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Sea Story.



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"He cried in his hollow voice, waved a 'kerchief.'"— Page 134

STRANGE SEA STORY.

A STRANGE SEA-STORY.

A Temperance Tale.

BY

MRS. JULIA McNAIR WRIGHT,

*Author of "Fug-or-Not," "Nothing to Drink," "Life Cruise of
Captain Bess Adams," "How Could he Escape," etc., etc.*

" I pray you hear my song of a boat,
For it is but short :
My boat, you will find none fairer afloat
In river or port !
Long I looked for the lad she bore
On the open, desolate sea——

NEW YORK :

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PREFACE.



THE strangest thing, possibly, about the following Strange Sea Story is —that it is *true*; so entirely true, that even the names of the ship and the abandoned sailor have been retained. The sole liberty that has been taken with an accurate narrative of events is, transferring the story from Plymouth, England, to the vicinity of Boston, Massachusetts, and from the British navy to our own merchant service. In thus creating an American story from the materials in hand, one large element of interest has been lost, *i. e.*, the stirring of a whole nation by the fate of one man. Houses of Parliament, Government, Foreign Ambassadors, were all absorbed in the one question, ‘ what had become of young

Jeffries?" A captain was dismissed in disgrace from his position, speeches were made by leading statesmen, and a great man-of-war went out, intent only on solving the mystery of this sailor's fate. The reader curious in these matters is referred to the "London Times," Feb. 13, 1810; "Cobbet's Weekly Register," Feb. 1810; "The Morning Post," Feb. 1810—and other leading papers of that year. Also "Chamber's Journal," 1848. The story is one of those protests of ungarished fact against the use of intoxicating drinks, showing more plainly than any romance, the terrible evils that follow in its train, destroying the innocent with the guilty.

THE AUTHOR.

A STRANGE SEA-STORY.

CHAPTER I.

A NORTHERN HOME AND A TROPIC ISLAND.

"A SONG OF A BOAT."

"There was once a boat on a billow :
Lightly she rocked to a port remote,
And the foam was white in her wake like snow,
And her frail mast bowed when the breeze would blow,
And bent like a wand of willow."



TROPIC noon : the broad sunshine beating down upon the gleaming expanse of the South Atlantic : the winds asleep : the sea asleep : all the air vibrant with heat, 'a universe of sky and sea,' and here a rock lifts itself out of the deep. It rises like a ghost of some wrecked world, so wan, so desolate, so silent. No shoals lie around it, no white breakers swell ;

the sea is quiet at its feet, and with scarcely a murmur in that wide yellow light the waters undulate about that lonely isle. No brook ripples to the sea, no tree lifts up its beauty; scorched, verdureless, one mile and a half in its diameter, its bare crags giving shelter to numberless gulls, and strange sea-birds who sweep thither at nightfall, gathering in from viewless distances; huge turtles crawl out of the lapping waters, and creep slowly along the rocks and up the crevices and hollows of dry, hot sand—forever desolate and hopeless, an iron-bound cup of bitterness, outermost of the Caribbees.

An island that has its romance, its tragedy; that has centered many hearts on its story; that, lying thus in burning, tropic noon, strangely realizes the Arabian fable of the island of lodestone—and is even now drawing, like a great magnet, closer and closer to itself all the circumstances of this true tale.

It is the Island of SOMBRERO.

A northern May time: night in Boston

harbor ; a full moon showing its broad white shield half way up a blue heaven ; the water in the harbor dark and still ; the tide full, trembling upon the turn ; the wharves deserted, save for watchmen leaning half asleep against great piles of merchandise ; the hulls of the ships looming black and huge out of the shadow ; masts, cordage, close-furled sails, idle and drooping pennants outlined strongly against the sky ; a sound of water slipping about chain and cable. A ship at anchor in mid-stream, her lading in the hold ; her decks cleared, stores laid in, crew engaged, captain eager to be afloat ; a ship built for strength, speed, beauty, capacity. Another night shall see her bows set toward the south, her graceful hull dividing the water, moving straight and swift and stately like a swan, and all her snowy canvass, a pyramid of white piled up against the blue. The merchantman "Recruit" bound for the Guiana coast, May 10th, 1859.

Morning in Gilberthead village, on the Massachusetts shore, thirty miles from Bos-

ton: the sun just risen: trees and hedges veiled in faint early green; newly sprung grasses and first spring flowers all drenched in dew: sheep rousing from their night's rest, wander slowly along the fields; a young colt, all alert, head turned on one side, ears pricked up, eyes rolling, uncertain whether to tarry or to fly, as he is startled by a step along the road. A long, swinging step—a tall, muscular figure: forehead too low, neck too thick; boisterous health, and bold self assertion in every inch of him, Captain Orson Lois, coming up from his morning dip in the surf; his face glowing, his curly hair dark and shining with the brine, his sailor's dress fitting him as if he could be easy in no other. As he dashes by a stone house, a house far past its best fortunes, a lad thrusts his head out of a window.

“Ho! they make no end of fuss about my going with you, Captain.”

“Tuts! they'll be glad when you're home again: be a man about it.”

“Well, but—there's mother and little Ila.”

“My ship waits for no man: if you don't start with me you stay behind, my lad.”

“Oh, but I'm going, Captain.”

Swinging on, a few of those long steps more, and here is a girl waiting for him at the gate.

“Were you talking to Larry Jeffries, father? Why do you want him to go to sea with you? He will be no good to you.”

“It makes me fairly disgusted to see such a thin-skinned, vascillating baby of a fellow. I'd make a man of him, in a few months, on shipboard.”

“I don't believe that is the kind of life for him; and his mother does not wish it,” said the girl, decidedly.

“The more fool she, then,” said the Captain, roughly.

“And if he should be lost, that would make them beggars.”

“Well, do you look for me to be lost, Claude?”

“O, I should hope not; but you two are so different.”

“Aye, I think so! I often hate him when I see his father in his face.”

And just then Larry Jeffries came up to them. All the chances of life seemed to be on the Captain's side; strength, experience, resolution, a haughty, over-bearing nature—the lad, nervous, slender, irresolute, fanciful. An artist and an athlete, these two, each to be the bitterness of the other's life. It looked easy to tell who would be victorious, if there were strife between them.

There was not a day, for we can hardly say how many years, when Captain Lois and young Jeffries would not each have given all that he possessed, if they had not met that Spring morning.

What is there that draws these two toward each other, and toward the ship “Recruit,” and what diabolical spell shall link them with Sombrero? There are such passions and weaknesses in humanity, as are stronger than any enchantments, or the casting of any evil eye, to evoke disasters, remorse and despair, from even the fairest circumstances of mortal

lives: and there is a divine guiding in all earthly mischances, an Omnipotence that lends aid when all human endeavors are exhausted, and that restores hope when hope seems lost.

“And so,” said Captain Lois to Larry Jeffries, “at this late day, when in two hours we must be off, you are still hesitating!”

At the Captain’s loud, scornful tones, the sensitive lad shrunk as a moth shrinks, scorched by a candle: and yet with the moth’s strange infatuation, hovered yet about his enemy. He replied:

“Oh, I shall go. My box is packed. I told them it was no use talking to me, my mind was made up: and yet mother cried, and little Ila cried, and they all went on so, I had half a mind to stay.”

“You had better have a whole mind to stay,” said Claude, daring her father’s vexation. “A boy who goes against his mother, is sure to go wrong. And Larry, the sea won’t suit you—what do you want to go for?”

"I must see something," said Larry, uneasily. "If I am to be an artist, or an author, or a poet, I must know the ocean in its strength and in its beauty. And then, it will make *me* stronger. I do not want to die young, like my father."

Here Captain Lois turned his back on him, and Claude said promptly: "Other things than the sea have to do with that!"

Larry continued inconsequently, "The sea is nurse of noble souls;" and Captain Lois muttered as inconsequently, "'You can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear.'"

"Larry! my Larry!" cried a clear treble voice. And there was Larry's little half sister Ila swinging on the gate of the stone house; her fair hair blowing on the morning breeze; and just then a bell rang from the dining-room of the Captain's cottage, and he and Claude went in through the long window, that opened to the floor of the porch.

Mrs. Lois sat at the breakfast-table; a woman whose remarkable beauty had been

marred by anxiety and sorrow, but who was singularly gracious and attractive still. When her husband and child took their places, Mrs. Lois herself asked a blessing on the meal.

The Captain was a man whose mind was always at strife with itself. He adored his wife, and felt himself in sore restraint in her presence; he loved his daughter and yet frequently detested her, in that she was not absolutely like her mother, but on occasion showed tokens of his own imperious nature. He loved his home and longed to leave it; doated on his ship, and dreaded it; and always had his mind half made up to be a good man, and was half inclined to throw the rein on the neck of his besetting sins, and let them carry him whither they would. He had been at home one month; and though he had no interest in Larry Jeffries, beyond half hating him as "a milksop," he had spent those four weeks persuading Larry to ship with him as a common sailor—merely because all the village of Gilberthead thought Larry should bide at home.

Said Claude, in her incisive style, "If Larry does go with you, Mrs. Jeffries is going to take him to the ship, and *I* am going to take you."

"We'll start at nine," said the Captain.

"Orson," said Mrs. Lois, "do bid Larry to stay at home."

"Not I," said the Captain; and then added, relenting at his wife's look of distress, "You may bid him, if you like."

"I have," said Mrs. Lois; "but Claude, go again; tell Larry from me to stop at home. Charge him not to sail on the 'Recruit.'"

Claude finished her breakfast in haste, and ran to find Larry. Captain Lois and his wife withdrew to a small library. The Captain placed his wife in an easy chair, and took an ottoman at her feet.

"Now, Helen, for my final charges and warnings!"

"Orson! why do you urge that boy to go to sea with you?"

"Pooh! mere natural opposition. I hate

a Miss Nancy, and long to see such a soft-handed, soft-hearted boy, turned into a man."

"It is no life for him, Orson. Promise me, promise that you will be kind to him: he is used to kindness, and remember how much hangs on his life."

"Why, do you think I mean to kill him? As for *kindness*, I don't pet my men, and I don't abuse 'em. If they treat me right, I treat 'em right, and if they don't it's their fault and not mine. He'll do well enough."

"But—I see, I know, that often a positive dislike of that boy rises up in you. Why then have him near you?"

"It is a fact that I hate him heartily now and then, for his father's sake. His father made a slave of me. His father got me the one master that defies my will, you know, Helen. I've told you what I mean a hundred times—it's cost you tears, and my mother too. If it had not been for his father I don't believe I'd ever have drank a drop. Curse him! for that week he took me off on

a spree, I only sixteen, and he twenty-five—and he let loose a demon in me, that can never be chained.”

“Not as you try to chain it, by human power. Divine power can do anything,” said his wife.

“Yes, I know,” said the Captain, impatiently; “but I can’t help that. Never fear, Helen; I won’t visit the sins of the father on his son. I don’t think of it often.”

“I feel terribly anxious about this voyage, more so than I ever felt for any other. You have a mate whom you don’t like.”

“James Nagle! You may say so! Sheer spite of the owners to put him in. I’ll break him the first chance. I’d have thrown up my berth, only it would have made him Captain.”

“And to think of *you*, with your ungoverned passions, shut up for a year with a man you dislike, eating with him, being with him hourly; it frightens me”—

“Never fear; I’ll forget him at the first port, and leave him ashore. He is a mean, cowardly vagabond.”

“ But if you live so near together there is no hope for you, unless you cultivate patience and forgiveness.”

“ Pshaw! they're virtues for women and parsons !”

“ Orson !”

“ There, Helen; well, never mind ; it riles me to think of that sneak. I'll leave him on the Guiana coast !”

“ May God keep you from sinning ! But, Orson, what can I say—what more shall I say of that sin that besets you? Do you not think I notice that you are changed, this visit home? You have been to church but once ; I have heard you take God's sacred name in vain—your Bible was gone—and I could see ”— Tears rolled swiftly over Helen Lois' cheeks.

“ Poor girl! dearest Helen !” cried the penitent captain, kissing her hand. “ I'll confess. I'll make a clean breast of it. I *did* have two tremendous outbreaks—one at Japan, and one at San Francisco ; and I had a touch of the horrors, and I had a breeze

with the mate; but, Helen, this time I'm bound to sail without a drop, and stick tight to the ship; so I'll be safe—just as safe as I was with my mother, or am with you."

"And yet," said his wife, sadly, "you would not stay with your mother, nor will you stay with me, where you are safe."

"Because a humdrum quiet life on land would kill me, or send me to worse pranks. I must have the care, the labor of a ship; the buffeting with storms, the trade with natives, the rule over men, to give vent to my excitement and my energies. I cannot stay at home, not if it would save me!"

"Oh," cried Mrs. Lois, wringing her hands, "if that One more powerful to shield you from yourself, than wife or mother, would but go with you! Orson, Orson, it has seemed as if such prayers as your mother and I have lifted for you, must bow down the heavens for your help. What, what will save you?"

Then Orson Lois gave this singular an-

swer. Springing up, and pacing the little room, he said :

“ Your prayers torment me ; my mother’s prayers torment me. I believe there is but one thing whereby God can save me. If he will let me go my whole line, take off his hand, which seems holding me like iron clasps, and let me run my whole length, and land me in perdition while I am yet living in the body, perhaps that might save me. Nothing else will.”

And this man of fierce passions; of imperious will; this man, subject to spasms of furious intoxication, was the captain of a ship—unlimited despot of a little floating kingdom—men’s lives in his hands; and with these awful opportunities before him, he dared challenge God to remove his restraining clasp, and let him run his own road of passion to its end!

