get back to Boston, or rather New York, by the Fall River boat to-night. I know what these provincial cities are, and although I love New Bedford wholeheartedly, on this occasion I'll be pleased to get away from her."

This decision of Mr. Stewart's sent the young folks into a silent delight. It would be so good to get away alone, and though neither of them knew what a Fall River boat was like, they were charmed at the idea of going to sea after that weary rail-road time. All the callers were put off, no one was admitted to the privacy of the trio, and so well was the secret kept that when they departed for the station to catch the Fall River train there was nobody about to pester them with inconvenient questions. And when after a short railway journey C. B. walked with Mary on his arm aboard of the palatial vessel which was ready to convey them through the picturesque long Island Sound route to New York, she was literally *exaltée*, for she had not even then realized how unsophisticated he was.

"Is this a ship?" he cried in utter amazement. "Dear Lord, what wonderful things men do! I should never have imagined that such luxury was possible on the sea!" And when an obsequious negro steward showed him to his beautiful stateroom, with its perfect hotel appointment, he felt as if nothing henceforward could astonish him. But he was wrong. For after a good night's sleep he sprang up shortly after daylight, washed, dressed, and went on deck in time to see the wonderful entrance to New York Harbour. And as he gazed, lost in astonishment, at the amazing traffic, at the masses of buildings everywhere, a mighty steamship from England came gliding majestically past, and recognizing the flag

he took off his hat to it. Just as he did so he felt a light touch upon his arm, and there stood his beloved, radiant as the dawn, a sweet smile of loving greeting upon her beautiful face. No one was near, for they were on the uppermost deck of all, which at that hour is almost deserted. And so they embraced, and their souls went out to each other in a long, loving, lingering kiss.

Then, unheeding the flight of time, they stood on their lofty platform while the huge craft beneath them, deftly handled by the invisible pilot in the wheelhouse, threaded her way among the host of small craft up to her berth. As she drew nearer C. B.'s amazement deepened, for he saw the train ferries, laden with railway cars, gliding across the wide arm of the sea, noted the wonderful energy manifested on every side, and again and again turned to his lovely companion, saying in short gasps—

“What a struggle, what work to be sure. And all to get money. And when it is got, what then? Surely God never intended man to struggle so hard for money alone. It does not seem right to me.”

But she, looking up at him shyly, said in reply, “Perhaps you are right, dear one, but you know that there are animals, insects, that work far harder than man and with apparently far less reason, the ant and the bee for instance.”

But whenever she took him up like that she found that his ignorance of so many things which had always been an open book to her precluded all argument. He was in the primitive stage when everything around is new, and consequently was unable to appreciate the difficulties and limitations of civilized man.

“Come down, dear,” said she at last, “father will be seeking us”; and they descended to witness a scene

on the great main-deck that arrested C. B. as if he had been paralysed. It was crammed with people, all ready to go ashore, all apparently full of eagerness to leave the vessel and recommence the struggle. And as he looked upon the swarming crowd his heart was filled with a great pity for them as he thought how intolerable such a life would be to him. But his sweetheart deftly guided him to her father's cabin, where stood the old gentleman, his morning cigar between his lips, calmly surveying the busy scene with the eye of a master and enjoying the stir and bustle.

He greeted them with curt affection and invited them to come in and rest; "for," said he, "you must have been on deck a long time."

"Since daylight, I think, daddy," replied Mary laughingly, "but it hasn't seemed like five minutes; it's so interesting to watch the absolute wonder of Christmas at everything. I declare I never have known anything more delightful in my life than to witness his amazement and to tell him the most commonplace things, which he receives as if they were details of miracles. Oh dear, dad, I never was so happy, never."

"I'm so glad," rejoined her father, "and now you two young people must just leave things to me, for we're at the wharf. Here, steward!" and an obsequious black man came running up, "get our grips and take them down the gangway to a hack. We'll go to the Everett House."

"Yes, sir, I'll be there at the hack station waitin' for you when you come down the gangway, sir;" and off he went.

Like a man in a dream C. B. followed Mr. Stewart with his beloved on his arm, but guiding him rather than leaning on him, until, in some strange fashion as

it seemed to him savouring of an enchantment, they found themselves in a very babel of noise of men shouting, horses' hoofs striking fire on the slippery cobbles, clanging of bells and shrill whistlings, seated in the carriage and passing swiftly through a tremendous entanglement of traffic between mighty rows of buildings. Tenderly his beloved looked in his bewildered face and sympathized with him, as much out of his element as a fish is out of water, while Mr. Stewart, his square jaw set and his bushy eyebrows frowning, sat opposite them busily weaving plans for their future.

It was not until they were quietly settled in their comfortable sitting-room at the spacious hotel in Union Square that C. B. began to lose that worried, harassed look which so distressed his sweetheart. Then, when Mr. Stewart had left them, pleading business, she said tenderly—

“ My dear one, I know how you hate all this. And so do I for your sake. Now tell me if you can what you would like to do after—well, after we are married ? ”

Without a moment's hesitation he answered—

“ Why, I would like to take you home. Home to that dear place where all this needless bustle and uproar never comes, where peace and love reign without a break and God is King. Oh, how I long to be there again ! ”

For a moment her brow clouded as she felt that if the choice were to be made by him between living here with her in the vortex of gay society and going back to his island home alone, he would give her up, and the question trembled on her lip. But she dared not ask it. She felt that where he was she could be happy, and that she had chosen rightly in taking such a man for her husband in any case, for

although full of spirits and intelligence and so easily first in all the gay companies she had been wont to frequent, she had always longed for the peace and quiet of a country where the absurd conventions of civilization did not count. And she was glad. So she said quietly, "In the words of Ruth, in that book you love so well, 'Whither thou goest I will go, thy people shall be my people, thy God my God. I will leave all for you, dear, and I feel sure that I shall never regret my choice.'"

He, simple soul, took all that for granted, and as he had never dreamed that there had been anything heroic in the sacrifice Mr. Stewart was making, or thought about the monetary aspect of the affair, so now it seemed to him the most natural thing in the world that this dear girl, loving him as she said she did, should be glad to throw all the stress and strain of the life she had been used to behind her and follow him. I fear that many will account it callous selfishness on his part, but it was really not so. In his very soul he felt that it would be best for them both. He remembered the lovely life of his father and mother, and could conceive of nothing happier, more delightful for his beloved. And so his soul was at rest.

They sat there and talked of their simple future until the waiter came and announced luncheon, which they took together as the father had not returned. And the afternoon slipped away as the morning had done, until the shadows lengthened and still Mr. Stewart did not come. At last, when it was quite dark, he returned, and flung himself into a chair with a sigh of weariness. Immediately his daughter was at his side full of solicitude.

"Tired, daddy dear?" she queried gently.

"Yes, love, and ruined," he answered quietly.

“ There is just enough saved from the wreck to take us out to your lover’s island and keep us there till we die. And I don’t know that I’m sorry. I can’t say that the Lord gave, but I think the Lord has taken away, and I can say I know, that blessed be the name of the Lord.”

CHAPTER XXI

Marriage and Departure

FOR a little while after Mr. Stewart had communicated this important news they all sat in perfect stillness: C. B. because he did not in the least understand what had happened, but he could see it was something that had tremendously upset these two people who were so dear to him. Mr. Stewart was the first to speak.

“I can never feel sufficiently grateful,” he said, “for the impulse to fix up that annuity for Taber on the spot and for yielding to it. It was only in the nick of time, for this great crash came yesterday afternoon. Had I been in San Francisco it would not have—— But there, why should I say that, Levy is as good and keen and straight a man as I am, and the very best of us get caught sometimes. Even now, if it wasn’t for you, my boy, I think I should have turned to and had a fight for it; but you’ve kinder infected me with your pleasant doctrines, putting me out of conceit with money grubbing for its own sake.”

Mary here burst in impetuously—

“Oh, dear Daddy, that I should hear you say so makes me so glad. I feel glad to think that we have lost our money if only we can get to this happy land that Christmas is looking forward to so hungrily. I felt almost jealous of it, and now I am as eager as he is.”

Just then a rap came at the door and in walked

the bell-boy with a telegram. The old gentleman tore it open and fell back in his chair, his face ghastly. Both Mary and C. B. sprang to his assistance, but he roused himself with an effort, and waving them back to their seats said, in a hard, strained voice—

“Mary, my love, you’re poor mother couldn’t stand the strain, she’s dead.”

Mary sat as if stricken to the heart, unable to speak, but she was a girl of great force of character, and she was rallying all her forces to meet this quite unexpected blow.

So her father resumed, saying, “She always had a weak heart as you know, dear, and besides she always had a dread that we should come to poverty. And so I suppose, when some heartless fool blurted out in her hearing that Levy and Stewart had burst up, the blow was more than she could stand. And so she died far away from me. Poor Mary, dear wife. There’s one consolation, she went as she had always wished to go without a long probation of pain, instantaneously from one life to another, thank God. And now, dear ones, I’ll get you to excuse me. I’ve been very hard hit and I feel old and tired. I need rest and quiet, and so I’ll go to my room and lie down a bit. Christmas, I’ll leave you to comfort Mary as no one else can.” And he left the room, walking heavily, almost dragging one foot after the other.

C. B. rose on the instant and strode to Mary’s side, where she sat with lips tight shut, her cheeks flushed and her eyes bright and dry.

“Dearest one,” he murmured, taking her in his strong arms, “don’t fight against your natural feelings. It is sometimes good to cry, I feel sure it would be good for you now. And if ever any one had reason to cry it is at the loss of a good mother.”

The last word, softly uttered as it was by her lover, touched the hidden spring of her tears, and they flowed, easily, gently, but copiously, C. B. holding her in his arms and stroking her beautiful hair as if she were a child. And at last she lifted her head and looked him full in the face, saying—

“I do thank God, Christmas, that we’ve got you in this difficult time. Do you know, I think even poor old dad will come to lean upon you directly as I feel I must do now. Why is it, I wonder? I suppose because you are really dwelling in the shadow of the Almighty God, and the changes and chances of this mortal life seem such trivial things to you.”

C. B. fondled her hair a moment or two longer before he replied—

“No, darling, they none of them seem trivial, but I know in whom I have believed, and because He is infinitely wise I do not worry, being sure that He will do His part. I only try to do mine without hitting my head against a brick wall, as I now know some people do if they want to get it down, instead of waiting to hear from God whether it is good that the wall shall come down or not.”

“Ah,” she said in reply, “I’m afraid I shall never come to your standard. Even now you don’t seem to worry at all about getting back home, yet I feel you must be longing to see your mother and father again and all your friends as well. And it is so far away as well as being a difficult place to get to. I have not heard you say one impatient word about getting back, and, do you know, dearest (I’m going to tell you everything), I can’t help wondering sometimes whether you are not just a little callous, unfeeling in some things.”

As she said this she looked at him keenly to see how he would take it. His face lit up with a beautiful

smile as he replied, "No, dearest, I don't think so. I do feel very keenly, more keenly than I wish, all that goes on around me, but if I have understood anything of the character of Jesus, its principal feature was that in His love for others He had no room for thinking about Himself. All that concerned His personal welfare He left to His Father, and in that I do try, I have always tried to imitate Him, because I have found it the easiest thing to do, I suppose. What seems so strange to me is that any one should wonder at me doing this or trying to do it. The Gospels are full of instructions about it, Christianity seems to be built on the words 'trust in God,' and yet you, dearest, and others whom I have met who are like-minded, look upon me as a being whom they cannot understand for practising what is so continually preached."

All she answered was—

"Forgive me, dear, if I can help it I will never allude to it again, but try as hard as I can to imitate the practice, knowing from your example how good it is. But I can tell you one thing that will surprise you," she went on. "If any of my friends, however Christian their profession, had been in our position, you would have heard worrying and weeping enough, I can assure you. People don't cast all their care upon the Lord in practice, only in theory, at least no people that I've ever met but you. And it seems to me that you don't get any care, that is you don't let things become a care to you."

Just then Mr. Stewart came in, looking perceptibly older and seeming to stoop more. "Now, my children," he said, "it will be best for us to have a consultation. I've quite made up my mind to go with you to Norfolk Island, in fact I had I think before this news came of my double loss. But it

would simplify matters considerable if you two were married, as well as save expense. What's your idea, Mary, it's no use asking him, because it's just one of those things that he wouldn't trouble about—you'll have to decide that for him after worrying me so to let you have him."

"Father," said Mary, "would it be right and proper so soon after mother's death?"

"I've thought of that," rejoined he, "and unless you care about what people say I don't see where the objection lies. When our dear one was with us she only thought of our happiness, and now she's gone I'm sure her spirit is the same towards us. Besides, if you really care about what people say, remember that nobody knows you here, nor, unless you want to have the usual big show of a wedding, will anybody know. If I was you I'd cut all that business out, and I'm sure that if you consult Christmas he'll feel the same about it as I do. Only, my best beloved one, do remember that on this, the greatest occasion of your dear life, I want you to be quite satisfied and happy."

While this conversation was proceeding C. B. sat and listened with a far-away expression in his eyes, which he always wore when anything was being talked about which he did not understand. And although the subject under consideration was of vital interest to him, he did not in the least comprehend their observations upon it. And Mary, catching sight of his face, said with a smile—

"Oh, father, it's just too funny us discussing this before him as if he had nothing to do with it at all. It's so strange that he should know nothing of these things. Tell us, dear one"—to C. B.—"what a wedding is like with your people?"

His face brightened directly and he answered—

“Oh, it is very simple and pretty. We make it a festive occasion throughout the whole community, no work being done on that day except what is necessary. The young people stand up before Mr. McCoy, who has a licence to marry people, and he joins hands pronouncing them man and wife in the sight of God and of all the people. They take one another for husband and wife and they are thus made one. Then we have singing, very much singing and praising God. But before the marriage everybody has helped to build a house and prepare a piece of land for the couple so that they have a place to themselves, I was going to say of their own, but we don't understand anything being our own as other folks do. The idea of having anything which we will not share with others is not known among us.”

“But how about wedding garments?” queried Mary, with a touch of true femininity.”

“Well, as you know,” replied C. B., “we are not troubled with many clothes, but we put on the best we have, as we do on Sunday when we all meet at stated hours to worship God in company. And the girls wear flowers in their hair, which makes them look pretty.”

Mr. Stewart here interposed, saying—

“I don't think I'd pursue the subject any further if I were you, Mary. We can be as simple as C. B.'s folk if we like and I think we had better. As we are going to live like this I think it would be foolish not to begin as early as we can, and I suggest that we go to a parson and let him marry you just as is done in the country by eloping couples,” and he laughed aloud, saying immediately after: “Don't think me unfeeling, but the thought of hefty Jim Stewart's daughter getting spliced in such a hole and corner fashion as this makes me. I reckon in

the ordinary way your nuptials would have run me into a couple of hundred thousand dollars at the very least, and we'd a made the Pacific Slope hum." For a moment he looked regretful and then his face cleared and he added, "But I hope we've left that costly kind o' tomfoolery behind us for ever, darling, and I'm sure we'll be happier."

Therefore it came about that the next day, after judicious inquiries made by Mr. Stewart, that the three went over to Brooklyn to a quiet Manse, where Mary Stewart and Christmas Bounty Adams were made one by an aged minister, who behaved as if he fully realized the solemn nature of the ceremony and was in full sympathy with the comely pair. And when Mr. Stewart, with a touch of past lavishness would have pressed a fifty-dollar bill on him as a fee, he refused firmly, saying, "My fee is five dollars, and I would not take that but that I have to live. Do not tempt me with much money, friend, for it brings a snare as I know full well." Then he gave them his blessing and they returned to the Everett House, Mr. Stewart introducing the newly wedded pair to the proprietor as Mr. and Mrs. Adams, in order to save explanations and invidious remarks.

The rest of the afternoon was devoted to clearing up Mr. Stewart's business affairs, a task of no great difficulty, in which he was aided by his daughter. It mainly consisted in surrendering all he possessed, except a sum of twenty thousand dollars or four thousand pounds, to the receivers of his estate. That sum he considered would suffice for all their needs in their new life, and for everything else preliminary to commencing it. And this being all put in train the old gentleman rose with a sigh of relief, collected his papers and put them away. Then he said—

“Love and business are all very well in their way, but we must also eat; and now I vote that we go down to the restaurant and do so. It is early for the regular diners, so that we shall not be crowded.”

He did not tell them that he had ordered a simple little dinner for the three of them at the far end of the room, where they could be almost in private; and when C. B. saw the pretty little table decorated with choice flowers, his face lighted up, and with great delight he called his bride's attention to what he considered the kindly behaviour of the proprietor.

The meal proceeded in the happiest fashion, for though the food was of the simplest and best they all ate but sparingly, for their hearts were full of joy and their minds full of hope. But they could not help noticing that at a table not far from them there was a party of four young men whose behaviour, from being quiet and gentlemanly at the outset, as bottle after bottle of champagne was emptied became boisterous and rude. Presently it became evident that their attention was entirely directed to the table where our friends sat, and as their voices grew louder and louder the epithet “nigger” was frequently heard. Mr. Stewart and Mrs. Adams heard all too clearly, but C. B. was quite unmoved, for although he heard the uproar he did not understand its import. At last one of the roysterers rose and shouted for the head waiter, who came instantly; whereupon the young man demanded to know why a nigger, coupling the word with other abuse, was allowed to dine in the same room with white men.

The head waiter endeavoured to explain, but as he did so the other three joined in the talk, which grew louder and louder until the proprietor was

brought up by one of the other waiters. By this time Mr. Stewart was fully alive to what was going on, as was his daughter, and Mary whispered her father that they might slip away. But there was a dangerous look in the old man's eyes now and he indignantly repudiated the suggestion. Then C. B. leaned over and asked him whatever could be the matter, and how the broil at another table could affect them. Stewart looked straight at him for a moment and then said—

“The wine has got into their foolish heads, and they are discussing you as a nigger who has no right to dine in the same room as them. And if I know the signs, unless the proprietor is a man of grit, there's going to be big trouble.”

He had hardly uttered the words before a big raw-boned youth sprang to his feet and shouted—

“It's an outrage to have to sit in the same room with a nigger, and you are a beast to allow it. But I'm going to have him out of it as you haven't got the grit, and so here goes.”

With that the crazy creature leapt across the room knocking his chair half a dozen feet away, and seized the unconscious C. B. by the collar and arm, at the same time yelling foul abuse. There was a shriek from Mary, but her father held her arm as she was about to spring to her husband's rescue.

“Keep quiet,” he said, “this is where your husband comes in.”

Indeed it was, for C. B., as quietly as if he had been invited to look at something, rose from his seat and winding his arms around the frantic youth placed him helpless on the floor. This unexpected defeat of their champion enraged the other three, who rushed to the rescue, but were in their turn, attacked by the waiters, who at the proprietor's bidding charged on

them in force, and succeeded in overpowering them.

Then C. B. lifted his prostrate enemy into a chair, and holding him with one hand as if he had been a child waited while Mr. Stewart said—

“You shameless brutes to behave like this. Lucky for you that the English gentleman you’ve attacked is as good a Christian as you are bad citizens, or some of you would have been broken all up. You Americans! I know ye by the back, and you’re a lot of dirt that brings shame upon the name of American. Take ’em away,” he said to the waiters, “and put ’em on the pavement. It isn’t worth having them arrested, for better folks than them would be hurt. Now, sir,” turning to the proprietor who stood looking anxious, “what do you think of this?”

“Well, sir,” replied the proprietor, “I think you and your son-in-law and his wife had better go as soon as ever you can. You see I’ve got my living to get and I can’t run counter to public opinion. I’ve no doubt that Mr. Adams is a perfect gentleman, but he is a bit dark, and, well, I needn’t explain to you, you know all about it. I shall be glad if you’ll go to-night, for I don’t think you’d like to hurt a man that hasn’t harmed you.”

Stewart gave him a look of withering contempt, and then bidding C. B. and his daughter see to their packing went out, returning in half an hour with the news that he had secured rooms in a good family hotel, and concealing the fact that he had arranged for them to have their meals in private during their stay. An hour later saw them transferred, Mr. Stewart saying to the proprietor as he took his leave: “I bear you no ill will, my friend, but if you knew the kind of man you’ve turned out of your house to

night you'd be sorry for having done so. He's worth a whole city full of such empty-headed dregs as those who insulted him."