His outbreak filled his gentle wife with distress. Loving her, he sought to compensate her for the pain his words had caused. “ Come, Helen, don’t fret yourself ill. The

voyage will be a good one. I'll be back in nine months, perhaps. The ship is staunch—I know the coast of Guinea, and I won't drink there and risk a fever. I'll bear with the mate for your sake; and as to this Larry, I'll bring him home tough as a pine knot; I'll double his chance of a long life. He's weakly, Helen, and his father's craving for drink is in him. The voyage will cure him of it. And then, Helen, I don't want him, with his poetry, and whims, and idle dreams, about our Claude; she shall not throw herself away on Nick Jeffries' son!"

"Orson, you astound me! The child is only thirteen!"

"And he's eighteen, and may dream of falling in love with the prettiest child in town. They are like brother and sister together, and it may grow to love-making. No, no, I'll break it up. You keep Claude at her books, and I'll take him to sea."

"I had rather move from this town, or send Claude to boarding-school, if that

would suit you, than to have this loss of her son laid on my unhappy cousin."

"I had not as soon have it so. Claude shall stay with you, and the boy will be all the better for a sea-voyage."

Afternoon. On the deck of the "Recruit" stood Captain Lois, giving brisk orders: Larry Jeffries, dazed and half repenting; Larry's mother in an agony of apprehension of the evils that might overtake her wilful son. Claude, vexed with Larry for causing his mother's tears, pitiful to that mother; curious concerning the ship; sorry to part with her father, about whose dubious courses away from home, she shared something of her mother's anxieties.

"Come now! No more good-byes—ashore, ashore, sweethearts and wives! Shake hands, you land-lubber, you'll come back a seaman."

"Oh, Captain Lois," cried Mrs. Jeffries, seizing him by both hands. Promise me—

pledge yourself to me, to take fatherly care of my poor, headstrong boy!"

"There now," said the Captain, struggling to free himself, and moved by her woe, "I'll promise you anything. I'll make a solemn vow, before God, if that will comfort you."

"No," said Mrs. Jeffries, "men may even forget a vow."

Ashore: Claude and Mrs. Jeffries on the busy wharf, clinging together, weeping, with eyes only on the ship which was bearing out to sea. Sails filling, water gently stirred—the "Recruit" glides on her way, and from far off are seen the stalwart form of the bold Captain on his quarter-deck; and Larry, wholly repentant and longing too late to retrace his steps, clinging to the ship's side, to get a last look of his mother's face.

What did they think of this freak of Larry's at Gilberthead? "The worst thing he could do," said the schoolmaster. "Utterly unfit for seafaring—here is the danger of such a nature as his; vascillating, weak; suddenly headstrong; penitent too late."

“A boy with a deal of good in him: affectionate, sensitive; with no religious staying power; and an inherited leaning to strong drink. I wish he had remained at home,” said the minister.

“I would not trust a dog with Orson Lois when he is drunk; and who knows when that will be?” said the postmaster.

“His mother may well break her heart; mark me, she’ll never see her boy Larry again,” said the dressmaker.

And in the spring-time twilight, one gossip told another how Larry’s father had died of drinking: how the grandfather had left house and lands to Larry, but if he died a cousin was to have all; Larry’s mother’s second marriage having displeased her first husband’s father. And the step-father was a chronic invalid from a fall, and if Larry died on this ill-omened voyage, the family, mother, step-father, little sister, would sink into bitter poverty. “Now,” said the gossip, “her husband, Mr. Vernon, attends to the letting out of the fields, and they make a

living, though the place is running down. Poor Mrs. Vernon, a good soul, and so unhappy, what with her first husband's wild sprees, and the old man's spite to her, and Vernon's ill-health, and Larry's going, she's nigh a broken-hearted woman ; and she doted on the boy, and thought him a genius. A cousin she is of Mrs. Lois—and there's luck for you. A saint married to a man by spells a demon. Lois' mother prayed and begged her into the match ; she lying at death's door, wanted to leave a guardian angel for her son ; and I dare say she loved him, the more 's the pity, for she 's fair worn out with worry for him. And I have heard that Nick Jeffries was the very first one as ever led off the widow Lois' son to drink ; and now Orson Lois has led off his boy, to some bad luck, I'll be bound."

CHAPTER II.

CAPTAINS AND SAILORS.

“I may be proud ;
It is a fault :” “Aye,” quoth the Phantom fell ;
“Sinner ! it *is* a fault ; thou sayest well.”



ANOTHER look at the homes in Gilberthead. Helen Lois has just entered the door of the old Jeffries house. The lower portion of the wide, shabby, half-ruinous mansion seems deserted, but low sounds of grief, of sobs and moans, guide Helen's feet as she ascends the stairs. Opposite the head of the stairs a door stood open into a large sunny room : the floor was covered with an ancient matting ; a great reading chair, refurbished with coverings of flowered chintz, was drawn near a vine-draped window ; a low broad lounge

had seen its best days, but had been carefully refitted as to its cushions with some grandmother's old-fashioned shawl. Here was Mrs. Vernon, her head bowed to her knees, weeping bitterly. Mrs. Lois sat by her friend, and laid a hand gently on her shoulder.

"I have been afraid you would grieve in this way, Cousin Sarah. What would I not have given to keep your son at home! What possessed him to leave such a home as this!"

"I'm afraid your husband possessed him," said the mother, "and I am afraid, terribly afraid, that he will be cruel to him. They are so unlike; a Captain has such power on his ship, and Larry is so unused to studying people's tempers."

"Orson promised me, faithfully, that he would be good to him," said Mrs. Lois, flushing.

"Yes. He means to; he even swore to me that he would be fatherly; but, oh, I cannot help my fears."

She sprang up, and taking Mrs. Lois' hand, led her about the room. "See what I have done to make him contented! Partly because that all that we live on is his; partly, to keep him from such temptations as his poor father had, and partly from mother-fondness and because he is such a kind boy to us all—only in this going away. He did not like school, but he loved to read; and see this chair, and these shelves of books. Yonder is his net for catching butterflies, and there's his cabinet for the curiosities he and Ila picked up. He made that cabinet himself, and his writing-desk as well. Wasn't that a pretty story he wrote for the county paper? And here's his easel—he made that too;" pointing to a very neatly made easel by the farther window, and a picture on it, not so good as the easel. "I don't know what Larry's turn is for, exactly," went on the doating and lamenting mother; "one while it seems for one thing, and then for another; but I just let him go on and seek for himself what he had talent for. I would not stand

in his way. Oh, I've hoped such things for my son! See, here is the dressing-gown I made him, out of my red cashmere dress. I don't care for such gay things now." And the mother hid her face in the soft folds of the gown, and renewed her weeping.

Looking from the easy chair, out through the window, Mrs. Lois saw Mr. Vernon limping around the kitchen garden, which he cultivated thoroughly, in spite of his weakness. Larry had hated *work* in the garden, but had chosen to attend to a few flowers, and these Ila had already taken as her care, and was now busy among. The great old apple trees were in bloom, and bees swung in and out of a row of bee-hives along the garden wall. How could Larry leave the place?

"Oh, how can I think of it, along by my loss of him;" said Mrs. Vernon, renewing her plaint. "But you know, if he loses his life at sea, we shall be turned out like beggars. My husband cannot do anything but what he does here, and little Ila would have

no home and no prospects ; and what could I do, supporting them all? And Cousin Peter, who would have the house, hates us.”

“ Never mind,” said Mrs. Lois, soothingly. “ Larry will come back, you will see him married and growing old in this old home ; and, perhaps he will find a way of making money, and restoring this fine old place to what it was fifty years ago. Cheer up. God makes all things work together for good to them that love him.”

And now for the ship, and that sea-life for which Larry Jeffries had abandoned his mother and his home. Instead of the wide airy room, was the close fore-castle and the hammock—instead of the nice cooking, the ready pleasing of his taste, the making of so many good things that “Larry liked,” here the fare was hard bread, cold pork, or hard beef, to be cut up with his own jack-knife ; tea and coffee, so called, boiled in the same copper, with molasses boiled in them for sweetening—and drunk out of greasy, dingy

tin cans: and *duff*, sole luxury, duff, *i. e.*, water and flour and molasses boiled together, with a few stray plums. And then Larry was sea-sick, terribly sick, and had been used to nursing and petting and self-indulgence, when he was ill; but here he lay a whole day in his dark hammock below, and no one spoke to him. He wished himself dead. At Gilberthead, if any one were sick, the neighbors sent anxious inquiries about them, and earnest hopes of recovery; but did Captain Lois send *his* inquiries and compliments into the forecabin? Not a bit of it. The afternoon of the second day after that on which the "Recruit" sailed, Captain Lois had a watch on deck, and soon after his brisk, heavy step began to sound, came his loud voice, shouting to some one to 'tumble those skulkers up on deck.' The 'skulkers' were Larry and another sick landsman. The other man obediently staggered into upper air, but Larry vowed that he was dying, and couldn't move, and was dragged up by main strength. "Come now!" roared the Cap-

tain, "no more skulking, boys! Act well, if you want to be well; fly around lively! Up into the mainmast there, and go to scraping — that'll cure you. Up, Tompkins!"

Tompkins knew that rough usage was sailors' lot; that captains must be obeyed; that there was no hope for him but to go up the mast. Faint and pale with sickness, and the motion of the ship increasing as he rose above the deck, he nevertheless scrambled where he was bid, held on for dear life, and set to work. But not so Larry; his old 'neighbor,' Captain Lois, had 'no right,' in his mind, to use him thus; besides he *could not* move, he should fall overboard. He would not go.

"You won't! Zounds, you shall!" shouted the Captain.

"I can't. I'll fall and be drowned! I'm too ill, and I cannot climb! I couldn't even climb a tree!"

A hoarse bellow of laughter rose from the listening sailors.

"Then I'll make you climb!" cried the Captain.

But this lad, *coaxed* along life's road thus far, knowing nothing of *obedience*, was hard to 'make' do anything. Captain Lois' face flamed. "Give us a rope—I'll fix him," he said, springing to the lower deck by the mast. Then drawing down some of the ship's cordage, he grasped Larry, and with no gentle hand, bound it firmly about him, beneath his arms, and around him in such a manner as to bear his weight securely.

"Now pull away!" he cried, and several sailors seizing the rope, Larry was hoisted into the air, far above the point which he had been ordered to reach. He shrieked; he almost swooned as the ship bent forward to her course, and the long lithe mast to which he swung seemed to spring far out over the waves. "You'll take him down in an hour," said the Captain to the third officer, "and we'll see then, if he has learned to climb a tree."

"The Captain's a rough doctor," whispered

one of the old salts, laughing, to sailor Robin Rounce, who was busy at some ship's work.

"Aye, aye," said Robin; and though he worked on, he cast pitying, and half-vexed glances at Larry, swinging in the rigging; and as the hour for his release drew near, stole off to the cook to beg a bit of junk beef, and a crust of bread. Robin Rounce was nearest on hand when Larry was let down, and unfastened. Weak, and stiff from impeded circulation, the lad could hardly stand, and yet the ship's deck seemed like firm ground, when he was put upon his feet. Robin grasped him, and led him to a retired corner. "Here lad," he said, producing his refreshment, "eat sum'at. See now, your head's steadier, belike now. I'll pick a bit of oakum beside 'e."

Larry ate, and ate hungrily. As his head grew steadier, and his strength returned, his rage boiled over.

"I wish I'd stayed at home," he cried. "The mean, cruel villain! how dare he use me that way? I'm as good as he is."

“Not aboard ship, lad,” said Robin. “The captain’s boss here. It’s too late to wish about home, and now you must obey.”

“I *wont* obey! What! obey that cruel tyrant!”

“Hist, lad! Captain’s his name. Don’t lay your tongue to ill words so easy. Aboard ships, right or wrong, we obeys the cap’n. Why, boy, if we wasn’t obliged to that, what ’ud become o’ ships? If, in any manner of means, sailors could say they wouldn’t obey cap’ns, why, lad, not one ship in a hun’erd as floats would make port safe; and what ’ud become o’ the lading, an’ the owner’s interests, an’ the men’s lives, an’ souls, too—for they ain’t overly well prepared to die, a many of them—to say nothing o’ the poor ship’s timbers.”

“But for him to bid me up there, when I could hardly stand, when I was ill!”

“It looked hard,” said Robin, “but we’re rough nurses at sea. Come, now your head’s firmer, and your stomach ain’t so outrageous, and you’re nigh cured just for your trip aloft.

And, there's Tompkins; why, he's quite cheery. You'd orter did like 'e."

"And I've got to be knocked about like a dog, by this man, for a year!" cried Larry, angrily.

"It's clear to me that you didn't know what you was shipping for," said Robin. "Yes, you've got to obey; as to knocking about, he ain't likely to knock, unless you cross him; and, he's a powerful good sailor, and can handle a ship like a sailmaker can a needle. But, aboard ship, my lad—'mind the captain,' is the word—and there's a tex' in the good Book that fits; 'obey them that have the rule over you.' It eases matters, my lad, just to keep that in your eye, and obey captains, be they good or bad—cheerful like, as doin' the Lord's orders—and mind t'other text, 'honor to whom honor is due.'"

Larry was cured of his sea-sickness. Being of a forgiving disposition, he presently concluded the captain's hard usage of him meant merely a resolve to cure him, so he

took the captain into favor — too palpably into favor. As to ship's etiquette, Larry knew nothing of it. He had been on an equality with the captain ashore, and he thought he was so here; and so one clear morning, being on the deck, and seeing Captain Lois on the quarter-deck, with his glass under his arm, he addressed him cheerfully. "A fine day, captain."

Captain Lois looked at him fixedly and frowningly for a few seconds, and then turned his back.