"I fully believe it, Mr. Stewart," answered the man, "but there's no sentiment in business, and I can't afford to shut my hotel up because the presence of a good man in it is objected to. In fact we hotel proprietors make our living mostly out of the bad men, and we must look after their interest or go out of the business."

Stewart was so angry that he could not answer, and as soon as possible they left those inhospitable walls and took up their quarters in their new abode, feeling, if the truth be told, almost like fugitives from justice. Then when they had settled down they began to think about getting away, and for the first time since they had known him C. B. began to show signs of enthusiasm. It was no easy matter to find any vessel that was going near their destination, but at last they heard of a large Boston barque that was bound to Sydney, New South Wales, with kerosene oil in cases, and they went down to see her. She was a fine powerful vessel of about 1,300 tons, but by no means intended to carry passengers. But like most ships of her type she had been built with due regard to the comfort of her officers as far as accommodation went, and in her roomy saloon there were two cabins vacant which Mr. Stewart and C. B. pronounced to be just the thing for them.

So they arranged a passage to Sydney for the three of them for four hundred dollars, the captain, a shrewd down-easter by the name of Eldridge, agreeing to lay in extra stores so that they should fare well on the long passage. Also Mr. Stewart decided to have the cabins comfortably fitted up, for they looked very bare, and having made his arrange-

ments and learned that the *Julia D. South* was to sail in ten days' time they returned to their temporary home well pleased with their day's work.

To Mr. Stewart's earnest inquiries C. B. replied that he could give a list of everything that was most needed by his friends on the island, for as Mr. Stewart said, it would look mean to go there, intending to stay for life, empty handed, especially when coming from a land where all the necessaries as well as the luxuries of life could be so readily procured. So for the next few days C. B. and his wife were very busily engaged collecting goods to take with them and having them carefully packed for sending to the ship. And when at last the sailing day came they went on board with the full assurance that nothing had been forgotten, and that they were besides as well equipped for the long passage before them as it was possible for them to be.

C. B. as the time drew near for leaving America grew steadily more lively and happy looking, indeed, as his wife said affectionately, he seemed quite transformed. Her spirits rose with his, for she had been somewhat depressed at the near prospect of leaving the land of her birth as she felt for ever. In spite of her deep and true love for her husband and the certainty she felt that she could know no happiness apart from him, such feelings were perfectly natural and to be expected. But when she saw how sedately happy her father seemed to be, and how bright her husband was, she resolutely put aside all regrets and determined henceforth to look forward only.

Punctually to the day the *Julia D. South* cast off her moorings and in tow of a small tug went swiftly seaward, her three passengers standing on the monkey poop and watching the fast receding shores with keen interest. C. B., however, was not long

before all his attention was claimed by the working of the ship. It seemed to him so very long since he had taken his part in what had become his profession that he watched with keenest appreciation every bit of work done, his fingers itching to have a share in it. At last, at the hoisting of the topsails, he could restrain himself no longer, seeing how great a task it was for her numerically weak crew, and rushing along to the halyards he caught hold high above the hands of the two men who were pulling before the block, and in an instant they felt the benefit of his vigorous assistance.

Then he forgot all about his being a passenger and to his wife and Mr. Stewart's unfeigned amusement joined in heart and soul with the crew at their work, making his presence most helpfully felt in everything he touched. As he was doing so the skipper drew near Mr. Stewart and his daughter, saying—

“Our friend's been a sailor man, I should say, from the way he handles himself!”

“You may well say that,” replied Mr. Stewart. “He was a boat steerer or harpioneer in a South Sea whaler, and according to what his old skipper said the very best in the ship. I've never seen him at his work before, but judging from what I know of him I should say he would be extra good at anything he undertook. He's that kind of a man, isn't he, dear?”

“Indeed he is,” replied Mary, and oh, I'm so glad that he's found something that he likes to do. I know how he has been suffering for exercise lately.”

When presently C. B. rejoined them, looking with an air of comic ruefulness at his hands, they roasted him unmercifully for forgetting his dignity as a

cuddy passenger at which he only smiled and replied—

“See what a lazy life does for a man. My hands have got that soft that it is most painful for me to hold a rope. They feel as if they were all red hot.” And the skipper, who was listening, laughed loudly before he remarked that it sounded so familiar to him who had suffered much in the same way himself.

They had an excellent slant of wind right from the start, which was most fortunate, for the crew were a poor lot and needed licking into shape according to Yankee ideas before they were fit to do all that was required of them. This same drilling hurt C. B. horribly, but recognizing his position he did not venture to interfere in any way, even when his gentle wife expressed her indignation at the harsh treatment the men were receiving. After all, as he explained to her, there was little real cruelty, it was little more than drill, though he thought unnecessarily harsh, and he told her of several incidents on board the *Eliza Adams* which amazed her.

So that by the time they had reached the equator she was a smart ship and C. B. with his willing hands, his ready smile and his perfect habit of non-interference except to help with his great strength was a highly popular favourite fore and aft. But I regret to say that he was also taken as soft because of his unfailing good humour, looked upon as a man you might safely impose upon, and many were the sarcastic remarks passed upon the hard luck as they called it of his wife, to be tied to a man who seemed to be utterly devoid of pluck, although they put it much more coarsely after the manner of seamen. The two aspects in which he was regarded seemed contradictory, I know, but I have had much experience of similar cases I am sorry to say.

But the worst offender was the captain. When once a sailing ship is well started on a long passage the life of her master, unless he be a man with a good hobby of some kind, is a very lazy one. He has literally nothing to do except find the ship's position at noon each day, and I have often wondered how it is that our sailing ship masters having so much time on their hands have not turned out a number of famous literary men from their ranks instead of being represented as they are, but by one giant, and he a foreigner, Mr. Joseph Conrad. In captain Eldridge's case the old adage about Satan's opportunity for idle hands held good, and he began to amuse himself by paying assiduous court to Mrs. Adams, yet in so polite and insidious a manner that only her feminine wit divined his true intent; even her father, immersed in books, tryin' to catch up on to his readin' as he termed it, failed to notice anything wrong. And Mary could do nothing, for she had nothing definite to complain of, and she did not wish to make any unpleasantness.

C. B. went on his happy way, spending much of his time at work and not noticing in the least that he was leaving his beloved wife too much to the attentions of the skipper. Indeed his true and honest mind was clear and incapable of suspicion, and had any one hinted their ideas of the wrong drift of things he would have been unspeakably shocked as well as amazed. And so the clouds thickened insensibly about them as the good ship sped on.

CHAPTER XXII

Back to Primitive Things

MANY harsh and ignorant things have been written concerning the masters of ships, principally, I think, because of the crimes committed by a few of them. Therefore I feel that it ought to be plainly stated that, remembering the temptation a shipmaster in a sailing ship on a long voyage is subjected to daily, it speaks well for human nature in general, and for seafarers in particular, that those crimes have been so few, so very few in porportion to the number of individuals who have been tempted to the commission of them. It is too often forgotten by those who ignorantly write upon this subject how free from all restraint save that of his own conscience is the master of a sailing ship at sea on a long passage. If he be a cruel, brave bully and tyrant—and believe me the bully is *not* always a coward as is generally supposed—he finds abundant opportunity to gratify his propensities and is almost sure of immunity from retribution when the vessel reaches port from the well-known careless character of his victims.

Where he has a few passengers another side of him may develop, as with Captain Eldridge, a side that must be touched very lightly upon but which all will understand, and many have been the tragedies resulting from his lack of gentlemanly self-restraint. And in the present case all the indications pointed

to a tragedy fast approaching as the captain, encouraged by the apparently entire indifference of the two male passengers, pressed his unwelcome attentions daily with more perseverance upon the young wife. She, poor girl, took great care never to be alone ; when her father remained in his cabin she remained in hers, C. B. being always fully occupied with work among the seamen. But Captain Eldridge lay in wait for her, and as soon as she appeared on deck with her father he took all sorts of interest in placing chairs, getting wraps, etc., and then when they were settled seating himself by the lady's side and paying her all sorts of odious compliments in a low voice while ogling her in a peculiarly bold and insolent manner.

With all the desire in the world to keep the peace and natural fear of the consequences of any action being taken on her part, Mary felt that she must do something soon. She could not ask her husband to remain with her always, for she loved to see him exercising his mighty limbs at really hard work, and knew how much he felt the need of exercise. Not only so, but she hated to disturb his quiet serenity of mind by the hideous suggestion that the captain was paying assiduous court to his wife, and besides she had nothing definite to go upon, even her father would have been unable to substantiate a complaint.

Presently the matter was taken out of her hands in a quite unexpected manner. The chief mate, a very keen young Philadelphian named Haynes, keeping his eye upon his chief as all mates do, was disgusted to see how Mrs. Adams was persecuted by him. He himself scarcely ever had a chance to speak to her, and there may well have been a spice of jealousy in his mind, but in any case he was very angry with his skipper and contemptuous of

C. B.'s want of perception. Yet he had grown very fond of C. B., as indeed everybody had but the skipper, and the more he grew to like him the less could he understand his apparent neglect of his wife, leaving her to be pestered continually by the skipper.

At last he could restrain himself no longer, and calling C. B. into his berth one afternoon watch below, he said, after fidgeting about a bit—

“Look here, old man, I’ve got very fond of you—I believe you’re about as good as they make ’em, but I’m hanged if I can understand how you allow Eldridge to persecute your wife as he does. He never lets her alone. And if you had any eyes in your head you’d see how peaky she’s gettin’ with all the worry of it. I don’t want to make trouble, I’ve got my living to get, but I honestly couldn’t see this cruel game going on any longer without warnin’ you, as you don’t seem able to see a hole through a ladder.” And all the time the mate was speaking he watched C. B.’s face. It showed no signs of change except that the lips tightened up a bit and the dark eyes glowed with a sombre fire. At last he spoke.