"He didn't understand me. "I'll let him know I ain't angry," said Larry. So he stepped briskly up to the captain's sacred presence, and said affably: "Wonder what they're all doing at Gilberthead to-day, Captain?"

Captain Lois whirled about in a fury, bel-
lowed, "Why, you confounded puppy!" and
knocked Larry off the quarter-deck, with-
out the least regard as to where he would
fall. The sailors, who had stared curiously,
grinned applause. Larry rose up, bruised

and stunned, and burning with rage, and limped off where Robin Rounce was at work. Said Robin : " Well now, lad, *I* am mad with you ! Who ever looked for 'e to do the like ! A sailor's no company for a captain, a shipboard."

" And I cannot even speak civilly, and be answered civilly. I am as good as he is. The Jeffries are as good as the Lois any day—he talked free enough to me ashore," cried Larry.

" But not aship, lad—not aship—don't kick agin the pricks, lad. Jest you be humble, as becomes a poor sinner ; and as to cap'ens, don't go to trespassin' on the privileges the sea gives 'em ; but, as the good Book says, ' Esteem 'em very highly in love for their work's sake.' "

" I wont esteem him for anything," said Larry, " and I'll pay him off some day for his doings, see if I don't."

But the paying off now seemed all on the captain's side. The ship was vexed with calms ; favoring breezes were scarce and

progress was slow. The routine of the day on shipboard sorely vexed Larry who had been accustomed to doing with his time as he pleased. The crew stood turn about in two hour watches. Early in the morning those below heard a pounding on the hatches, and the cry, "tumble up, tumble up!" The decks were to be washed and holy-stoned, and tasks at mending rigging, scraping and tarring masts, spinning rope, mending sails, picking oakum, and doing a hundred other things, as humdrum and disagreeable, filled the hours from sunrise to sunset. Larry learned to climb the masts, and to take his part in furling or setting sails. He was taught by Robin Rounce to make all kinds of knots, and occasionally he found a little congenial work in helping the ship's carpenter.

Larry was a lad fond of cleanliness; and being obliged to wash himself on deck in sea water, and wash his clothes in sea water also, was very trying to him. He had been used to decent people and language, and except

Robin Rounce, every man on the "Recruit" was foul-mouthed and profane. The men frequently quarrelled with each other, vexed Larry by mocking him and playing tricks on him, and when he retaliated, or reproached them, they proceeded to open abuse. The Captain and his mate, James Nagle, were on exceedingly bad terms, and each vented part of his spite at the other, in ill-usage of the men.

Wearied of his ship's work, Larry one morning determined to treat himself to occupations more suited to his taste. He had brought in his chest—strange outfit for a sailor—books and materials for drawing and painting. He had his fits of wanting to be an artist; he had heard of the French painter who, at sea, in a storm, would not go below, but had himself lashed to the mast, that he might study waves and the ocean under a tempest. Why could not Larry study the sea in calms? He forgot the difference between the French artist-passenger, and Larry Jeffries, Yankee hand-before-

the-mast. He brought a bit of canvass, tacked upon a board, his paints, and a little palette. Old Robin warned him to get these materials out of sight and go to picking oakum. Larry would not heed. He was laying on colors—green, blue, white, gray, liberally, when Captain Lois came upon the deck, and soon espied this new pursuit for sailors. He hated art and artists, and amateurs, and dilletante triflers; and with a bound he cleared the space between himself and his painting sailor, and flung canvass, brushes, paints and palette into the water.

“None of your dishes and rags and daubs here!” he shouted. “Zounds, if you want to paint you shall have painting enough!”

And while all the lookers on thought it wondrous funny, he condemned Larry to be hung over the ship’s side in a sort of chair made of rope, and safe enough, and paint a red line around the ship above water mark. The blazing sun hurt Larry’s head, the jeers of the men cut him to the heart;

the green crawling water made him sick; he was afraid sharks would bite off his feet. And then the line about the ship was not the end of it. Constantly captain and mates kept him painting—"paint the mast," "paint the wheel," "paint the capstan," "decorate the cabin door," "paint the cuddy door." All this to torture Larry, whose artistic efforts at home, had been regarded as those of a young Raphael.

And what was Sabbath on such a ship as this? If Captain Lois could find work to put his men to, he did it; he seemed to begrudge them Sabbath rest. There was no teaching, no prayer; they had no ship's library; they worked, they washed themselves and their clothes; they swore and played cards, and told tales—all but Robin Rounce. On Sunday this honest old fellow got Larry under his protection, talked to him of home, of his soul's salvation; read the Bible with him, and set before him a sailor's chief duties, "to be instant in duty, and to mind the captain." That last was a

bitter lesson to Larry—he felt that Captain Lois was his enemy. Meanwhile, Larry was growing stronger and more nimble than ever he had been in his life; more handy, also, and more fit to take care of himself; but he hated every day as it passed, and looked to a year of ship's slavery with unmitigated horror.

As for Captain Lois, the longer he was near Larry, the more he hated him, and the more ready he was to make his life hard for him. He saw him utterly unfit for sailors' work, especially in the rigging when it was stormy; he might have found him work with the carpenter, or mending the sails, but this he would not do, just because it would be a kindness to the luckless youth.

When the "Recruit" was in the latitude of Cape Sable, there came up a tremendous blow. All hands were on deck: such a poor sailor as Larry had all he could do to keep from being washed overboard. Captain Lois himself could hardly keep his feet, and yet he deliberately ordered Larry into

the maintop, to do a duty that only an able-bodied seaman was capable of performing. Larry really could not go, and he would not go. He said as much, shouting, that 'he would not throw his life away for any man.'

After the storm was over, Captain Lois, burning with wrath at having been defied, ordered Larry put in irons. It would have been better to have ignored his disobedience.

Weak natures like Larry's are sometimes roused to unreasoning furies. Larry was, by being in irons: he threatened the Captain before all the crew, that 'when they two got back to Gilberthead, he would tell all the town of his cruelties, and make the place too hot to hold him.'

"*How do you know you will ever get back to Gilberthead?*" Having said that, Orson Lois went to his cabin, and faced facts. What a fool was he to bring this boy to sea! When they returned, Larry would fill the town with tales of his cruelties, his oaths, his godlessness; his wife would shrink from

him; his daughter would be forced to blush for him; the townspeople always took the part of the weak against the strong—he would never hear the end of it. He wished Larry would never get back; he calculated the chances of the boy's dying during the year, and concluded that he was likely to live. He half resolved that he would try a new plan; would be kind, and efface the memory of his harshness. He ordered Larry taken out of irons.

“Eh—'fraid of Gilberthead?” muttered his evil genius, James Nagle, in a voice meant for him to hear. His motive was suspected. No, he would not be beaten by this boy! He was harsher than ever in his treatment of him.

Larry, if good at nothing else, was good at hating. He spoke of the Captain as “that brute,” and “that villain.”

“Eh, boy,” said Robin Rounce, “the good book says, ‘Curse not the king, no not in thy bed-chamber,’ and I make account it is all the same as to Cap'ns. Cap'n's king o'

the ship. My lad, don't e' know what the good book says, that it is no thanks, if being buffeted for our faults we take it patiently ; but if we suffer wrong patiently we please God. See lad, ye has faults, and ye suffer wrong, but take the word o' the good Book, 'ye have need of patience.' Take all them good people of Scripiter as 'examples of suffering affliction with patience,' and 'endure hardness as a good soldier of Christ.' Eh, lad, do e' just follow Christ fully, and e' will see how it spirits us up to bear our troubles ; and how little things look grand, done for him."

But hate, not patience, buoyed up Larry's soul, and he scowled daily at the Captain, as boldly as he dared, threats of recompense at Gilberthead. Defied on his own ship by a lad he despised, vexed at the stories that would reach his home, Captain Lois worked himself up into a fever of unrest and anger ; and at Nassau, where the "Recruit" must touch, he broke his promise to his wife, and brought on the ship some spirits for his drinking, and also a cask of ale.

Now Larry was not permitted to go ashore at Nassau, and he eyed that cask of ale enviously; he had a passion for malt drinks, a passion kept in check at home, but increased by hard fare and hard work under a hot sun, where he lacked all the little luxuries which he could command at home. He desired money or leave to buy some ale for himself, but the Captain refused to allow him to make any purchases. Captain Lois said "The 'Recruit' was classed as a Temperance ship, and nothing stronger than tea, coffee or water, should enter the fore-castle."

"Where will ale and whiskey do most harm?" said one of the sailors aside, "in cabin or fore-castle?"

"Amen that it is out of here!" cried Robin Rounce.

"I've sailed with this captain *and* whiskey before," said the sailor.

CHAPTER III.

A DEMON ON THE SHIP.

“Over the moaning and rainy sea
Looked for the coming that might not be :
What did the winds and sea-birds say
Of the cruel Captain that sailed away ?”



It was Captain Lois who bought the rum and the ale, and placed them on the “Recruit” for his own use: he did it with the recklessness of a man lashed by a keen consciousness of guilt, and madly resolved to heap up his iniquities, and be as bad as he could: as children of a lesser growth, say that they ‘don’t care,’ when they have committed some juvenile peccadillo, and immediately set themselves to commit several more.

But when a man does some great wrong,

there is generally not only the inner temptation of a heart astray, but the outer suggestion, or persuasion, of the demon in some human form; and now Captain Lois was pressed along in his evil path, by the deliberate malice and wickedness of his first mate, James Nagle. For purchasing liquor, and meaning to drink it, was even more a sin in Orson Lois than in other men, for he knew that when once the liquor had inflamed his brain, he was driven to frightful excesses, demonized, whirled into phrenzies of passion, so that neither his own life nor the lives of his fellow-men were safe in his hands.

James Nagle had not so pleasant memories of the outbreaks of his Captain in Japan and California, that he desired to re-encounter them for their own sake: but in California Captain Lois had struck the mate twice; he had abused him before the sailors—and James Nagle was not of the ‘dearly beloved’ who are not to avenge themselves, but should rather ‘give place unto wrath:’ on the contrary, he desired nothing so much as to wring

out vengeance with his own hand. The whiskey entering into the Captain would serve a two-fold purpose for the mate: the Captain would be most likely to commit some great error, either in regard to his ship, or his sailors, that would bring him into disgrace with the owners, and cause his dismissal; upon this his humiliation, James Nagle should rise to a captaincy; getting, at one stroke, promotion and revenge.

And so the "Recruit" crept out of Havana, and began working her way along between the multitudinous Bahamas and the Greater Antilles. As the ship stretched along eastward, Captain Lois began to drink. There was a singular method in his liquor madness: he drank like a man deliberately bent on self-destruction—facing his doom, and daring it for awhile—and then, carried away in the fever of his blood and brain, realizing nothing. It took large quantities of spirits to master that mighty frame, and mightier will. He drank almost continuously; his face flushing, his breath quickening, his eyes light-

ing with baleful fires, day after day. His fierce temper rose hotter and hotter, his voice grew stormy ; every sentence carried an oath. The men trembled, the mate watched him ; and still proudly trusting in himself, stung to unrest, suspicious of all around him, and as long as sense remained, fearing some mistake that should ruin the ship, he held his post like a fell genius, and guided the " Recruit " out of narrow channels, and abruptly rising islands, north of Hayti, and out again into the breadth of the South Atlantic.

In these days James Nagle seemed never to sleep. He was not a man to be willing to risk casting his bones to bleach on those Southern Isles. The Captain watched the ship, and Nagle watched the Captain. Nagle kept his own watch on deck carefully, and the men breathed freer when he was there, and Lois drinking below. When the third officer was in command, Nagle went to his cabin, and studied charts and books on navigation assiduously, and knew better than the Captain just where the ship

was. When it was the Captain's watch on deck, Nagle, with cat-like steps, small wiry figure, keen eyes, thin red beard, and long hard face, dogged him like a shadow. 'He was feverish and could not sleep;' 'he enjoyed the prospect of that southern sea;' 'sailors should be wakeful;' there was always a reason for his being on deck when Lois was in charge there. The sailors pursued their work desperately, careful not to anger the Captain; and yet, do the best they could, he was in a state of chronic rage, and flung curses and marlingspikes at them, and made frantic threats of what he would do. And so, this staunch and beautiful ship, when skies were fair and seas were stirred by most favorable breezes, glided on her way, bearing a new "Reign of Terror"—the "Recruit" was a floating despotism, and the sole absolute tyrant was a raving maniac!

By the time the ship had reached the longitude of Porto Rico, charts and observations meant nothing to Captain Lois: he did

not stagger nor sleep when he was drunk, but he foamed and raged, and watched for some offence, real or fancied, upon which to hurl the diabolical accumulation of his passions.

Longitude 63 or thereabouts — not that Captain Lois comprehends that: wind gentle, north, and a half a point east—not that this has a meaning for the Captain: Sabbath morning, not that the Captain heeds the holy time: far off, rising out of the sea, a cluster of gray rocks on the blue waters—SOMBRERO. The Captain knows it to be land, because he sees it: but what land, and how far off, and whether to be sought or shunned, these are questions that do not enter his frantic brain. He is a little quieter to-day; cruel, rather than excited; bitter, rather than mad; he would more enjoy flinging a man overboard, and seeing him swim for life, hear him plead and cry out, see him despair, and drop off and die with help in sight and withheld—he had rather do this, we say, than blow a man's brains out with a pistol.

The sun burning hot: the heat aggra-

vated by the thought that water is scarce, and the men are on allowance, though not a very short one. The tanks are leaking, but Mate Nagle has exaggerated the difficulty; the blame will not fall on *him*; the men will add thrist to the score laid up against the Captain. They can, in a few days, run into a port on one of the Seaward Islands, and renew their supply. The men are patient in the main; they cool themselves by going about in thin shirts and breeches, barefooted, and with wet kerchiefs tied on their heads: they find shady places to lie in, well out of the Captain's sight, and whisper hopes that his "spree" will find speedy ending. Larry Jeffries is the most uneasy of the sailors: he frets against his lot; he wishes himself home; fears and hates the Captain; and home-sick, feverish, self-indulgent, he pictures to himself the cool well at home, the rippling brook wherein he fished at Gilberthead, the glasses of milk, the bowls of cool berries, the shade, the refreshing breezes—and after all these excursions of his fancy, he returns to 'ale,'

for his thirst is stirred by the knowledge of the cask of that beverage, kept by the Captain in a cool place; and then he was born with a taste for liquors, especially malt liquors. He says to Robin, "Oh, if I had only a drink of that ale!"

"Come, lad. The good book says, 'Thou shalt not covet;' and, boy, ale is no drink for God's creatures; water's far better," replies Robin Rounce.

"But I can't have all the water I want; and I'm burning up with heat and thirst."

"Don't vex 'tself thinking o't. I've been in sorer straits for water, and the Lord brought me through. Come, lad, though we are a bit deprived in the way of water, yet we can never be stinted o' the water of life. God giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not. Let's get our minds set on the love o' God springin' up in our hearts like a fountain, and we'll forget these little worriments, while he's makin' us drink o' the river of his pleasures."

But though Robin Rounce divided his

portion of water with the boy, and though he beguiled him to a cool shady corner, and read to him, and talked with him of his mother, and little Ila, and the blessedness of being home again, Larry's perverse mind swung round that one idea of ale, ale, ale—nothing but ale. So infatuated did he become with the thought of a great draught, a foaming quart, of the coveted beverage, that he resolved to brave discovery and the Captain's wrath, and help himself to what he craved. He stole away from Robin Rounce. It was noon. The Captain was below. James Nagle paced the quarter deck: Sombrero was rising boldly out of the sea. On the "Recruit" were fifteen souls; Captain, two mates, steward, cook, ten sailors—of these only the Captain and first mate had sailed these waters before, or knew—though now the Captain did *not* know, not being sober, just where they were, or what rocky land was that that lifted between them and the southern sky. Larry concluded that the Captain must be asleep, he had been quiet

so long. Earlier in the day he had sworn at Nagle and called him 'dog' and 'fool;' he had flung a bottle, a platter and a goblet, at the steward, and hurled a great piece of boiled beef at the cook. Now all was silence in every part of the ship. If the Captain had subsided from his freak, no one desired to rouse him up.

In this silence Robin Rounce nodded, and dropped sound asleep; and then Larry found a quart can in the forecabin, and hatless and barefooted, stole off to get his ale. Silence—no one but Larry heard the ale ripple into the can—he lifted the tin to his parched lips, and drained it. Then a cry like that of a wild beast furious with starvation, hurling itself on its prey, rent the air, and brought every soul on shipboard to their feet. A rush, a dragging sound, a moaning of infinite fear, and a suppressed roaring sound, as of a giant half suffocated with rage, and Captain Lois came stumbling up the cabin stairs, dragging Larry Jeffries, who seemed nearly dead in his

grasp. The Captain had a pistol in his right hand, and as he flung Larry furiously from him, the crew expected to see him shoot the boy on the spot. They pressed forward with a cry. James Nagle stood by to see the end; but as the Captain raised the pistol, suddenly his eye caught the line of *Sombrero*, set sharply against the sky. A gleam of demoniac exultation lit his convulsed face. He burst into a horrible peal of laughter. "Ha! ha, ha! you want to go ashore—you are sick of sailing! Go ashore you shall. Ha, ha, you thief! Go drink on that island! Man the gig! launch the gig! bring the ship about!"

Still keeping an eye on Larry, who lay as he had been flung on the deck, the Captain tore the trumpet from Nagle's side, and began bellowing his orders. The two mates withdrew to a safe distance; the sailors, relieved of fear of seeing the lad shot, and awed by the pistol cocked in the Captain's right hand, proceeded to execute his orders. The gig was launched. Robin Rounce, the

sailor who had been with Lois before, Tompkins the new sailor, and one other, were ordered to man the boat. Larry was ordered, barefooted and bareheaded as he was, to get into the boat; but first the carpenter was bidden to tie on his back a small board with THIEF painted thereon. Not a particle of food, water, or clothes, was allowed to be put in the gig for him. The Captain stood at the ship's side, weapon in hand, scrutinizing every move. When Larry could not, or would not, get up and embark, the Captain called two sailors, who reluctantly flung the boy into the gig, and then himself entered and took his seat to steer. Larry was shrieking and sobbing wildly; the hated "Recruit" looked already like a Paradise to him; he lifted himself upon his knees, and prayed the Captain to have mercy on him, not to banish him forever from hope of home, and from his mother's face. But these very prayers infuriated the madman.

"Ha, ha, ha! You don't like to sail with me! You shall not! Ha, ha, ha! you

will fill all Gilberthead with stories of me, and make it too hot for me? Scream then until your voice reaches from here to Gilberthead ;” and so he roared, and the boy plead, until the terrified seamen who were rowing prayed the lad to hush, lest all their lives should be sacrificed. The sailor, Harper, who had been on Lois’ Japan trip, whispered to Larry, “Boy, cheer up. French fishers, I’ve heard, haunt these places for turtles, and so on. You’ll be taken off.”

“He never means to leave you, only till over night, to scare you a bit,” whispered Robin.

“I’ll shoot the first man who speaks to him again !” yelled Captain Lois, raising his pistol.

Larry sobbed and cried all the time until the boat touched the island. He was then threatened with instant death if he did not land. Under stress of this threat he stepped forth on the bare, hot, sharp rocks, and sank down with a cry, blood running from feet and hands. Harper boldly drew off his own

shoes and flung them to him. The Captain lifted his pistol, and the other sailors, to draw off his attention and divide his rage, as well as moved by pity for Larry, begun to fling things ashore; resolved if he fired one shot, to fall on him and disarm him, and give up the ship to the mate. Robin Rounce tossed Larry a kerchief, with his Bible tied up in it. Harper threw his socks and jacket after the shoes. Robin followed the Bible with a hat; Tompkins tossed his knife to him, and the other rower threw a handkerchief.

At these proceedings Captain Lois glared about, breathed hard, lifted his pistol, dropped it, bade them push off, and return to the ship.

The gig regained the "Recruit" in silence. The Captain rushed to his cabin and drank rum: the mate made no remarks, but kept the ship lying to, as he had no order to change her position.

"He will take him off to-night, poor lad," said Robin.

“Not he, I know him,” said Harper. “He will have no idea of mercy until he gets sober, and then it will be too late.”

“The boy will die of fright,” said Tompkins.

“Or of thirst,” groaned Robin. “God help him!”

“I’ve heard of great birds like those here, killing people,” said another sailor.

“Mr. Nagle, sir,” said Robin Rounce, making obeisance, “what away land is this here?”

“What do I know of land?” growled the mate; “it’s a place to lay the ship’s bones, if we stop here too long. It’s land I never saw before.”

“One o’ the Leewards?” suggested Robin.

“We’re past them,” lied Nagle, deliberately.

The sun was setting. The man came out of the top. “Can you see him? What is he doing?” said the men, crowding around.

“Lying on his face—perhaps he’s dead, poor lad; he’s nervous and weakly, my

boys ; here's sheer, cold-blooded, cruel murder. And all around the ship went the whisper "*murder!*"

No one slept that night on the "Recruit ;" she lay rising and falling with the regular motion of the waves. James Nagle kept his place on deck : not one word to the Captain, not one word for the abandoned boy. One of the men ventured to pray him to intercede.

"The Captain would shoot me in his fury," said Nagle ; "and then, my boys, your bones would lie in these waters, for *he's* past sailing this ship."

The men gathered in knots on the deck. What should they do? To do anything, even to ask Nagle to take command, would be mutiny : they could complain when they got home, and then Larry would be dead.

And on that verdureless island, what was the agony of that unhappy boy's fear, and pain, and longing for help, lying all night with the sound of waves softly lapping against the stones, the stir and cry of sea-birds about their nests, and not a human

voice to break the utter desolation of his loneliness.

Gray dawn just lifting above the horizon : now Captain Lois comes on deck. His face purple, his eyes wild, his dress disordered ; his pistol in his hand—and greeting no one, he stands, taking possession of the ship, and issues his orders for getting the “ Recruit ” underweigh. Whether it is force of habit, or some ruling of reason, yet in his distracted brain, he gives all his orders with precision and absolute correctness. The sailors obey with alacrity : possibly he is not so drunk as he was yesterday ; probably sound judgment will return ; he will bear nearer this unknown island, and take off this miserable culprit, if yet he is living.

But no—the course of the ship is *from*, not *to* the island. What can this mean ? Surely he can never intend to abandon a sailor—a boy—his own townsman, on this utterly desolate island, with not one drop of food, or drink, without the least shelter or hope of relief ; and all this, for the mere

taking of a can of ale, when he was suffering from thirst, and the usual allowance of water was denied him.

“He means to scare him a bit more,” said Robin Rounce.

“He’s mostly scared to death already,” said Tompkins.

“He’ll turn and take him off—the mate will speak to him.”

But no, the mate was silent; the ship was passing away from the island. Then a sudden resolution was formed. The man at the wheel gave his place to the second mate; the steward skulked behind the cabin door, the cook hid himself in his cuddy; but ten stalwart sailors, with Robin Rounce at their head, appeared, hats in hand, upon the quarter-deck.

“Cap’n—axin’ your pardon—do you not intend to take that poor, unfort’nit lad off yon rocks?” asked Robin.

“To your places, every man of you! What I intend is nothing to you!” bellowed the captain, going into a fury.

“Cap’n, the boy’s our fellow, and sir, with honor to you, in the Lord’s eyes, we are all our brother’s keeper, and must do as we’d be done by; and so, cap’n, we axes you to forgive the poor fellow, and we promises for him, he wont offend you agin; and, thinkin’ him punished enough, we axes you to take him back aboard, sir.”

“To your places! or I’ll shoot every man of you like dogs! Do you mutiny, you rascals! If you turn this ship one inch from this course, you murder me first, do you hear! Leave this quarter-deck, or you are dead men.”

He rushed at them, brandishing his pistol. The men fell back; withdrew from the quarter-deck.

“We can’t die for him,” said Tompkins.

“We can’t help the boy,” muttered Harper.

“We can see to it, complaining when we get ashore—we can let the owners know,” said another.

“But too late to save the boy,” said

Robin ; “too late to keep his mother’s heart from breaking. O, I cannot let this go ! I must say a word more. Good-bye, boys. I am old enough to die, and I’ll go speak for the boy, if I die for it. We have the example of the Lord Jesus, that a man should lay down his life for his friends.”

And so, back went this honest sailor to the quarter-deck. “Cap’n—axin’ your pardon—but cap’n, do only think of yourself; suppose it was you, sir, or your dear son, if you have one, sir, in that boy’s place—consider, cap’n, if you please, his poor mother !”

“Another word, and I’ll shoot you !”

“Shoot me, Cap’n !” cried Robin, baring his fearless heart. “Shoot me, but save that poor miserable boy, as ain’t prepared to die, sir. Consider, cap’n, your own good name when the ship gets home. Thieving *is* bad work, sir, and the lad was badly to blame ; but, sir, thieving ain’t to be punished wi’ death ; and consider how little a thing he took ; an’ cap’n, there was circumstances to help excuse him. For the dear

love of God, who is ready to pardon sins, sir, do put the ship about, and save that boy—do it for all our sakes, Cap'n."

What held Captain Lois, that while foaming with rage, he did not shoot this bold intercessor? Probably something in the man's earnest and fearless manner. He could not shoot him, but he thrust him by main strength from the quarter-deck, and loudly ordered him to be put in irons. Not a man moved to obey. Under threat of having his brains blown out, the steward finally brought the irons, and dashing his pistol upon the deck, the crazed captain himself fitted them upon Robin Rounce.

CHAPTER IV.

A DAY OF RECKONING.

For mine thou art, and nought shalt sever us ;
From thine own lips and life I drew my force ;
The name thy nation give me is—REMORSE.”



THE seamen on the “Recruit,” with the single exception of Robin Rounce, had been unfriendly to Larry Jeffries. They esteemed him a coward, a fine gentleman, and a “shirk;” they fancied that he felt himself above them ; but here they were mistaken—as we often are in judging our fellow-men. Larry had looked on his shipmates with no contempt, but with intense envy of their boldness, their ingenuity, and their vigor. However, so long as Larry was in the ship, the men flouted him, and made no end of their petty

persecutions; now, as soon as he was cast out to die of starvation, thirst and fear, on that miserable rock, they made his cause their own; the very weakness which they had despised, was now an added reason for their pity; they compassionated his fate all the more because of his helplessness, as we compassionate children or invalids. And why should not these men make the lad's cause their own? How soon might this maniac captain turn others of them out to die on desert islands; how soon might not his pistols, so ready to threaten, take some of their lives; how soon might he not fling an offender over into the waters, to be food for sharks, as carelessly as one would fling a dead dog? Few men would have abandoned a living dog as he had abandoned Larry Jeffries.