“Thank you very much, Haynes, I’ll see to it at once. I’m afraid I am guilty of neglect, and I can never forgive myself for being so selfish. I thought she was happy with her books and her work and her father, and that I was pleasing her by working about the ship. I didn’t dream of anything of this kind happening. But,” and he rose, holding out his hand, “I’m very grateful to you, Haynes, for your warning, which I’m going to act upon now.” And he strode out of the cabin, Haynes watching him with a queer sensation of wonder as to how the storm would burst, for burst it would he felt sure,

C. B. went straight to his cabin, but his wife was not there. From thence he ascended to the deck, where he saw, as if it had been arranged for him, a tableau such as the mate had been speaking about. There was his father-in-law asleep with an open book in his hand in one deck chair, his wife in another next to the old gentleman, and seated on a cushion at her feet the skipper, whose face, distinctly visible to C. B.'s eagle vision from where he was, bore an expression entirely evil. His wife's face he could not see, but he went quickly towards her, saying—

“Mary, dear, will you come down for a moment, I want to speak to you.”

She rose immediately, turning towards him as she did so, and he saw that her dear face was pale and drawn and that her eyes were full of tears. Choking down the awful wrath he felt rising within him at the sight, he assisted her into their cabin, closed the door, and said—

“Mary, dear, forgive me, I never dreamed of neglecting you, but I see that I have. And I fear that I have subjected you to persecution of a very bad kind. Tell me, dear, what has the captain done?”

She looked doubtfully at him for a moment as if wondering what the outcome would be, but she was too much akin to him in soul to palter with the truth through fear, so she said—

“Dear love, he has been very offensive for some time now. His actual words have had little meaning in them for me, though I know they all had a double intention, but his eyes and his looks generally have filled me with horror. I have felt again and again that I must tell you, but, dear one, I dreaded a scene, I find I don't know you well enough even yet, and then there was nothing actually to complain about except his looks. But

he certainly has made me very unhappy, and there could be no mistake as to his meaning."

Again C. B. said with grave penitence—

"Forgive me, dear, I had not imagined that men could be so vile. I suppose to them I must look like a semi-idiot. However, you shall have no more of this. I will go to him now."

The captain was just then coming down into his stateroom whistling dreamily, and C. B., following him to the door, said—

"I should like a few words with you, Captain Eldridge."

"Oh!" returned the skipper insolently, "what about?"

"About your behaviour to my wife, which, I'm sorry to say, has been entirely rude and distressing to her, making her feel quite ill. It has I find been a topic of general conversation in the ship, but I, being exceedingly unsuspecting and never dreaming that a gentleman could behave so, have left her more than I ought to have done, and you have taken advantage of this simplicity of mine to behave as you have. Now my eyes are opened, I tell you this must cease."

While C. B. was speaking Captain Eldridge's face grew almost livid with rage, his eyebrows contracted until they met across the bridge of his nose, and as soon as C. B. had finished he snarled out—

"Looky here, Mr. Educated Coon, I'll allow no nigger to talk to me like that on board my ship, and if you open your head to me again on the subject, I'll shoot ye: understand that. Now get out o' my stateroom an' keep yer squaw out o' my way."

C. B. retreated, keeping his eyes fixed upon the scoundrel, who doubtless at that moment would

have carried out his threat, so mad was he. As soon as C. B. reached his cabin, where he was awaited by his wife, he entered, closed the door and fell upon his knees, crying in agony of soul, "Lord, keep my hands, keep my temper, save me from doing wrong. Don't let that man try me beyond endurance, and see right done."

Then he sprang up, calm again, and told his wife all that had happened, only leaving out the opprobrious epithet applied to her by the captain. As soon as he had done so he went on deck and sought Mr. Stewart, to whom he told the story. The old gentleman listened with compressed lips and lowering brows until it was finished, then said with a sigh, "Well, I guess we're in the hands of a deep-dyed scoundrel, and we shall not have much of a gaudy time from this out. Now we shall all have to learn from you how to bring God into all our troubles, or else feel pretty miserable."

Indeed he was right, for from thenceforth no indignity that it was in Captain Eldridge's power to inflict upon them was omitted. He really seemed as if he laid awake at night thinking over new ways of annoying them. And the poor wretch did not know that only by constant prayer and watchfulness did C. B. restrain himself from slaying him with his bare hands. Coincidentally with this development another arose. Every member of the crew knew of what had happened in the mysterious way that news spreads on board ship, and especially resented the way in which the skipper continually vented his wrath and disappointment upon them. Not only the foremast hands but the officers were thus disaffected, and undoubtedly the ship was getting fully ripe for mutiny.

Every time that C. B. came on deck it seemed as

if the skipper was waiting for him, and insults and provocations came thick and fast. With his hand in his hip pocket where his revolver lay, the dastard (for a man must be a dastard who insults and abuses an unarmed man, having himself a lethal weapon) would hurl every epithet of contumely that he could invent at the great fellow, who took not the slightest notice of him until one day, maddened by the contemptuous silence as he deemed it of the passenger, he hurled a foul and filthy insult at Mary. With a leap like a tiger's C. B. was upon him in spite of the quick shots fired, had torn the revolver from his grip and flung it overboard, and then, forcing him to his knees, said in a voice that was terrible in its deep calm—

“You bad man, you don't know how near you have been to hell. Abuse me all you care to, it's better than praise from a man like you; but if you value your life, don't say a syllable against the good woman who is my wife. She is no subject for your foul lips.”

With that C. B. released him and he staggered to his feet, all his crew looking on at his discomfiture. If there be a greater punishment for a man than he then endured without possibility of retaliation I do not know of it. He had no second revolver, or he would assuredly have gone and loaded it and laid for C. B., and shot him from some secure hiding-place, after the most approved American methods. He staggered into his cabin, shouted for his steward, and when that trembler appeared, he said—

“Go an' get a revolver from either Mr. Haynes' cabin or Mr. Fisher's (the second mate), I don't care which; but get me one or I'll smash yer face in.”

The steward fled on deck and, seeing the mate, almost screamed—

“ Oh, Mr. Haynes, the skipper wants yer revolver, says he’ll kill me if I don’t get it for him. I believe he’s gone mad. Oh dear, oh dear, whatever I’ll do I don’t know.”

The mate’s face darkened, and, turning contemptuously away from the steward, he went below and rapped sharply at the skipper’s stateroom door.

“ Come in,” was snapped at him, and pushing back the door he looked in at the skipper, who was standing like a wolf at bay.

“ What you want ? ” he snarled, and the mate replied—

“ I understand you sent the steward to search my room for my revolver. Now see here, what’s in that room’s mine, and don’t you dare to meddle with it or there’ll be bigger trouble than you want. I’m at your service on deck, but my room’s mine and no man’s coming into it without my leave.” With that the mate turned on his heel and made for the deck again.

Now although the atmosphere seemed surcharged with electricity nothing happened. Stewart and his daughter both implored C. B. to be very wary and careful of the skipper, but he smiled placidly as usual, and replied that a greater care than he could exercise was being manifested for all of them : and went on his usual way.

They were now getting down into the “ roaring Forties,” and the stern weather characteristic of those immense southern spaces had set in. Needless to say the vessel was handled in seamanlike fashion, because she was a Yankee clipper, and it is not possible to imagine them being handled otherwise. So as the great west wind rushed out of its lair,

they trimmed their yards to it, set up preventer backstays, swayed up all halyards and tautened all sheets, while the beautiful craft, like a high-mettled steed, laid herself down to her mighty race over the six-thousand-mile course.

Great was the temptation to C. B. to help in these hard doings, to join in the work when she was shipping green seas over all, but he dared not leave his wife again for one minute, for he feared what the malevolent ingenuity of the skipper might effect. And he dared not trust his father-in-law, who seemed to have developed a strange habit for him of reading himself off to sleep at any hour of the day. It looked as if the stimulus of money getting having been removed, he was sinking into a lethargy from which it would need something very urgent to arouse him. And as he was only sixty-two that was a bad sign.

Eastward, at three hundred miles a day, the good ship sped, the wind and sea holding steady and true. C. B. and his wife watched her flying over the immense combers with unconquerable energy, not lightly as the sprite-like wanderers of the ocean that floated above, but as if in full crashing triumph over all obstacles and dangers. Neither of them had ever such an experience before, but it appealed most to C. B., whose recollections of the leisurely movements of the old whaler were entirely at variance with this wonderful utilization of the wind's power. Hour after hour they would sit watching the beautiful fabric, noting every forceful bound and lurch, their ears attuned to the great sea music, the blended chorus of wind and sea and ship all working amicably together, but all strung up to concert pitch of highest energy.

Never since that remarkable day when C. B.

disarmed him had the skipper made a sign of either enmity or friendship—he had simply ignored their presence on board. But this unnatural quiet had the effect of making C. B. doubly watchful because he could not understand it, and he lived as we say a dog's life, that is, he always seemed to have one eye open: which for a man with a poor physique and weak nerves would have been fatal, but had little or no effect upon this perfectly healthy and natural man. Still, there was one thing which troubled him, the absolute disregard of attention to the boats. As an ex-whaleman, of course, he had to look upon the boats as being always in readiness. Pretty they certainly looked, with their sword-mat gripes and their gaily painted covers, but how they were to be got out puzzled him, for there were no davits shipped.

And when he mentioned his fears to the mate, who in utter defiance of the skipper continually chummed up with him, that worthy said—

“Well, I guess it's about the same in all merchant ships of all nations; we don't go much on boats because we ain't got much confidence in 'em. I know there have been boat voyages that make you gasp as you read about them, but you take the average sailor and he don't think much of boats. And I'm a pretty average sailor too.”

This did not content C. B., but he kept his ideas to himself, saying that bad as the skipper might be, he was a No. 1 seaman, and that it was most unlikely that any harm could come to the ship.

And no one seemed to remember the nature of the cargo!

That was why, I suppose, when during the second dog-watch of a particularly strenuous day, when the ship was doing fully fifteen knots an hour on her

course, nobody took any notice of C. B.'s remark that there was a smoky lamp somewhere. His keen scent had noticed it but none of the others could, being used moreover to the unpleasant fumes emitted by a kerosene lamp when it is turned down too low. Still, every now and then he would utter his complaint, until suddenly there was a cry from forrard that quickened the heart-beats of the listeners—

“There’s smoke comin’ up the forehatch.”

And everybody remembered that the ship had 164,000 cases of kerosene stowed in her hold, realized that they were in the midst of the stormiest, remotest ocean in the world, afloat upon a volcano due to burst, and quailed. No blame to any of them. From the outside we may pass judgment upon what men do in such crises, but we should be chary of so doing :. it is an awful test of manhood.

The mate rose to the occasion. “Call all hands!” he cried, “and pass the hose along.” Then he sought the skipper and reported to him, at the same time reminding him of the state of the boats. The skipper received the news in the same curious, careless way that he had treated everything of late, but to the mate’s remark about the boats he made no reply whatever. This angered the mate, who repeated the remark in a raised tone and asked for orders concerning them. In a strange, unnatural voice the captain replied that he could do what he liked, it would not matter. Of what use were boats here, and he waved his hand around over the desperate sea. For a moment the mate hesitated, then shouting—“I can’t waste time with you,” he rushed forrard, intending to give orders to have the boats cleared, when he saw C. B. and two hands

working away at them, the rest being busy at the forehatch with a monkey pump.

It was a sad business but heroic in the extreme, that little group of men engaged in the hopeless task of trying to subdue the flames below among that terrible cargo, and aft one of their number steadily pursuing his task of steering the doomed ship on her course through the darkness. Suddenly the mate roared—

“Drop those buckets and get the boats clear, what’s the use of wasting work?” and, obedient to his cry, all hands rushed to the boats, realizing in a dazed sort of way what the neglect of this slender chance of life might mean. But C. B. and his two companions had toiled at the biggest boat on the skids to good advantage, for they already had her clear, her gear all sorted out and water put in her.

Then C. B., hurriedly whispering to his helpers to get such food as they could out of the cabin, caught up his wife and placed her in the stern of the boat. Next he settled his father-in-law by her side and bade them remain where they were. They obeyed him implicitly, for at that moment he seemed to them to be gifted with amazing power and foresight. But he was at his wits’ end because the ship was still running before the gale like a hunted thing, and the very act of heaving her to, that is, bringing her round to the wind and stopping her way, was fraught with the utmost danger, yet it had to be done if the boats were to be launched. And the captain made no sign.

At last the mate, able to bear it no longer, rushed off to where the captain stood by the helmsman, and shouted so as to be heard above the roar of the gale—

“ We’ve only moments left ; the fire may burst up through all hatches at once at any time now.”

“ All right,” said the skipper wearily, as if the matter did not concern him very much.

“ All, all hands to shorten sail.” He had hardly uttered the words when with a roar that dumbed the gale a column of fire burst upwards from the fore hatch as wide as that opening and as high as the topsail yards. The man at the wheel, paralysed at the sight, let the spokes slip from his nerveless grasp, and the vessel gave a tremendous sheer up into the wind. She was of course carrying a press of canvas, and the weight of it caught aback, heeled her over, until she was on her beam ends. One gigantic sea towered above her like a wall, then swept down and tore everything movable from her decks over the lee side which was now under water.

C. B. standing by the boat in which was all that he held dear felt her heel and saw the sea coming. He clutched at the boat’s gunwale just as the wave overwhelmed the ship, and was swept with her out and away into the tormented sea, clinging with all his great strength to her as she went. Presently he found the strain upon his arms ease, realized that the boat was still afloat, and climbed into her. She was half full of water, but his dear ones were still safe cowering in the stern sheets. He uttered a fervent, “ Thank God !” and feeling all his vigour return got an oar out and tried to get the boat’s head round before the sea so that she would ride easier. But it was an impossible task for one man, however strong and skilful, and he realized it directly, resigning himself to the mercy of God. But full of hope even then.

He had just settled down by the side of his wife and grasped her clammy hand when the whole of the

wild heavens were lit up by a tremendous glare, in which every detail of the ship close at hand was manifest, an awful though a glorious sight. For the space of a couple of minutes the mighty mass of flames soared heavenwards, lighting up the whole expanse and revealing the heaving waste of ocean all dotted with wreckage. But it showed also that the sea was smoothened greatly, as was inevitable from the enormous quantity of oil which had been liberated. C. B. did not think of the cause of this relief, but he seized the opportunity to get the mast stepped and the jib set by means of which he could keep the boat under control. And within the next five minutes before the glare died down and the last sign of the ship disappeared, three men were rescued from the watery wild around, the mate, the cook, and one seaman. Then the light went out and darkness most profound swallowed them up.

Throughout that terrible night the boat, managed with consummate skill by C. B., rode gallantly and easily over the tremendous billows. But the strain of watching was intense, and when day dawned at last on the tormented breadths of ocean the effect of it upon C. B. was painfully manifest. Nestling side by side at his feet were his wife and her father, sheltered as well as was possible, and marvellous to state, sleeping soundly. The rescued men, however, did not appear to have been able to sleep, they knew the danger too well, and besides, they were in a miserable plight with wet and cold. Bad as they were, however, Mr. Haynes, looking at C. B. and noting the effect that his ceaseless watch had had upon him, at once offered to relieve him at the helm so that he could rest a little if sleep was impossible. Very gratefully C. B. accepted his offer, handed the tiller to him, and slipping down by the side of his

wife had only just time to murmur a few words of thanks when he fell fast asleep.

When he awoke the weather had become finer, and Haynes had managed to get the mainsail set with a couple of reefs in it, so that something of a course to the northward could be made. There were still heavy masses of clouds marching swiftly up from the west, and occasionally obscuring the pale blue that looked so hopeful, and the waves were still huge and threatening, but the boat was now making good progress without shipping any water to speak of, and the sun diffused some warmth through their chilled frames. So that as C. B. looked around he felt a great wave of thankfulness surge over him, and kneeling he invited all hands to join with him in praising God for their wonderful deliverance. Very solemnly and heartily they all agreed, and some of them for the first time in their lives honestly and unreservedly recognized God as the Lord by praising him for that their lives had been spared.

Then a meal was taken, the provisions having been examined and apportioned with the utmost care, and Mary looking up into her husband's face with eyes of deepest affection, said—

“Only to think, Christmas, that so short a time ago we were your patrons, showing off the power of wealth, I'm afraid, and now we are like little children in your hands.” And Mr. Stewart chimed in laconically—

“I guess it's good for a man to get down to the beginning of things occasionally. I ain't a bit comfortable, nor I wouldn't be here if I could help it, but somehow I feel glad to think I am here and getting along almost as well as the next man.”

And C. B., refreshed in body as well as exalted in

mind, raised his voice in the grand strains of "Oh God of Bethel by whose hand," to the manifest wonder of all his companions, but also to their exceeding comfort.

CHAPTER XXIII

Saved from the Sea

NOT a word was spoken by any of his companions until he had finished his song, then his wife, looking up at him with streaming eyes, said—

“My dear love, how is it that I never knew of this wonderful gift of yours? I could sit and hear you sing all day, forgetting everything else in the world. How could you hide such a talent as that?”

For a little while C. B. hardly knew what to say, for he actually felt shy as if he had done something wrong. And at last all he could say was—

“I’m sorry, dear, if you like it so much, that I haven’t sung before. I’ll make it up to you now. But first of all I’d like to ask our chief here what he’s proposing to do.

Haynes immediately suggested that C. B. should take charge as being the most experienced boatman, but C. B. would not hear of it, saying that as long as any particle of the late ship’s furniture remained upon which they had to depend the senior officer of the ship should be in charge of it, “and I,” concluded C. B. “am only too glad to be at your orders.”

“Well, then,” said Haynes, “my idea is this. We’re about midway between Prince Edward Island and the Crozets, that is in about 46 S. We dassent keep on east for we can’t stand the weather, and anyhow if we did fetch the Crozets there’s nothing there, we might all starve to death or remain in misery for

many months. I think then we'd best stand on as we're doin', about north-east by east as near as I can figure it, hoping to be sighted by some of the clippers running east who won't go very far south at this time of the year because of the ice. An' I guess you'd better keep your pray-machine going, for as I figure it we've only got provisions enough with the utmost economy to keep us going for fourteen days. Fortunately an old fad of mine comes in handy now. I always did keep a couple of fishing lines and some hooks in one of the boats, and it happens to be in this one. It's the first time I've ever known any good to come of it, but it may now mean the saving of all our lives."

"Thank you," said C. B., "as I know very little of geography and nothing at all of navigation I have no doubt you are right, and now if you like I'll give you another song." Without waiting he plunged into another sweet old melody and followed it up by another and another from the rich stores of his memory until he himself called a halt. Everybody was gratified, not merely by the sweet sounds but by the words which now for the first time meant so much to them. As for Mary and her father, it is impossible to say what their feelings were. It was a new side of their beloved one that they had not suspected. Oh! I know of no more poignant pleasure than to find that one you love and honour and trust goes on to develop new excellencies undreamed of before. Not merely that they do not fail you in your need, but that they rise to heights undreamed of by you. It is certainly a foretaste of heaven, as the failure of those you have lavished stores of love and trust upon to justify any confidence at all is misery not to be explained.

Now the life of a castaway boat's crew in the

middle of a mighty ocean is a fascinating subject, but one that requires much room and great care in handling. Principally, I think if dealt with faithfully from the inside, it would reveal the true character of each individual, because every one of the people involved has ever before them the spectre of an awful struggle to exist, a struggle wherein body and soul come to death grips, but where, thank God, it has so often been proved that soul is the stronger, conquering the primal longings of the body and vindicating its supremacy.

But somehow in this boat's crew, although privation and suffering from exposure had full course, no one was really unhappy. When the awful vision of the end as it might be came before any of their minds, it was only able to affright them for a moment; then its effect departed, its place being taken by a sense of trust in God akin to that of a little child in its parents, which, I think, is the most precious instance of faith that we have. But the privations endured by them were not so terrible as some that have been recorded, for the weather having grown finer remained steadily so, much to the disgust of many of the captains of the great clippers, who by the failure of the heavy western winds felt that their chance of making a record passage that trip was being completely spoilt. They never dreamed of a little company of fellow-men being in such straits quite near them that they blessed God with their whole hearts because the usual sturdy winds had moderated their rugged force, and the great swelling seas of the south were rolling quietly, almost as the waters of an inland lake, the vast swell affecting them not at all.