The breeze from the north and west filled the top-sails; the sky became overcast; the water, late shining and sparkling, grew purple; there rose a deep inner murmur of the sea, undertoning the ripple along the

ship's sides ; the prow pointed west, and the rocky island, whose name this crew did not know, was fading out of sight. Evidently repentance was hidden from the Captain's eyes. A low and terrible whisper passed round the ship—should they rise, release Robin Rounce, iron the Captain, give the mate the command, go back for Jeffries, and make for the nearest port to deliver the man whom they named *murderer*, to marine authorities? They hesitated. They did not trust the sly wickedness of the mate any more than they trusted the mad outbursts of the Captain. If they executed the movement suggested, they had no assurance that Captain and mate would not unite at the nearest port to swear to a lie, and call them all unprovoked mutineers—and appearances would be against them. Then the third officer knew nothing of navigation, and if the mate refused his help, or should be lost, there would not be a man to sail the ship. Some one hinted the plan to Robin Rounce, but he replied that it was "better to suffer

wrong than to do wrong." And so while the men went sullenly about their work, and a cloud lowering on all their faces, threatened the Captain's ruin, something withheld the vengeance. Here was a man who had wanted to run his whole line to a realizing of perdition, and God was removing his restraining hand and letting his own stormy nature carry him whither it would, unchecked of Heaven or of man.

Robin Rounce, sitting in irons on the deck, had his face toward the stern of the vessel; and as she lifted on the long swells of the waves, and then sunk again, he saw lessening and lessening, in the sunless distance, the rocky top of that terrible island. The picture his mind drew of the deserted boy's dying agonies, and of the woes of that mother who waited for a son who would never return, were too terrible for him. Like Hagar in the wilderness, he cried out—"Let me not see the death of the child!" and 'lifted up his voice and wept.' Harper was passing near him. Robin glanced about

the deck—the Captain was not in sight. He said, “Turn my face, Harper, for the love of mercy, for I cannot look at that away island rising an’ falling on yon water; and seems to me, I hear the death moans o’ yon poor lad every sight I gets o’ his rock.”

Harper took the honest sailor under the arms, and turned his face away from Sombrero.

And now the island was almost out of sight—the ship was pressed more swiftly on her way. Tompkins came near Robin in his work. “Tompkins,” said Robin, “I cast my Bible to yon poor boy—but think ’e, there’s one yet in yon fo’cas’le?”

“Aye, aye, in the bottom o’ my chest,” said Tompkins.

“Slip after it like a good lad, an’ lay it here on my knee.”

Tompkins looked about, saw a clear coast, and ran for the Bible. He glanced curiously at it from his work, as Robin painfully turned the pages, for Captain Lois had ironed him, feet and wrists. Said Robin,

“aye; here’s the word I wanted—lend a y’ear, Tompkins. ‘And the angel of God called out of heaven, and said—what aileth thee? fear not; for the Lord hath heard the voice of the lad where he is.’—A word in season, my lad, how good it is! That’s the Lord’s word to me.”

“Why you doesn’t say that there’s in yon Bible?” said Tompkins.

“Aye, lad, read it for e’ self.”

“Not now, but dash me if I don’t read the book through, if it runs like that,” said Tompkins.

The island far out of sight; the sea very black; the sky with the purple blackness that heralds a storm in those low latitudes; wind veering a little to the west, coming in puffs, and giving shrill shrieks and whistles as it hurtles through the rigging. Up tore the Captain from his cabin, hatless, coatless, his shirt throat open, his breath thick, a fearful heat seeming to parch him. He looked up at the black sky, and the sails filled tight with the wind, and swearing at Nagle, for

not 'knowing how to handle a ship,' and 'fearing a cap full of wind,' and 'not daring to sail under a pocket handkerchief,' he seized his trumpet and bellowed "all hands aloft;" and one sail after another was, by his orders, set, until driving at full speed through the foaming sea, the "Recruit" buried her prow under every wave, washed her decks from stern to stern, and the oldest sailors grew pale, and the long lithe masts bent like willow wands, stooping almost to touch snowy canvass to snowy foam, as the vessel dashed from billow to billow. The strong cold wind, the wreaths of brine in his face, the excitement of the scene, gave a new outlet to Captain Lois' phrensy. He ignored Mate Nagle, who submitted to stand aloof with folded arms, but whitening face, and the Captain and third officer, Wilcox, handled the ship. The rain came down in a deluge; the wind did not abate, the ship shivered and reeled, and the men looked in terror at the clouds of canvass and the overstrained masts.

Noon; a sound overhead like the discharge of a cannon. A great sail loose, and flapping and jerking in the tempest, threatening to tear out the mainmast. That sound summoned back Captain Lois' truant reason: he straightened himself, looked about: calm courage took the place of phrensy. He shouted for men to spring aloft and cut loose the sail: but who went aloft then took his life in his hand, for one blow from that loosened sail would be death, and there was small assurance that the mast would hold until the sail was free: only volunteers, hearts of iron, would go aloft for such duty. Forward sprung Harper: "Another," shouted the Captain; "alive there, men! save the mast!"

"I'll go!" came the cry from Robin Rounce, yet ironed.

"Aye, up! go, Robin; where's the man? *Zounds! what is the fellow in irons for! Hang you, Nagle, that's some of your work!*" and the Captain dashed to release Rounce, cursing Nagle for "maltreating the best man aboard!"

The sail was cut loose, and with a loud final clap floated off from the ship, describing a wide curve as it tended to the water. The storm increased—thunder and lightning added to the terrors of the scene. The Captain, who seemed to have come to himself, handled his ship like an accomplished sailor, to the admiration of all the men.

“He’s past his worst,” whispered Harper to Rounce. “I know him by the past—he’s not like to break out again very soon.”

“Then, in a bit, we must venture to ask him to go back for the boy,” replied Robin. “We may save him yet.”

“The wind will have to drop and change then,” said Harper, shaking his head. “No ship can sail in the teeth of such a gale as this.”

But the wind continued. The Captain maintained his place on deck all day; hot coffee, and then great fragments of hot meat, were served to the men on deck. Two sails were blown out of the clews and were lost. The ship was washed her whole length every

few minutes: chicken coops and all loose stuff vanished; every man, wet and weary, was in terror for his life; only one calm heart beat on board the "Recruit," and that was the heart of Robin Rounce, and to him it was fulfilled: "He shall keep him in perfect peace, whose heart is stayed on thee, because he trusted in thee."

"If ever I get out of this storm alive," said Tompkins to Robin, "I'll lead a different sort of life—see if I don't."

"I hope so, lad, I hope so," replied Robin, "but don't 'e put off a making peace wi' God till this storm's over; now you're on a prayin' and intercedin' terms wi' t' Lord, boy, as parson up to a Bethel put it; but, belike, you'll ne'er see this storm ended—so cry aloud, and spare not, now, my boy, stormy as 'it is; for 'the Lord's arm is not shortened that it cannot save, nor his ear heavy that it cannot hear.'"

Every bit of canvas was now close-reefed; three men stood at the wheel—the main duty of the rest was holding on to whatever

would keep them from being carried overboard. Robin and Tompkins were hanging fast to the mainmast. Said Tompkins :

“O, is it as bad as that, do you think, Robin?”

“Eh, so bad? My lad, there’s sides to it might make you say ‘so good.’ If you had part and lot in the Lord Jesus, my boy, you’d mayhap say, is it so good as that; this very night I may be wi’ him in Paradise! Why mate, often I say to myself, Robin, you’re like to perish at sea; the sea’s the best grave for a friendless old salt; and when you goes through this sea gate into heaven, some great shining angel will come up to you, saying, ‘He sent from above, he took *thee*, he drew *thee* out of many waters.’”

And as this servant of God was thus calmly making his trust under the shadow of his wing, for the rest of the men in the ship, some were wildly praying and vowing. Mate Nagle, in abject terror, was cursing his unhappy fate; the steward and the cook, ardent cowards both, were hidden in the cabin,

crying to the saints and angels to save them, and Captain Lois was brought face to face with death. *He* was no coward; he had no physical fear of death; but he had not some men's refuge in the lies of unbelief; eternity, judgment, future punishment, were to him no figments of theological dreamers' brains, but they were fixed facts; *he had learned them from his mother, when a child.* He felt that he should never again look on his wife and Claude; there came a pang into his heart at the thought, but he ground his teeth and said, "So much the better for them: I am not fit for them, at my best." And then—there was a God, a *righteous* God, to be faced that night. What could he answer HIM? and conscience, and reason, and memory, suddenly made a Babel of accusations in his soul, about some undefined, recent and awful crime, the manner of which was vague and indistinct in his mind. But the peril of his ship, his duty to the owners, and to the lives that hung on his skill and fearlessness, his duty as a brave man and

a ship's captain stood very plainly before him.

"I can't settle with God," he said with a groan. "I must do my duty by the ship, go down in her, and face the rest!" And so he stood his ground, and fought death all that night; by morning he seemed to be getting rather the better of the storm; day brought a glimmer of comfort with its light—the wind fell a little, the waves struck with less fury against the ship—the captain shouted to cook and steward, to prepare food and coffee for the exhausted mariners. Mate Nagle crept forth.

"Shall I take my turn on deck?"

"No, Mr. Nagle, no!" cried Captain Lois, with withering bitterness, "we want *a man* in command at such a time as this!"

What had he done by those words! What a future for him did they involve! Nagle had in that night experienced a little relenting and remorse; he had felt a gleam of gratitude toward a man who was so skilful and courageous, who held so many lives

in his hands, and was battling for them so bravely. Now, when the Captain's bitter sarcasm fell upon him, it scathed every better emotion like a breath of fire curling through films of gossamer.

All day, tempest; sleepless watchfulness, unflinching courage; the storm has blown itself out: the sea, baffled of its prey, the ship, and worsted in the contest with the wind, glooms and mutters sulkily about the keel, and its fury dies out wave by wave: repair the damages of the storm a little, more food for the men. "Make it good, you Dutchman!" bawls the Captain to the cook. "You fellow, get me something to drink!" and the 'fellow,' *i. e.*, the steward, went into the cabin. "Wish I knew what the Captain was wanting," he mutters; "he's that fierce, I dar'n't take him the wrong thing."

"Wants—why rum, of course," says Nagle confidently; "take him that bottle of rum and a glass, and you'll be all right;" and thus encouraged, and judging from past experi-

ences, the steward approached the Captain, bottle and glass in hand.

“Why, you fool,” bawled the Captain, “I wanted coffee;” and catching bottle and glass he flung them into the sea.

“That’s better,” said Robin Rounce to himself.

“Starboard watch below!” Blessed words to men exhausted with two days and a night of fighting with the storm. The larboard watch is on deck, one man short. Larry was in that watch. Night settles over the sea, here and there a star glimmers out, and at last a slender crescent of light rides low along the main. The Captain looks anxiously at the stars; he would like to know whereabouts his ship lies: his face in the pale moonlight is wan, and haggard, and distressed.

Some one, unbidden, on the quarter-deck. “Captain Lois, askin’ your pardon, let me say a word with you. It’s for the lad, Captain, for the lad Larry Jeffries. Sir, it’s for your sake, and for his mother’s sake. I saw

her crying heart-broken when she kissed him good-bye; and the good Book says, it's great bitterness a weeping for the loss of an only son."

Silence: dim accusations begin to take palpable shape in the Captain's consciousness.

"No doubt he's punished enough, Captain, and like the Lord himself, you will remember mercy in the midst of judgment. Likely, sir, it was only to scare him, and you'd have taken him off before, only for the storm?"

Silence still: mists are clearing from certain pictures of memory now, and they are standing forth bold and black and bad. Robin is by silence encouraged to proceed.

"If you'd but order the ship put about sir, we might hope to be up to him soon, sir; before—before he's starved to death, Captain, a thing we'd be all main sorry for."

And so the Captain is driven desperate at last. He says curtly, "Perhaps you can tell me where we are now, Rounce?"

“Oh, sir—I, sir! But don’t you know, Cap’n?”

“Since when did I have an observation? Not since Sunday. How fast has she driven in this storm? Is her course to or from, North or South of this—*island*? There’s nothing to be done to-night; in the morning, of course, we’ll pick him up, unless we lay our bones and the ship’s timbers, on some of the confounded islands that are sprinkled so thick in these seas. For my part, I don’t know what so much land was made for. Look out, there! Keep a sharp watch in the top! Alive there, at the wheel! don’t nod, your watch below, soon!”

“Aye, aye, sir!” dropping down from the lookout.

“Aye, aye, sir!” hoarsely grumbled from the wheel.

Robin retreats, discomfitted. Not know where the ship is! ‘Pick up’ a man from an island maybe hundreds of miles away? And the Captain looks at the water, and puts together stray words of the sailor, ‘his

mother's sake,' 'crying, heart-broken,' 'before he's starved to death, Cap'n'—and the echo of a Shemitic oath, 'God do so to me, and more also.'

But the larboard watch goes below, and then Mate Nagle comes up, and the Captain staggers exhausted to his bed, and drops into a heavy slumber, and so sleeps until day. There is broad sunshine then: the men, somewhat refreshed, are clearing up the ship, and drying their clothes. The first thing is to take an observation, and then the Captain is sure of where he is.

Driven far out beyond the Leeward Islands now, north of his destination, in fact, he might drop down on the Guiana coast, but—but, there is a man abandoned somewhere, and—well, it is needful to be civil, to take Mate Nagle into confidence; but Mate Nagle is not to be brutally insulted one day, and made friendly the next. "Mr. Nagle," says Captain Lois.

"Sir!" says Mr. Nagle, but looks unpromising.

“We’re in the longitude of New Amsterdam—might drop down on the Guiana coast—but there’s that confounded boy, we were driven off from, as I meant to pick him up. I suppose we must go back for him?”

“As you say, sir,” replied Mr. Nagle.

“And what do you call the place where we left him, Mr. Nagle?”

“I don’t know, sir.”

“Well, it’s west, and by north from here, and, zounds, we’ll put the ship about, and I’ll warrant you’ll find it soon enough,” said the Captain, losing his equanimity, and looking threatening.