Twelve days since they saw the last of the ship and only two day's rations remaining, because in that

part of the ocean Mr. Haynes' fishing line was of practically no use. Only the roughest of dead reckoning had been kept, for not only was there no sextant or chart in the boat but there was no compass, and Mr. Haynes' course of NE. by E. was merely the expression of habit. So that although they hoped to be drawing near to St. Paul's Island they could not know with any certainty. And cheeks grew thinner, eyes more hollow and sunken, but, thank God, as yet no word of complaint or anger. Nor had there as yet been any discussion as to what might happen if they sighted neither land nor ship, and all their food and water were gone. Not a word, yet it was in every one's mind, coupled with the thought that having endured the pangs of semi-starvation for so long, starvation itself could not be so bad to bear.

On the morning of the thirteenth day C. B., standing up to stretch himself as his custom was on waking, took a searching glance all around the horizon. And his eyes lighted upon a dazzling speck of white upon the western verge of the horizon. It did not need a second look to tell him that the blessed vision was the fore royal of a ship lit up by the first gleam of the rising sun. But he said nothing, just waited till the morning prayer was made and the tiny meal was served and eaten. Then he raised himself up again, his heart full of unspoken pleading for those with him, lest a disappointment should await them, and there she was evidently steering in a line with them and coming at such a rate that now her courses or lower square sails were plainly visible. Then C. B. said quietly—

“Dear friends, there's a ship steering straight for us, and if they are keeping anything of a lookout on board of her they should have seen us by this time.

Only we are not so easy to make out as they are, being on the wrong side of the sun."

No need to ask where, his outstretched arm told them, and all saw her like some mighty angel swooping down on them, and from unaccustomed lips came gently the gracious words, "Thank God." She fascinated them as she came nearer, a fine full-rigged ship, her stately beauty growing upon them with every scend she made. And now they knew she must see them, for she still steered right for them, and C. B. declared he could see men on the foreyard. Nearer, nearer still, until suddenly she swung up into the wind, showing a broad band of white along her side which had black above and slate colour beneath, stamping her for all the seafaring world as one of the fine ships of the great firm of Messrs. T. & J. Brocklebank of Liverpool.

The yards on the main swung round in fine style, and she lay motionless but for the gentle heave and sway of the sea. "Out oars," shouted Haynes, "we mustn't keep him waiting. Lord, what a lovely ship!" So the oars were shipped and all hands pulled lustily until they got alongside, where they found a whip with a basket already rigged for the hoisting inboard of any too feeble to climb. Mary and her father went up in this way, but the rest of them, in spite of their feebleness, climbed on board pilot fashion up the swaying man ropes. And the boat, like many another good servant that has outlived his usefulness, was turned adrift, much to C. B.'s sorrow.

The genial captain came to meet them and welcome them on board the *Majestic*. He had over twenty passengers on board and was, of course, bound to Calcutta. Whoever heard of a Brocklebank ship going anywhere else in those days? The lady

passengers captured Mary and carried her off, their gentle hearts full of compassion for her sad plight, for in spite of her courage and the calm heroism with which she had endured the misfortune that had befallen them, her sunken cheeks and hollow eyes and wasted arms told their own tale of privation. Her father too, who had borne up amazingly with the dogged courage indeed of the genuine American of the better class, now looked frail and very old, while C. B. and the members of the crew, though thin and haggard, were not nearly so bad as might have been expected.

Hospitality of every kind was shown them, but food and drink were given judiciously, after the well-known rule for fasting persons, and so rapidly did they recover that the next evening they were all, except of course the cook and the seaman, able to come to the well spread saloon dinner table, where they were made very much of. They were indeed a great acquisition to the ship, for swift as her passage had been (those vessels usually made the run out from Liverpool to Calcutta in from eighty to ninety days), the passengers as usual began to feel the tedium of the voyage, as they termed it, hang very heavily upon them. Consequently this romantic break in the monotony was welcomed with great joy by them all, and as they heard more and more of the strange adventures of one at least of their guests, their interest rose to a very high pitch indeed.

It was Saturday, and after dinner the patriarchal skipper announced that he would hold the usual prayer meeting, for he was a Christian indeed, and endeavoured to provide the means of worship for all, while obliging none to attend. And he said, "We shall be able to-night to turn it into a praise meeting

for that the Lord has been so good as to let us rescue the perishing.”

C. B. looked up at him wonderingly. He could hardly believe his ears. But there was no mistake at all. He presently realized that for the first time since he had left his beloved home he was going to enjoy what to him was the most precious privilege of life, that of meeting with the Lord's people in prayer and praise. His eyes sparkled and his face flushed so that his wife, looking up at him, felt the influence and bowed her head in silent thankfulness.

Partly from curiosity, but in some cases in pure reverence, most of the passengers attended the meeting in the saloon that night, also a few of the crew. The grand old skipper presided, and after a hymn had been sung, in which C. B.'s glorious tenor electrified them all, he read a chapter, the stirring story of Paul's shipwreck by Luke. And then he prayed, being indeed accustomed to take all the parts himself, since up till now no one of his crew or passengers had ever accepted his invariable invitation, "Will any brother or sister lead us in prayer?" There was no change in this evening's exercises, except that the dear old man was a little less stereotyped than usual, especially when he thanked God for permitting the crew of the *Majestic* to be the means of rescuing their perishing brothers and sisters.

And then he uttered his invitation, at which C. B. immediately sprang to his feet and poured out his very soul. What a prayer that was to be sure! It flooded the hearts of the hearers with a sense of the presence of the Divine in their midst, it established with a certainty that nothing could shake the connexion between the man and his heavenly father. When at last he ceased, and be sure that he

did not pray long, there was a strange sensation among them all as if they expected something to happen. And then the sweet voice of Mary rose, never sweeter than now, following her husband. Never before had she raised her voice in prayer in public, but now the inspiration seized her and she could not refrain. Sweetly and gladly she praised the Lord, and the people who had felt strange tremors while C. B. was praying now owned to a peace that passed all their understanding stealing over them. She ceased and, wonder of wonders, the hard rugged old citizen, the keen fighter in the business arena, Old Man Stewart of the San Francisco Stock Exchange, lifted up his voice. I have not dared to give a sample of either C. B.'s or Mary's out-pourings, but Mr. Stewart's was so new and vigorous and eminently common-sense that I cannot refrain.

"Almighty God, in the name of Jesus Christ I thank you for all the mercy you've shown me and my daughter and her husband. You've saved us from a horrible death, you've brought us among good people, and you've made me see as I never did before the glory and majesty that is yours. If I knew, how I'd compete with the angels in praising you for what you've been and done to me lately, but I don't, and I guess 'tain't necessary either. So I'll just say thank you, great God, for my dear son and his good influence, thank you for savin' us, thank you for the lovingkindness of this good ship's company and all, and all. . . ." Then the rugged voice faltered, the tall form trembled, subsided into a seat, and he buried his face in his hands sobbing.

And C. B. sprang to his feet, singing with his soul in his voice, "All hail the power of Jesu's Name." They all sang it through, following him verse by verse, and then when the voices died away

the old skipper solemnly pronounced the benediction, closing what he afterwards declared was the most memorable prayer meeting he had ever attended. And after the folks had dispersed in chastened mood to talk over the strange happenings of the evening, he called C. B. and his wife to him to ask of them certain things. He needed, as he explained, to be strengthened in his soul by the conversation of such natural Christians as he felt sure they were.

His communion with them was of mutual benefit and much pleasure, and C. B. felt happier than he had done for a long time, not that he was ever unhappy, but that being a man he had sadly missed the pleasure he had renewed this night. Then when the old skipper had bidden them good night C. B. and his wife and Mr. Stewart sat and talked over the amazing happenings of the past month, the strange ways in which it was pleasing the Lord to lead them. And gradually the talk came round, as it must do, to ways and means. They were now bound to Calcutta, and as Mr. Stewart had remitted the balance of his money to Sydney except for the trifle they had brought on board with them, all of which had been lost, they were practically beggared; still they could not talk with C. B. and feel that, for his cheery optimism was entirely proof against any such depressing thoughts. He would only quote the simile of the sparrows and smile contentedly.

Next day they swung round the island of St. Paul's, had set the course northward for Calcutta. And as soon as the yards had been trimmed the captain called C. B. to him and said that there was just a chance of them meeting a ship bound South to Sydney or Melbourne which had been to Calcutta with horses, then a very lucrative trade and one that

gave employment to a good many vessels. Then he said—

“If we do, I will signal to her and try to get them to take you on board, for much as I should like to take you on to Calcutta with me I know how hard it would be for you in your present penniless condition to land in a port so very far away from where you are bound to. And none of our passengers here are wealthy, they are all people who have their living to earn, or I know they would help. So we will pray that a vessel may be sighted into which you can be transhipped and thus the way made clear for you.”

C. B. thanked him and withdrew to the society of the dear ones, whom he found seated among a delighted group of the passengers who were listening spell-bound to some story Mr. Stewart was telling them. And as C. B. approached they hailed him gladly and made room for him in their midst, while Mr. Stewart said laconically—

“Now I guess I’ll turn the story over to him, for not only was he there and knows the whole thing, but he’s the boss story-teller there is, lays clean over any spinner of yarns I ever heard of, and what is best of all, you can bank your entire substance that he’ll never tell you anything that isn’t exactly so to an actual dot.”

C. B. laughingly inquired what this was they were getting up for him now, and learned that it was the story of poor Captain Taber’s breaking up, which, although Mr. Stewart and Mary had heard several times, they could not possibly tell as he could. And yet, having heard Captain Taber’s side of the yarn, Mary was able to put her oar in occasionally in order to prevent her husband’s modesty from entirely covering up his good part in the great business. For like a

thoroughly good wife she loved to have her husband praised. His glory was hers, everything that was spoken of him truly and gratefully warmed her very heart, for he was part of herself and her typical hero.

So C. B. told the story and more also, and in such pleasant ways the time sped on until they had been a week on board and felt as if it had been but one day. There was no more respite for C. B.'s voice now, especially as the *Majestic* had a piano in her saloon, and C. B. now discovered to his boundless delight what he had never dreamed of before, that Mary could play beautifully: a born musician, she could accompany anybody with or without the music as soon as she got the air. And how they did sing! It seemed as if they could have thus poured out their very souls. Mr. Stewart made a mental note that whatever they decided to do without in their new simplicity at Norfolk Island when they got there, a piano or an American organ certainly would not be one of the things, since it was a source of such great delight and innocent pleasure.

This pleasant time came to an end with great suddenness. A sail was sighted coming towards them and the captain shaped his course to meet her closely. As she drew nearer it was seen that she was a fine full-rigged ship, and the flags soon revealed that she was the *Ben Ledi* from Calcutta to Sydney, thirty-one days out. To the signal "I wish to communicate by boat" the stranger backed her maintopsail and lay to expectantly, while the captain of the *Majestic* invited the three to accompany his chief officer to the boat to the other ship, wisely remarking that if she would take them so much time would be saved, if not there was no harm done. Of course the three hands of the late *Julia D. South's*

crew would go on to Calcutta ; being sailors, one port was as good to them as another.

Hurried and fervent farewells were made and many tears were shed, for the trio had made themselves much beloved during the short time of their stay ; then laden with good wishes and a substantial outfit of clothing generously contributed by all the passengers they dropped into the boat and departed. As only a mile separated the two ships but a very short time elapsed before they were alongside the *Ben Ledi*, and the mate of the *Majestic* who had accompanied them climbed nimbly on board and briefly stated their case to the captain, offering in their name to pay whatever should be considered fair for a passage to Sydney.

No difficulty whatever was made, for the *Ben Ledi* was also a big ship with good accommodation, and the captain, though a cautious business-like Scotchman, said that he was happy to be of service, and as for the passage money, that could be settled by the agents in Sydney. So a whip was rigged for Mrs. Adams and her father, they were lightly lifted on board, C. B. sprang up the side ladder, the mate after a hearty handshake all round leaped into his boat, shoved off, and away they went.

As soon as ever the boat was clear the captain shouted—

“ Fill away ye’ere main yard. Come up on the poop, friends, and wave good-bye to your ship.” And with swelling hearts they watched the hospitable *Majestic* dipping her flag in farewell as the *Ben Ledi* gathered way and began to slip through the water southward bound. The captain, introducing himself as “ James McIntyre, at your service,” made no attempt to persuade them to come below until the *Majestic* was hull down, and then gently suggested

that they might be glad to see their cabins, like a courteous host doing the honours of his house to distinguished visitors. And so they became passengers in yet another ship on this curious tortuous journey of theirs to the lonely lovely isle of their hopes.

They found to their astonishment that this ship was scarcely less sumptuously fitted than the last, that the cabins were roomy if less comfortable, and that an air of quiet ordered peace reigned on board. And Mr. Stewart said emphatically—

“How is it, I wonder, that people will tell such needless lies about this thing? Now I’d always believed the Britishers were hoggish, unsociable, et up with pride. That British ships were dirty, no account tubs, where life was hardly worth living and comfort was unknown. I’ve heard the term lime-juicer applied to them all and felt that it meant all that was contemptible and worthless. And now I find everything the exact opposite, and I’m filled with shame that I ever believed such lying slanders. Ah well, there must be some evil spirit at work tryin’ to keep the two countries enemies. As for me, I’ll bless a Britisher as long as I live if it’s only for the way I’ve been treated and seen folks behave under that flag lately.”

You can hardly imagine how C. B.’s heart thrilled with joy at hearing his father-in-law say this. For he, like all the rest of his island brethren, was passionately patriotic, and praise of the dear land they had never seen was only second to praise of the Lord and His glorious kingdom in their innocent ignorant minds. Perhaps it was as well that they had no opportunities to become disillusioned, for Heaven knows the latter process is easy enough to even our most fervent admirers who visit us and take the trouble to inquire into things.

Truly the old gentleman's encomia were well deserved in this case, for while the *Julia D. South* was certainly far from being a fair representative of American packets generally of that day, both the *Majestic* and the *Ben Ledi* were among the very best of their class, magnificently built and equipped, and in the hands of men who were a credit to their profession. Of course the *Ben Ledi* was not so comfortable in some respects as the *Majestic*, for she was not carrying passengers, but that did not trouble our friends, who were grateful and delighted at the thought that they were once more on the direct track for their last but one port.

The passage was entirely uneventful, for no extraordinary weather was experienced, and while every man in the ship knew his duty and did it well, they were an exceedingly taciturn lot, being nearly all pawky Scotchmen. Having given their guests the best reception in their power and treated them in every way as first-class passengers, they left it at that, as if they felt that it was no part of their duty to amuse and entertain their guests as well. And doubtless they were perfectly justified in their own eyes, but for my part, having been in a few of them, I detest a *silent* ship. It always seems as if everybody was sullen or as if some trouble was brewing.

Certainly it did so here to our friends, for Mary said to her husband on the third day—

“Whatever can be the matter with these folks, they go about like automata, and whenever I have spoken to one of the officers or the captain they have seemed so embarrassed and troubled that I have felt quite guilty, though for the life of me I can't think of what. Their whole stock of conversation seems to consist of 'ay,' long drawn out, or a funny noise that they make with their mouths shut, all

m's. The chief officer did say the other day when I remarked how beautiful the weather was, 'that's a faact, mem,' but he got quite red in the face over it."

C. B. laughingly reprov'd her for her criticism, and reminded her how the silent folks were almost always those who did most. And in any case if their hosts were silent the ship was as near perfection in every respect as a ship could be.

And so she remained. Through the dreaded waters of the Great Australian Bight, where she fought out a tremendous easterly gale in splendid fashion, through the intricate navigation of Bass's Straits, where she behaved like a yacht against light, baffling winds and unfavourable currents, and then as with a howling "Southerly buster" behind her she flew north at the rate of fourteen knots an hour, she won the most whole-hearted and lavish admiration from her guests. Mr. Stewart waxed enthusiastic, a rare thing for him, and going up to the captain, who was standing with impassive face near the binnacle, he burst into praise of the ship and her many superb qualities as far as he could tell, having travelled a good deal at sea. To which the captain rejoined drily, "Aye, she's no' a bad ship."

Presently they opened up the wonderful harbour of Port Jackson, so cunningly concealed as to its entrance that our greatest navigator sailed right past it unsuspectingly, and after picking up a pilot filled away again and sailed up to the crowded anchorage like some mighty bird settling down to its nest and gradually folding its wings. There was a crash and a tremor all through the ship as the anchor fell, and there she lay, another passage safely accomplished, and her passengers' hearts full of joy.

CHAPTER XXIV

Home at Last

IN one hour from the time the *Ben Ledi's* anchor was dropped off Sydney Cove, C. B., Mary and Mr. Stewart were in the fine offices of the firm with which the latter gentleman had deposited the small remainder of his fortune, and explaining as briefly as possible the vicissitudes which had attended their journeying thither. They were welcomed with great cordiality by the head of the firm, Mr. Oliphant, who at once invited them to come and be his guests in his beautiful home on the shores of Woolloomoolloo Bay, where they could rest and refresh themselves while they made their preparations for the last stage of their journey. They all smiled at the idea of their needing either rest or refreshment after the luxurious life they had been leading of late, but gratefully accepted the good man's offer nevertheless.

Now visitors to the Queen City of the South are usually captivated at once by her charms, especially with the wondrous beauty of her glorious harbour, and their enjoyment is always heightened by the delightful hospitality of the citizens. But although neither of the three friends could be said to be insensible to either the beauties of nature or the wonders of man's handiwork, they were all filled with a great longing for the home about which C. B. had spoken so lovingly, and whose simple delights he had so

often pictured to them. And therefore, when Mr. Oliphant at his cheerful table that night produced a programme of visits and sightseeing that he and his wife had arranged for their guests, he received somewhat of a shock to find that they manifested not the slightest desire to avail themselves of his thoughtful kindness.

He had been amazed at the refusal of his guests to taste the costly wines he had set before them, wondered too at the extreme simplicity of their tastes, which made them neglect nearly all the carefully prepared dishes on the table and content themselves with the plainest fare, but now to find that they were careless of the wonders of Sydney, both natural and artificial—well, it was incomprehensible to him, and his wife's chagrin was so great that she could hardly conceal her vexation. Now the guests knew that as they were people of practically no importance socially, for Mr. Oliphant had no idea that Mr. Stewart had so recently been a millionaire, this solicitude for their comfort and pleasure could only arise from sheer kindness of heart, so they hastened to explain. The task of doing so fell upon Mr. Stewart, for C. B. had been strangely reticent of late, his usual fluency of speech seemed to have deserted him.

"Dear host and hostess," said the old gentleman, "nine months ago when I was hastening home to San Francisco from a world-tour with my dear daughter here and her mother, now with God, had anyone told me that I should turn a cold shoulder to hospitality such as you offer us I should have laughed in their faces. For we were all very keen on sightseeing, and I was besides a business man to my finger-tips; in fact it seemed to me almost the only thing that made life worth living, for to make money rapidly and

spend it royally. I do not feel inclined to tell you all the story now, and indeed it would take too long, of how thoroughly my views and my whole life have been changed.

“ I have lost my dear wife and almost the whole of my fortune, but I am to-day a happier man than I have ever been in my whole life. I have learned from that dear fellow there what it is to really live, and how little we really need in this world in order to be truly happy. I am more glad that he is my daughter’s husband than I should be if she were the wife of a reigning sovereign, and I am looking forward with great longing to spend the rest of my days in his peaceful home on Norfolk Island, a place which perhaps you know something about? ”

“ I know there is such a place at no great distance from here, less than 1,000 miles anyway, and I know too that it has had an awful history as a convict settlement, but since that black stain has been wiped out from our Australasian Colonies I cannot say that I know anything of its history. I know at any rate that we have no trade with it, so if there is a settlement there it must be self-supporting, I should think.”

Then C. B., being appealed to by the gentle eyes of his wife, told his host and hostess the story of the emigration to Norfolk Island of a large number of the Pitcairn Island folk, descendants of the mutineers of the *Bounty*, while they sat in dumb surprise.

But when the recital was over Mrs. Oliphant looked at her husband, and, shrugging her shoulders, said—

“ There’s no accounting for tastes, Harry, but I think such a life as that would drive me mad within a month. How can people go back to such barbarism as that when once they have escaped from it? That’s wonderful, but it’s ten times more wonderful

that people like you," nodding at Mr. Stewart and his daughter, "should be attracted by such a life and leave all the delights of civilization for it. However, it's no business of ours to try and persuade you, presumably you have decided fully on your course?"