“Sir,” says Mr. Nagle, preserving his calmness, “there’s a leak reported, and the ship’s strained by the gale, and the water’s low in the tanks. We cannot make the run to New Amsterdam without repairs and water, sir, even if we could not trust, as we can, plenty of ships to pick the rascally boy up.”

“We’ll pick him up,” said the Captain, growing obstinate.

“As you choose, Captain, and as you think the owners will approve, of the ship and the crew being all risked for one boy, who is likely grinning on his way to New York now. If we run from here to Antigua or Barbuda, which are nearly due east of us, we make either in one-third of the time that we should take to get to New Amsterdam, and we can repair and get the water butts filled. If we go off looking for the boy, Jeffries, and then go to Antigua or Barbuda—it is for you to say, Captain Lois, but I don’t think we’d ever get to either of those places. If we make for one of those ports, and don’t find the boy at them, or hear of his being taken off, why we can run after him, where he is; it is for you to say, sir. *I* don’t sail the “Recruit.”

Captain Lois turned on his heel, and went to his cabin. He had very ugly facts to face; regard for the interests of the owners and the safety of the crew, called on him to make a port as speedily as possible. The more he tried to decide *where* he had left

Larry Jeffries, the less able was he to fix upon the place. From the longitude of Turk's Islands to the time when his mainsail got loose, and he found himself fiercely fighting a storm with a sailor's *instinct*, everything was misty and doubtful in his mind, and he only knew that he had put Larry on land somewhere between longitude sixty-seven and fifty-nine, and between latitude seventeen and twenty north—a vast tract of water, flecked with many islands, wherein to search for a rock with a boy on it! Captain Lois had also to face the question what would be said or done, if Larry never was heard of more. What would Helen Lois and Claude say; what would Larry's mother and the community, do and say? And the owners—what of them; what would they do about having men left at sea, unprovisioned, on uninhabited rocks?

There was but one thing to be done, and that was to get back Larry; and Captain Lois made up his mind to do it; but then, doing this he could not long delay the ship,

or the owners would take account of that. He paced the cabin in a fever of distress, as all the shame and sin and danger of his position confronted him. He ground his teeth as he realized how ignorant he really was of the place where he had deserted Jeffries. Then came the consciousness that the mate, Nagle, knew the place precisely, and evidently meant not to tell where it was. The mocking face of the man rose upon his despairing reverie, and taunted him. "He knows, and means not to tell me," he said, clenching his fists. "He wont tell. But he *shall* tell: he shall speak or die!"

Perhaps James Nagle read that resolution on his face when he came on deck, ordered sail to be crowded, and set the ship's course for Antigua.

CHAPTER V.

ALONE ON SOMBRERO.

“Waves in the sun, the white-winged gleam
Of sea-birds in the slanting beam ;
And far off sails that flit before the south wind free.”



THE “Recruit” made fair sailing to Antigua. Three vessels passed them on their way, and Captain Lois, contrary to his usual custom, took especial pains to speak them. As each one reported “no news,” the Captain’s countenance fell, and James Nagle looked a secret satisfaction.

On a clear balmy evening, as the “Recruit” was sailing almost due west, the verdant oval of Antigua lifted before her, rosy and golden clouds hanging low about the hills; white houses gleaming on the sunny slopes; the harbor full of shipping; the sugar factories roaring with business,

and vast acres of canefields filled with dusky toilers. A healthful, populous, wealthy and beautiful island, well governed and well cultivated; a paradise of the southern main. And into such a paradise never floated ship more laden with bitterness and discontent, than the "Recruit;" the Captain full of unrest and remorse, the mate of hate, and fear, and bad intentions, the men burning with resentment and distrust.

The ship having dropped anchor in the harbor of St. John's, the Captain informed the men that their stay would be as short as possible; that permission to go on shore would be given as far as accorded with the business of the ship, and that while in port all hands might go below at night except an officer and two men, holding their turn for a three hours' watch.

On that first night Captain Lois came for a watch on deck from twelve to three. Tompkins was standing idle at the wheel, watching the city and the shipping in the moonlight, and the reflection of occasional

lights in the water. At the stern of the ship Robin Rounce sat, looking down into the black, quiet deep. Captain Lois paced up and down for a while, not merely on the quarter-deck, but the whole length of the ship. At last he stopped by Robin.

“Rounce,” he said, “I want you to ask leave on shore to-morrow—and—I want you to spend the time while we are here, visiting every ship lying at this island, and see if you can get any news of that boy Jeffries. Very likely you can hear of him.”

“Aye, aye, sir,” said Robin. “And that would save us a trip?”

“A trip where?” asked Captain Lois.

“Why, Cap’n, sir, a trip to get him, where we left him?”

“Well, Robin, where was that?”

“Why, bless you, Cap’n, sir, axin’ pardon, doesn’t you know sir? Mebby ’twas one o’ the Lee’ards. I’ve sailed to the North seas, Cap’n, and three times around Cape Horn, and twict to Ingee, and ’long our coast, and to N’Orleans, an’ to the Bahamy’s. I’m an

old salt, sir, but I never went these seas afore, not to know 'em like print, sir, and pint 'em out."

Captain Lois' disturbed brain had retained for him such indistinct images of all the circumstances of Larry's abandonment, that he felt compelled to ask further information from some one of the ship's company; and this Robin was the only man whose honest kindness he could trust. He took a turn or two, smothered somewhat the tumult of his feelings, and came back to the sailor, saying, "Rounce, describe to me that island where we left Jeffries."

"Eh, sir, it were a fearsome island," said Robin, frankly; "a pile o' rocks, sir, about a mile across, mebby; no water, no trees, nothin' but birds and crawlin' things; hot sir, as an oven; and sharp the stones were: the blood ran from the lad's feet the minute he trod on 'em."

With a smothered oath, the Captain turned on his heel, and tramped up and down for a while. Then he returned.

“And what did the boy take with him, Rounce?”

“Why, love you, Cap’n, not a mortal thing, ’cept that we men threw him shoes, a hat, kerchers, an’ my Bible. The last the lookout saw o’ him, sir, he lay on his face, and he thought he were dead.”

Longer walking up and down now, for the tortured Captain; he had some humanity left in him, and this picture was too horrible. Then his promises—that mother—his wife—public sentiment—Back again to Robin.

“And what land did the men say it was, Robin?”

“They none o’ ’em know, sir; only they guessed, for none o’ ’em never see that rock afore; they only guessed it were one o’ the Caribbees, Cap’n.”

“There are eight hundred of *them*, first and last!” cried the Captain; “some large, some small, some points of rock.”

It began to dawn on Robin’s mind that the Captain had a very dim realization of

in he sailed. But the Great Cap'n up aloft don't sail his ships after our advisements, but accordin' to the charts He's made out from all eternity, and it's a good thing to know as he always sails 'em right."

The ship was lying near shore, and Robin preferred a request to Captain Lois that Tompkins might be buried on the coast under a tree. "He were more a landsman than a sailor," said Robin, "and to me it don't seem as the sea would be a good bed for him."

The Captain agreed to the request. The cutter was lowered; the body, wrapped in a piece of sail, was put in, half a dozen sailors went ashore, dug a grave and laid the body in it. Robin Rounce read a chapter and offered a prayer, and with solemn faces and subdued hearts, the men returned to the "Recruit." There were now but seven men in the fore-castle of the "Recruit;" enough for duty along the coast, but her number would need to be made up before she started on the return voyage.

While Captain Lois, of all men on the ship, most tempted the coast fever by his drinking habits, and was most exposed to it by his excitement and his frequent visits to the shore at all hours, he experienced no signs of it; but Mr. Wilcox, the first mate, became dangerously ill. The ship was lying off a small town near Sanamari; the Captain hired a vacant cabin on the shore, sent a bed and various comforts there, and detailed Robin Rounce, and a Coolie woman whom he hired, to nurse the mate there. Robin bade his shipmates good-bye, when he left the ship. He felt that the Captain was likely to sail away any night and leave him; but no, the Captain fumigated the ship, looked scrupulously after the cleanliness of the fore-castle, and of the men, superintended the diet, and did his best to stay the plague. Mr. Wilcox died after a short illness, was buried near the cabin where he had been ill, and Robin Rounce painted a headboard for his grave.

Next day the "Recruit" sailed for Sana-

mari. There was no man on the ship fit to take the place of first mate. Harper had not sufficient knowledge of navigation to stand next the Captain, or to sail the ship if the Captain were disabled. Captain Lois, according to ship's custom, called the men together, sold by auction the effects of the dead man, and then made a statement to the crew, that he should run into Sanamari and endeavor to secure there a first officer. He succeeded in getting a young Englishman who had been left there with a broken leg by a brig from London, but having quite recovered, had been waiting two months for a good berth in a ship bound northward.

And now the ship's business on the Guiana Coast was nearly done. She had spent some months on those disastrous shores: no further deaths had occurred, and the Captain began to make his plans about getting home.

We turn once more to the lonely inhabitant of Sombrero. Relieved of immediate

fear of perishing by thirst, Larry set himself to procure food. Eggs were scarce, and would not keep long; he lived on them for about a week, and then the supply was exhausted. He then succeeded in killing a turtle: this was meat enough, but soon became so putrid that he could not use it. He had no means of making a fire to cook his food, and too late remembered that he might have soaked it in salt water and dried it in the air and hot sun. Profiting by this thought, he secured what young birds he could and cured them in this fashion; but the birds were now fledged and active, and protected by the old ones, so that they nearly all escaped him, as he was weak and weaponless. His supply of water was rapidly diminishing; he was so fearful of losing any of it, that he only drank when the sun was not shining on his cisterns, and then he sucked up the water through a quill which he had found on the rocks. He read his Bible much, deeply repented of his waywardness toward his mother, of his idleness while at home, and called

upon God to have mercy on him, and deliver him from his captivity. Days seemed like hours in his prison-house: he could only sit in his grotto and read his Bible until his eyes swam, or watch for sails on that glittering sea, until he grew giddy and blind.

One night there was a short storm, a wind, a gust of rain: he stumbled around in the darkness, uncovering his cisterns that they might be replenished, and rejoicing in having his parched body well drenched in the cool pure water as it fell. The next day, wandering around his rocks, he found wedged in a crevice, a long slender tree, trunk or limb. The bark was soft, juicy, and not unpleasant to the taste. He greedily ate it, living on it for two days. He then fastened the long pole erect on the top of his island, wedging it fast with rocks, and having on the top for a signal his only shirt. In the feeble fluttering of this forlorn flag, he made his hope: a ship far off to the eastward saw it one night, and took it for "a gull or something." That evening Larry thought he saw against the

clear sky the spars and fluttering pennon of a ship. He watched it, breathless, and with streaming eyes for a time, and then it melted away before he could be sure whether it had been a ship at all. Very dark prospects now: Larry very faint and hopeless: the water in his cisterns rapidly disappearing: food very scarce. He found one day some small dark blue muscles planted on their ends in the sand: he ate them, and they poisoned him; his head swelled; his eyes swelled, and the lids closed together; he was in darkness and agony; he lay by his cistern in the grotto, and feebly sucked water through the quill, as he blindly moved and replaced the stones. After several days he recovered from the poison, but was very weak. Next day he saw a sail: he cried out in his hollow voice, waved a kerchief; all uselessly. The great ship "passed him by on the other side." Another and another ship, full of wealth, food, drink, life, hope, safety, came and went, and no one perceived this wretched castaway. He was too weak to walk; water,

the gift of heaven, remained by him, but in a very small quantity.

Five vessels he saw, and hoped and prayed, cried out, trembled and despaired, and those great ships, as they had drawn toward him out of unshadowed horizons of blue skies, and golden light, and glorious waters, went white sailed and stately, sailing down measureless seas, recking nothing of that one poor life that was beating and agonizing itself out drop by drop on desolate Sombrero. The ships might come now and he would not quicken and quiver with hope: they might go, and he would not moan in his despair; they might land men and he would not greet them, for he had fought his poor battle through and had been conquered; and worn out with hunger and anguish, he lay inanimate upon the rocks, half his body under shade of his grotto, and one wasted hand lying as it had fallen, feebly seeking for his quill in the failing water of his little pool.

CHAPTER VII.

THE HOME PORT.

“ But ne'ertheless, by much too old
Not to perceive that men withhold
More of the story than is told—
And so infer a mystery.”



BEFORE setting out for the North, Captain Lois set himself to discover whether his men yet brooded over his desertion of Larry Jeffries, and suspected him of “getting rid” of Mate Nagle in some underhand and wicked way. He had been not unkind while on the Guiana Coast, and though harsh and driving in work, more than was natural to him, because he was in an unnatural state from the effect of the rum which he was drinking, he had cared well for the health of his men, and had granted all reasonable requests. Possibly a degree

of liberty on the way home and 'plum-duff' twice a week, might obliterate from their minds all unpleasantness. But suppose that it did not: suppose that they went home and denounced him as the destroyer of Larry and Nagle? And suppose that neither of these were ever heard of again? Then, though no murder could be proved against him, yet he would lie under very strong suspicion of it. He would be bruited from one end of the country to the other as an atrocious monster: he would never get another ship, nor even position as mate; and there was nothing which he could do on shore. All Gilberthead would rise against him for destroying the son and sole stay of Mrs. Vernon, the last scion of the well-esteemed Jeffries' family; he might see the mother die of grief; the blue eyes of little Ila would always look accusation at him; his own child would shrink from him as the murderer of her playmate. And Helen—Helen, that gracious and pious woman, who beside himself had always seemed like some

angel strangely wedded to lost estate, she would shudder at him, would pine in his presence, would hope no more to lift him up to that plane where she and his mother had always stood, would die as surely by his wickedness, as if slain by his hand.

These were Orson Lois' thoughts night and day. They drove him desperate. Sometimes he thought he would give up the command of the ship, and lose himself in some of the broad tracts or numerous rivers, or almost illimitable coasts of South America, and be heard from no more; fighting his bitter self-ruined life to the end, unhelped of men or God.

But a singular longing to see his home, and especially his wife, once more, overpowered him; her soft touch could perhaps exorcise the demons which possessed him; at her voice the mists that shrouded his mind would flee away, and all this voyage would prove but an ugly dream. Get home he must and would.

He received a letter from his wife—he

read—"Cousin Sarah's last letter from Larry was dated at Havana. She is very uneasy about him; why does he not write? Only that you report 'all well' she would think some evil had happened him. Tell him to write, and do you write fully about him—and oh, Orson, remember your promise and be good to the boy! If Larry should die on that dreadful coast, I do not see what the family would do. Mr. Vernon is very poorly this summer. Sarah works herself nearly to death at embroidery and knitting and crocheting for the Boston houses, trying to lay by enough to give Ila a thorough education, so that she need not always be dependent on Larry. She does all her house work now, but that is a blessing to her, relieving her confinement to the needle; but if that dear old-fashioned house were no longer theirs, with its familiar furniture, its bees, its garden and its fruit, and the income from renting the fields, I think Sarah would soon die in the endeavor to support her

family, with health and buoyancy broken by so many cares and sorrows."

Captain Lois shed hot tears over this sheet; then he tore his hair, gnashed his teeth, and broke into a fury of curses; after that he twisted that part of the letter into little fragments and flung it out of a port-hole. He went up and paced the deck. He must bury his evil deeds; must put a bold face on matters; must go home and say that Larry was dead, had died in Guiana; but here were eight who could and would contradict him, Mate Harper, and seven men in the fore-castle. He must get rid of those eight. And here suddenly he got help in his nefarious schemes. Satan does seem to aid his servants. Here was a man who had wanted God to let go of him for a while—and he had not realized that this Divine withdrawing would mean also delivering him over to Satan; that if God let him go, the devil would pick him up.

While he considered what he should do to get rid of his eight men, a deputation of

three of them came to him. The ship was lying at Cayenne, and near her lay a very fine bark bound for Rio Janerio, San Francisco and Shanghai. Sailors frequently feel that there is an eclat connected with a long voyage; they have a pride in having sailed to distant ports, or especially in having sailed around the world; and the lofty contempt of a tar just come from Shanghai or Bombay, shown to him who has returned merely from Nassau or Port au Prince, is a thing edifying to witness.

The three men of the "Recruit" who came to speak with Captain Lois, had been lured by the idea of a voyage in the indisputably fine bark, to such a glorious distance as Shanghai. Moreover, in visiting the fore-castle of the bark, they had heard marvellous tales of life on board her. There was as little work done on Sundays as possible: Saturday afternoon the men had for mending and washing their clothes, or for a little junketing while in port, so that Sabbath should not be used for such affairs:

there was a library for the men on board : a service on Sabbath morning : a short service of singing and a prayer on Wednesday evening : no liquor, no abuse ; and on cold stormy nights, when the men had been wet to the skin and risking their lives in perilous duties, the Captain did not stand on the quarter-deck drinking hot coffee, and caring nothing for the exhaustion of the crew, but he sent them also hot coffee or hot soup, and treated them generously, like men. The sailors on his ship also had little chances to trade, and to purchase curiosities, which they sold at a profit when they arrived at home. The sight of the bark, the fascination of a long voyage, the rare tales of this model Captain, and a rooted fear and hatred toward Captain Lois, had made the three sailors anxious to exchange ships. The bark was one hand short : one man who had been lately married had begun to get very homesick, and was ready to exchange into any ship which would take him home quickly, and another sailor had heard of the death

of his father, and was anxious to get back at once to orphaned younger sisters. Thus three men could go on the bark, and two from the bark could come to the "Recruit," if Captain Lois would only consent. The men said they wanted to see China, they liked long voyages; it was only common humanity to give these two men a chance to go home. But underneath their words, Captain Lois' keen suspicions read in furtive glances, and muttered speech, dislike, distrust, a longing to be rid of him and his ship.

The private history of the "Recruit's" voyage had been hidden by her sailors: they did not care to give the ship a bad name while they were on her, and their story might have hindered their exchanging into another vessel. Captain Lois grasped eagerly at the opportunity of getting rid of three accusers, and taking into his crew two who at most could only tell a bad tale on hearsay. But he concealed his gratification, and spoke sharply of "fickleness," and "folly," and of

“leaving him in the lurch.” Then he considered gladly that a two years’ voyage lay before the bark, and that there were chances that she might never see home again: or that these men might not come in her, and then, she was from New York, and not from Boston. He sent to inquire if the Captain of the bark agreed to the exchange: finding that he did, he also consented, called his men to the capstan and paid them wages in full; then he said that they had been in the main good fellows, and he handed them from his own purse, each “five dollars to drink his health.”

These men left the ship each with five dollars’ worth of conviction that Mate Nagle went off of his own good will, and that Larry Jeffries got no more than he deserved—and five dollars’ worth of conviction goes a good way with a sailor. The new comers thought Captain Lois the “freest handed Captain ever they had fallen in with,” rashly concluding that five dollar healths was his ordinary practice. Captain Lois supplied

the place of the third man who went to the bark, with a Swede, who was lingering in Cayenne. He then proceeded to Trinidad, and hired there two American sailors, survivors just brought in from a wrecked ship, and thus his quota of men was full; but he had still four sailors and a third mate of whom he must get rid. He thought it a fortunate accident that one of his unlucky four was injured by a chain falling on his foot and crushing it badly: he was a man from Maine. The "Recruit" was near Barbadoes. Captain Lois ran into Bridgetown, left the man at a hospital, having paid him his wages, made him a present, and shipped another hand. The men now began to look askance at each other, and say that they believed some curse was on the ship, and that not one of the original crew would get home in her, and that "the Captain was at the bottom of it."

"Why, lads," said Robin Rounce, "he didn't make the men sick, or put them up to exchanging, or throw the chain on this

lad's foot. He's done main well by those that went."

"He'll do less well by others that hang on too long," said one. "Dead men tell no tales. We'll be got rid of. See here, Robin, if you gets home in the "Recruit," do you mean to say a word about the mate's disappearin' and the boys bein' left, or do you mean to keep quiet, and let the Cap'n go on v'yagin', desertin' sailors, and makin' way wi' mates."

"It seems to me it's my bounden duty, owed to the safety of sailors, and the limiting of cruelties in cap'ns, to tell the owners the true story of this v'yage, and if Cap'n Lois is a true man he'll meet it, and wont want concealment," said Robin.

"But he's not a true man, and he'll not meet it, and he'll take measures to pay you off, or get you out of the way before we, or the ship rayther, gets to Boston."

"Whatever happens to me," said Robin, calmly, "I must do my duty—my good Book tells me to do to others as I'd have 'em do to me—and I wouldn't like to be

abandoned like a dead dog, and my mates say nothing 'bout it. Likewise, it tells me, that 'he that covereth his sins shall not prosper,' and so I take it that we are not to cover any sins, when it is like as if the voice of our brother's blood called to us from the ground. And the Book says, 'that he that doeth violence to the blood of any person shall flee to the pit, and let no man stay him;' and I make that out to mean that when one is guilty of such evil doings, justice needs to be satisfied, and we become partakers of the crime if we, even by silence, hinder justice. Not, my lads, but if a man was truly repenting of a bad deed, and trying to undo it, I'd help him, to the very last end of my strength; but if I saw any trying to add sin to sin to cover up a matter, or to stop the mouths of righteous accusers, that would rile me, and I wouldn't find myself able to put up wi't, nohow."

The last part of this speech happened to be heard by Captain Lois. He said to himself, "All's up, unless I get rid of that

man: he is one of those that nothing will stop."

Rounce, Harper and two other men were now in his way. The "Recruit" ran into Martinique. At St. Jean, and contrary to custom, Captain Lois said that he would pay the old hands their wages; they might wish to buy something to take home to trade. He then gave them leave ashore, and went ashore himself, having charged all to be promptly on board at the hour of sailing, and not to make the "Recruit" shorter handed than she was; adding fierce threats if they deserted. He had gauged his men correctly; two were very vulnerable to the allurements of liquor; and to make assurance doubly sure he quietly paid a rum-house owner a price for getting these men dead drunk. The man obeyed instructions, got the men drunk, and hid them, but managed to betray the Captain to Robin Rounce when he was seeking for his companions. The peremptory signal for return floated from the masthead. Robin and Harper

went aboard, and prayed the Captain to wait for the men or send to look for them; but he swore and raved, and vowed vengeance; weighed anchor, and made off, saying that the men 'were deserters and disobedient, and should be reported as drunken dogs, who abandoned their duty.'

"He's far worse than I thought him," said Robin Rounce to himself. "It is true that he means to get rid of all of us first crew of the "Recruit." Well, sure enough, his sins shall be brought to light, and he made to account for 'em."

But as now day after day passed and all went quietly in the ship, Robin's fears for himself began to lull. Captain Lois touched at no port until, coming to the northeast of Porto Rico, he announced that he must run into San Juan to procure two more sailors, if possible. He found suitable men, and laid in a bountiful supply of vegetables, of which he gave freely to the men. He had been keeping a sharp lookout for some such an island as that on which he had left Larry,

and when along the outer edge of the Caribbee Group he had once or twice sent a boat and some of the new sailors, or the first mate, to land at some islet on various pretences. He now knew that he was far north-west of any spot where he could by any possibility have left Jeffries; but this Harper and Rounce, sole remaining witnesses of the abandonment, did not comprehend.

Instead of pursuing the ordinary track for a vessel on the voyage the "Recruit" was making, the Captain sailed his ship along the Caycos Islands, or Keys, an outlying bank of the Bahamas, westward of Turk's Islands. Coming within a mile from the southernmost of these rocks, on a fair day, when the wind was increasing from the south-west, he told Harper that this rock struck him as the place where he had landed Jeffries, and that he and Rounce were to take the gig and row ashore, and see if they could find any trace of him. Harper suggested that two were too few to row the distance with any speed, but Captain Lois

replied that the Keys made an ugly berth to lie off, and if the wind freshened he should not like to be short-handed for the ship, and two men were already sick. Lest they should be gone past dinner-time they might take their rations for dinner, and they were to hurry back.

Robin was full of uneasy prognostications, but he dared not refuse obedience. He secretly got from the cook an extra supply of bread, and a little keg of water, and as he rowed off from the "Recruit" he mentally bade her a long 'good-bye.' When the boat had touched on the rock, and the two men had gone ashore on their goose chase, Captain Lois ordered all sails set to catch the south-and-by-west wind, and coolly drew off into the passage between Great Caycos and Turk's Islands. When he was thus sailing away as fast as possible from Robin and the third mate, he called the ship's company together, and told them that though he had no proof, he had reason to suspect that Harper and Rounce were expecting to scut-

tle the "Recruit," or damage her by getting her on some reef during some of the mate's watches; that they had been paid to do this by some party who desired to damage a company by whom the "Recruit" was heavily insured.

"I dared not run the risk of keeping them aboard," he said, "and I could not endure to iron them and carry them home to be tried, on a mere strong suspicion. The fellows were over persuaded, and didn't know what they were doing, and you see they are in a good place; they have the boat, and are near Turk's Islands, where the ships are plenty coming for salt, and these Keys are inhabited, many of them, and so the poor fools will get safe on a ship, and by merely not showing their faces again at Boston, they will be all right. I let Mr. Harper know my views, and he will understand not to try this little trick again."

Rather a lame story; but who in that mixed crew knew or cared? Who could prove anything? If Harper and Rounce

got round to Boston again and told their tale, he could rebut it with another: besides they would get there long after the "Recruit," and after a very short stay at home he meant to try and get a ship bound for a two years' voyage—a trip around the world—a trading expedition to the Sandwich Islands. He would be gone. Nothing could be done if those two witnesses did rise out of the deep with their tale of wrong; and when long after he came back with a good-humored crew from a successful voyage, the bad story would die out of itself—no one would take it up; and he would say that Larry Jeffries was the sailor who was buried on the Guiana coast under the tree, by his shipmates' hands.

All this had taken long, hard planning, and much forcing of the remnants of his more honest and manly nature, to conclude upon; but he was desperate, and drank himself to the point of doing desperate things. When he had finally gotten rid of Robin and Harper, he felt that the worst

was over, and he breathed more freely: he treated the men even with an overstrained kindness, was careful to give them liberal diet, and all the luxuries possible to their position. When he was fairly north of Great Caycos he had favorable winds and an unusually quick and pleasant voyage. His cargo was in good condition; he put the ship in prime order; the men were pleased to be home coming, and were busy in making themselves neat, and in setting their various possessions in good order. The supply of rum was exhausted, and the Captain regained his right mind. The circumstances of Larry's abandonment were still obscured in his mind, and perhaps loomed up in even worse than their real proportions, in the mists of half consciousness; but the rest of the history of the voyage, his terrors, his remorse, his desperate plans, his cruel conduct, stood plainly enough before him. He was shocked at the crimes which he had committed, and loathed himself as a monster. He felt that with these sins resting upon him, he could

not long race his wife, his child, Mrs. Vernon and the townspeople; their presence and words would be torture to him. He would get another ship, and be off as quick as possible; and forever after he would eschew whiskey, which had been the moving cause of his crimes, and would so conduct himself that he could bury and forget the past, and live a comfortable life.