"Indeed we have, ma'am," said Mary; "and you see, although we are fully persuaded ourselves, we do not seek to make converts to our way of thinking, nor are we following any new religion. We ourselves have been converted mainly by the spectacle of a good life—that of my husband—whom if you knew, you would say of him as nearly every one else says, that he is a man after God's own mind. Now we should not have told you these things because we felt we should be misunderstood, but we wanted you to know that it was not churlishness nor ingratitude that made us refuse your very kind and generous offer."

Mr. Oliphant made a gesture as if washing his hands of the whole affair, as if indeed he felt frankly that it was quite beyond him, and said, "Well then, Mr. Stewart, perhaps you will tell me in what way as your agent here I can serve you?"

"That I can," responded Mr. Stewart cheerfully. "First of all, I want the captain of the *Ben Ledi* paid for our passage hither from where he took us on board. I do not believe he will ask exorbitant rates, but I must tell you that we have had first-class accommodation, and I should not consider \$350 too dear. I should object to paying more than that. Secondly, I want you to find us either a vessel that we can charter at a low rate, a schooner, say, to convey us to Norfolk Island, or perhaps for less money you may be able to induce some owner to let his vessel, bound somewhere else among the

islands, go out of her way a little to 'land us there. Lastly, we wish to buy rather a large quantity of goods, tools of various kinds, clothing, books, and above all, a first-class American organ. And I think that is all. Only of course we should like despatch."

Mr. Oliphant, who had made notes while Mr. Stewart was speaking, turned and replied—

"I think I have all your instructions now, sir, and you may rely upon me to put your business through as soon as I can. And if there is anything else I can do or my wife can do for Mrs. Adams command us. We can and do honour and respect you for your opinions, even though we totally disagree with them. And now perhaps you would like to retire, as it is getting late."

C. B. looked wistfully at his wife and father-in-law, and then said meekly, but as if he could not help speaking—

"Have you any objection, sir, and Mrs. Oliphant, to our having a little prayer together before we part for the night?"

A look of consternation came over the lady's face, almost of terror, and she turned appealingly to her husband, who replied immediately, "I'm sure you'll excuse us. That sort of thing is not at all in our line. This is Liberty Hall and of course you may do what pleases you, but we could not take part in your exercises, it would be hypocrisy."

C. B. rose at once bowing courteously and saying—"I hope you'll forgive me for mentioning the matter, I have no wish to intrude our views upon you. Good-night"; and with mutual expressions of good will they separated. But as soon as Mrs. Oliphant and her husband reached their chamber the lady's indignation broke forth, and she said many bitter things

about the impudence of these strangers suggesting such a thing in a house where they were guests.

This difference however did not affect her hospitable attentions to her guests for, as if repentant of her feelings towards them, she really toiled hard during the week of their stay to make them as comfortable as could be, while her husband was certainly as good as his word. So strenuously did he exert himself that by that day week he had arranged everything for them, the goods they needed were all packed in convenient parcels for transshipment, C. B. being the director of this part of the business, and a handy brigantine, the *Lady Head*, bound to Fiji, was chartered to land them and their belongings at Norfolk Island with the least possible delay.

The morning of their departure broke bright and clear, with a fresh westerly breeze, and they bade Mrs. Oliphant and her three dear children an affectionate and grateful farewell. But nothing could blind them to the fact that she was almost nervously anxious to have them gone, for as she afterwards confessed to a few chosen acquaintances, they made her feel strangely uneasy, made her feel as if she were a godless wicked creature, while all the time behaving themselves with the utmost meekness and courtesy. And they on their part were hungry for the place that C. B. was never tired of telling them about, and reminding them that God might there be worshipped continually without its being thought a strange thing to do, where no one felt bound to dislike you because you admitted that the love of God was the chief factor in your life and where, while living an active happy life with all your God-given faculties in full play there was no brutal collision at every turn with the forces of evil regnant in the world.

The *Lady Head* with all sail set sped swiftly seaward, our three friends sitting on her little poop with no eyes for the beauty of the shores they were leaving. Every day brought Mary and her father to a clearer understanding of the thorny way C. B. must have travelled since leaving his home, for even Mr. Oliphant, honest, courteous and urbane as he had been, was obviously glad to see them go. They felt that for men and women truly filled with the love of God there was no room in the world that hated the Master. The thought that there was anything cowardly in thus fleeing from the scene of conflict did not occur to them as perhaps it should have done: I do not know. They only knew that they were going to a place of peace and that sufficed them.

They had no pleasant passage. The vessel was small, the crew were rough and brutal, and the language they heard around them hurt them very much, but nothing could disturb the serenity of their souls. So deeply had they become imbued with the spirit that C. B. had always manifested that they had no doubts, they felt that they were going home. And it was with something of a shock that they learned from C. B. that since his departure in the *Eliza Adams*, he had heard no word of his people. It was but slight though, one look at his face with its calm assurance of all being well gave them a mild rebuke. Of course all would be well.

Contrary winds and heavy weather delayed them a good deal, but the little vessel if uncomfortable was staunch, and they were proof against bodily discomfort. Yet when on the fourteenth day from Sydney Heads they sighted the well-known bay (to C. B.), Mary and her father were seized with a strange trembling, and the stern old man, so wonderfully softened, could not help a tear now and then stealing

down his ruddy cheeks. They stood in, and when within easy distance of the shore hove to, C. B.'s keen glance detecting a boat putting off before any one else did. Swiftly it came towards them, while C. B., holding his wife with one hand and his father-in-law with the other, bade them observe how she was handled.

Suddenly he gave a joyful shout, "My father! Oh, thank God, thank God!" Yes, it was Philip, with all his old vigour handling the steer oar, and, as he skilfully swung the boat alongside, he looked up and recognized his firstborn. He snatched at a rope flung to him, sprang on board and folded his son to his breast in a silent ecstasy, while Mary and Mr. Stewart stood back trembling and waited till the sacred greeting was over.

Suddenly C. B. sprang away from his father's arms and, seizing Mary, cried, "Here, father, here's another daughter for you: this is my darling wife; and here is her father, a brother for you."

Philip gravely embraced his daughter-in-law, his clear eyes appearing to search out her very soul. She, poor girl, now that she was where she had so longed to be, was for a moment just a little dismayed at the aspect of Philip. While her whole heart cried shame at the thought, it was there, that this noble-looking man's rough sleeveless shirt, coarse short pants and bare gnarled feet were repugnant to her. Life-long prejudices are indeed hard to overcome.

Surely then it should be accounted unto her for righteousness that she bravely took those ignoble feelings by the throat and choked them, envying her father as she did so the ease and grace with which he greeted the roughly clad man before him. But then he had long ago known the true value of clothes, and being besides a rare judge of a man when he saw

him he had mentally appraised Philip at once as being another C. B. only more so.

But neither C. B. nor his father thought of these things. C. B. indeed, shaken out of his usual calm, could hardly restrain himself sufficiently to explain about the goods they had brought with them; he was so impatient to bring Mary and his mother together. But it was certain that one boat could not possibly carry the boat load that was waiting, and so it was decided that Philip and Mr. Stewart should remain on board while C. B. took Mary ashore and sent the two boats back. Such a precaution was necessary, for the character of neither skipper nor crew of the *Lady Head* stood very high, and it was quite possible that in the absence of the owners of the freight they might take it into their heads to up helm and be off in a fit of absent-mindedness as it were. Such things have happened in those latitudes before now.

So Mary was carefully assisted into the boat, and crouching low in the stern sheets she gazed upwards with loving admiration of the noble form of her husband as erect at the great steer-oar he swung the boat's head landward. Every stroke of the way she watched him, nor blanched for a breath, even when the enormous shoreward rushing billow poised the craft like a feather upon its foaming crest, a vast green slope before and behind, down one of which it seemed that they must roll and be swallowed up.

Presently the boat touched the beach, the crew sprang out, dug their feet into the shingle as the wave receded, and then with a great cry of delight as the next billow came in ran her up with it high and dry. And C. B. sprang out, turned, lifted his wife like a babe in his powerful arms, and running up the slope with her placed her in the arms of his mother. Grace took Mary to her bosom while her son said

with tears streaming down, "Mother, I have brought you home a daughter, my dear wife."

And the friends catching the word shouted aloud for joy, while Grace, holding her new daughter a little way from her, looked in her sweet face and murmured—

"Dear one, may God abundantly bless you and make your married life as happy as mine has been. Come home and see your brothers and sisters, they will all welcome you to their hearts as I do. Come, you are tired and excited, but in our home you will find peace and rest." And Mary went with her mother, her mind all awlirl. In those few moments she realized how fully she had severed herself from all the past, and with Grace's strong arm round her and her husband striding by her side knew of a certainty that she had done well.

That was the most exciting day in the history of the little community. What with the landing of the very necessary and welcome consignment, listening to the tale C. B. had to tell, welcoming the fine old American gentleman Mr. Stewart, and occasionally breaking out into songs of praise, it was midnight before the friends sought their homes, and even then there were many who did not sleep until morning.

My story is really done, for although in novels generally the story ends with the marriage of the lovers, mine has not done so, but has carried them on through the trials and developments that always follow marriage, which after all is to most people but the beginning of a life story. It would be quite easy to spend many pages in describing how the new-comers were introduced to the many quiet sweet joys of their chosen home, as easy as it would be to find fault with them for quitting the world of effort for this peaceful nook. But to do so would

be merely repeating the earlier descriptions in the book, and so I do what seems to me the right thing, merely record that with an ease that was marvellous Mary and her father slipped into their allotted places in the simple island scheme of existence.

And presently they wondered how they had ever been able to bear the burden of so-called civilization, and the thousand and one miseries which the possession of wealth and the maintaining of a place in society, supposed to be incumbent upon the wealthy, brings in its train. Mary summed up her feelings upon the subject to her father one Sunday night when after the usual united meeting for prayer and praise they all sat upon the verdant hillside in the warm moonlight by saying—

“Daddy dear, I do not believe we ever knew what it really was to live, and I am sure that we had no conception of the lovingkindness of God until I met my Bounty Boy.”

THE END



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