He prepared a letter to his wife, telling her that Larry Jeffries had died of fever on the Guiana Coast, and had there been buried: the voyage had been a disastrous one in some respects—several men had died, and several had deserted, lured by higher wages or the enticements of a free life on southern islands. As to Larry, he felt desperately about him: wanted the news broken to his mother, and as he was sure he could not stay long at Gilberthead, witnessing her sorrow, he was resolved to sail again as soon as possible. This letter he put upon a little schooner running into St. Augustine, so that it should go northward by mail and reach

Gilberthead long before the "Recruit" made her port at Boston. The first shock of Larry's loss would be over when he got home; he could decline to answer many questions. He thought this a last grand step at concealment. But, no sooner did it seem that his letter must be fairly on its way, than it came upon him like a thunder-clap: "What if Larry Jeffries had been rescued—had reached home—were already there, to meet and contradict the deliberate lies of his letter!" The very suggestion drove him frantic; he hardly restrained himself from ending his torments by leaping into the sea. He had bidden his wife write to him, that her letter might meet him at the owners when the "Recruit" reached port. Oh, to bridge the gulf of time between that hour and this! Oh, to know the worst! He was resolved if he found that his awful misconduct had been discovered, at once to fly the country and never be heard from more by any one living at Gilberthead. The anguish which this man endured be-

tween the hour when he had sent off his letter, and that other hour when his ship made her port at Boston, was like Larry's anguish for food and drink, as he had lain slowly dying on Sombrero. Captain Lois stepped on Boston Wharf, a gaunt, haggard shadow of the Orson Lois who had sailed away.

CHAPTER VIII.

AN ACCUSATION FROM THE SEA.

“The bands
Of fate had bound him fast : no remedy
Was left : his voice unto himself was strange.”

WHEN Captain Lois had touched the shore of Guiana, no news would have been so welcome to him as that Larry Jeffries had been rescued, and had reached home in safety. When he touched the wharf at Boston, news of Larry at home would have come to him as a knell of doom ; sentence of exile from his native land, and a lasting separation from his family. The wild beating of his heart almost stifled him, as he made haste to the office of the owners of the “Recruit.” Mr. Bloss, the senior partner, met him. Holding out his

hand, he cried, "Welcome home, Captain Lois! Is the 'Recruit' all right? Have you had a prosperous voyage? You look poorly."

"The ship is all right, so is the cargo, though we have had some misadventures. Are there letters for me, Mr. Bloss?"

He was handed one from his wife. He grew pale; his heart almost stood still—he tore it open. Its first word was of sorrow for Larry's loss! His eye brightened—he read the account of the bereaved family, of village sympathy, the idle regrets that ever the boy had gone away. It is true, that they cut him to the heart with keen remorse for the evil that he had wrought, and yet the letter was as news of a reprieve, and he might go home and see his wife and child once more.

"Ah, Captain," said Mr. Bloss, who was watching him as he read, "'As cold water to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country.' You look better already."

Cold water to a thirsty soul! Perhaps Larry had died of thirst. He could not tell

what that meant by experience, but he knew what this thirst for news had been, and how he had counted every league that lay between himself and that waiting letter. Then he must give an account of the voyage. He slurred it over; there was the ship's log, but that he had kept to suit himself. The Mate Nagle had left the ship secretly; why, he could not tell. Some of the sailors had died of fever — so had Mate Wilcox. Guiana coast was a disastrous place. And trifles light as air had indicated that two men, Rounce and Harper, had been bribed to injure or destroy the ship; nothing that he could prove against them, but many little things had pointed all one way. He could hardly venture to bring them home in irons on mere suspicions, and he could not risk ship, cargo and lives, so he had left them on Caycos Islands. They were safe enough, and likely would never come near Boston. Hoped he had done the right thing, but felt at his wits' ends, and knew nothing better to do.

It was a queer story ; queerly told. The owners looked sharply at him. There was a disappearance of fourteen men in a not very long voyage—a year's voyage. But here was the undeniable fact of a ship well cared for, and a valuable cargo. Well, let all things take their course.

Captain Lois did not go home that day ; he spent his time looking for a new ship, and by what he thought very good luck, he found a ship bound for Bombay, to sail in a fortnight, and the Captain was ready to be transferred to the "Recruit," as he did not fancy the Bombay trip. Captain Lois laid the matter before the owners. The ship belonged to the same firm as the "Recruit." What ! go again so soon ? Captain Lois asserted that 'he should, in his present health, be broken down if he stopped ashore, and he had a heavy mortgage to pay, and could not afford to be idle, even for a month. He hoped, some time, to be able to stay at home altogether.' Certainly he had been a successful captain, had never lost a ship ; had

always made quick voyages. Let him go to Bombay, if he chose ; how long he stopped at home was his own look-out.

So he secured his ship, and went to Gilberthead. Larry's loss was there the first theme of conversation. His step-father was discouraged and melancholy, his mother had been ill in bed with grief ; as for the home, news had just come from the cousin, the heir, that he must have possession of his own immediately ; he meant to turn the old homestead into a house for summer boarders from Boston, and he knew no compassion for the destitute and helpless family. Larry, Larry, Larry ! the air was full of Larry.

Captain Lois wished that he, and not Larry, had been left on the island.

More than that, though entangled in such a direful mesh of lies, Captain Lois, when sober, had not been a coward, nor given to lying ; and the horrible falsehoods and slanders which he had felt obliged to invent to cover his evil deeds, tormented him with their *meanness* ; not because they were sins

toward God, but such contemptible sins in the eyes of men. Then Captain Lois had questions to answer, questions about Larry. "Don't mention him to me, or I shall go wild. Do I not feel to blame for inviting him to take the voyage? Do I not feel responsible for his mother's loss? Don't question me, for pity's sake!"

"Why sail so soon again? Whoever heard of such an arrangement!" "To be rid of seeing sorrow which I cannot alleviate. To get out of sight of Larry's family and their tacit reproaches. To make a little more money, and pay Mrs. Vernon's house rent."

But some intuition caused Mrs. Vernon to shrink from the Captain, and utterly to eschew his offers of assistance. 'She would support the family herself: perhaps Mr. Vernon could get a little copying to do;' 'they would get a very small house, and fare plainly; a little of the furniture of Jeffries' house was her own, and she had the bedding and family clothing.'

All the village of Gilberthead was stirred about Mrs. Vernon's losses and afflictions; they stormed at old Jeffries' memory for the will that had been made; at the hard-hearted cousin, at Larry for leaving home; and at Captain Lois for taking him. The minister and Judge Cole wrote to the new owner of the house, begging him to leave the present occupants in it for at least one year, until Mrs. Vernon should be able to recover somewhat from the shock of her son's loss, and perfect some arrangements for her future. The heir, however, refused any delay, saying he 'had been kept out of his own long enough;' but how he made that appear was plain to no one but himself.

"The hard-hearted wretch!" said Judge Cole; "but he shall not take possession until all legal formalities are gone through with. We will have an affidavit of Larry Jeffries' death."

Orson Lois had not expected to be required to make oath as to the time and manner of Larry's death. He had, as he thought,

been forced to tell a false tale, but he shrunk from swearing to a lie, really perjuring himself, as a legal formality toward robbing a good woman of her home. He found himself in new straits: he had, indeed, woven a tangled net, and he was taken in its toils. He made an excuse to go off, and he stayed three days, merely to escape making that oath. He went to Boston, but the new bark, "Clementine," would not sail before the appointed day. He returned to Gilberthead, and his wife anxiously questioned him about his unrest, sleeplessness, his morbid musings, his changed appearance. All he could say was that the voyage to an unhealthy coast, the death and desertion of so many men, had shattered his nerves and broken his health; and that a voyage under more favorable auspices would restore him.

Judge Cole called on him to question him about Larry's death, and to have him make affidavit to the decease. But now Orson Lois thought that he had matured a plan of escape from that last step in his way of crime.

He said he had scruples about making affidavit about what he had not personally seen. He transferred the circumstances of Mate Wilcox's death to Larry. He said that he had sent the sick boy ashore to be nursed; that the sailor who nursed him had not returned with the ship; that he had reported Larry dead, and sailors had been sent to dig a grave, and they had reported their comrade finally buried; but Captain Lois had not seen him dead, nor laid in the grave.

"Suppose," said Orson Lois, "that he had not really died? Suppose that he had coaxed or hired the man to make him out dead, with some of his odd notions of staying, painting or writing or poetizing about an out-of-the-way region, and so making his fame? I found him a sly dog, up to anything; then, I've heard, down there, of sailors thought to be dead, buried in a trance, and unearthed by the natives, for the sake of their clothes, and so proving alive, and coming home. I don't believe this about Larry Jeffries, but I have my scruples about taking

oath concerning a thing that I did not myself see."

"Why, this is an odd thing; puts a new face on it. I wonder if we could hold the property for Mrs. Vernon in that view? I think I will go to Boston and see the heir, and talk the matter over with a few sharp wits." ' "

'Only four days more,' thought Orson Lois, 'and the "Clementine" will sail, and I shall get the blood hounds off my track at last!' He felt like a man hunted to death—and he was pursued only by his own sins!

"I never thought," said kind Mr. Vernon to his wife, "that Captain Lois would take our Larry's death so hard; he appears to feel it almost as we do; he's a changed man this time, at home, and there's no other cause."

"He feels as I do, that he was bitterly to blame, persuading the boy off: a boy that he cared nothing for, and whom he led against my wishes, out of the mere mischief and obstinacy of his disposition: it is very hard to forgive him for doing it," said the mourning mother.

But a strange suspicion had grown up in Mrs. Lois' breast, that her husband was cursed by the memory of some great wrong: that remorse was gnawing him; that he was concealing something: that he longed to fly from home, and from her presence. She feared for what revelation of wickedness might come to her, for she knew that Orson had been drinking during his absence, and that when once he became intoxicated he was no longer master of himself, but that he became as a furious, wild beast. The child Claude, a creature of quick instincts and high temper, seemed to share her mother's unspoken thoughts—she shrank from her father, as she had never done before. Thus Captain Lois lived in an atmosphere of suspicion and fear at home, and also feared to go abroad and meet his townspeople, lest some unlucky question might betray him. And still he feared to shut himself up entirely, for that was contrary to his usual habit of being abroad, loud-voiced and dictatorial about all affairs, and might expose him to curious surmises.

But the last day at Gilberthead came: the Captain began to grow confident—to-morrow he would be off: within the two years which his ship would spend abroad, if Larry Jeffries came home, people might learn to forget and forgive something to Captain Lois; and if Larry was heard from no more, the talk about his death would have ceased. And yet, often, in solitary hours, often in the night, Orson Lois would seem to hear the bitter cry of that boy's agony, and see his quivering hands held out for aid; and he would long to give his all to buy the lad's safety, to obliterate the past: he would feel as if he must go forth before the whole community, and proclaim his crime, and beg some one to help him search for the lost lad, through all the tropic seas, until he was found, living or dead. He had gone on unhindered in his wicked way; he had, unchecked, wrought out as bad a course as possible—and it had ended in an agony of fear, and shame, and remorse.

He strolled out that last evening: it was a

pleasant sunset, and he would walk down the main street of the village, where post-office, "hotel," and express office on a corner, generally formed a gathering place for the men of the village after the day's work was done. He could say good-bye, and make a few remarks about his coming trip, and part on ordinary terms with the people. Going down to this place, he took one of several chairs standing in front of the hotel, and tilting it back against the house-side, began talking in something of his old free-and-easy style to the crowd about.

Leaning back thus, a cigar in his hand, making autocratic assertions about trade winds, three men suddenly stood before him, as if they had risen out of the earth to confound him—Mr. Bloss, Judge Cole, and—Robin Rounce.

"Ye didn't think to see me so soon, Cap'n Lois," said Robin, "me whom ye left to perish on Caycos—but I've come to accuse you, to set your sins in order before your face. Ho, you landsmen!" shouted the sailor,

stretching out his arms, "here's a man as I accuse to you of wickedness. He left Larry Jeffries"—

But Captain Lois sprung up to make one last defence of himself. "Ho! bring a constable—here is a man whom *I accuse*—accuse of intending to scuttle my ship—a man on whom kindness was wasted. Quick, arrest the fellow!"

"Stop!" cried Judge Cole. "Hear this man, as I have heard him! Captain Lois, if you are half a man, hear *his* story of Larry Jeffries—face his accusation and disprove it."

"Larry Jeffries!" shouted several voices, "what about Larry? Ain't he dead—let's hear? Any foul play about Larry?"

They crowded together, where Captain Lois with blazing eyes and panting breath, a wild beast at bay, stood face to face with the rough, indignant sailor, on either side of whom stood Judge Cole and Mr. Bloss.

"Answer me—deny me if you can!" cried Robin. "Sir—Captain Lois—on a Sunday last summer—the date I do disremember,

but I can come anigh it—the sun were blazin’ hot, and we on the ‘Recruit’ was short of water. You’d treated that simple boy, who was unfit for sailor’s life, treated him like a dog all along, though more than me heard you swear to his mother to treat him judg-matically, and like a father. On that day, Cap’n Lois, you was on ship, drunk—mad drunk, sir.”

“Drunk!” shouted Captain Lois. “Dog of the for’cas’l, dare you call me drunk? I’ll brain you!”

“Hands off—words and no blows—hear him,” cried several.

“Cap’n, you were drunk; mi’raclous drunk, ravin’ mad wi’ Jamacy rum; an’ that boy Larry, bein’ used to easy livin’, an’ short o’ water, and mar’v’lous thirsty, took a draught of ale out o’ a cask o’ yours, an’ you caught him doin’ of it. I don’t reckon as the lad meant to *steal*, but you knocked him down, and put a board wi’ THIEF on it on his back.”

Cries of—“Shame! Larry Jeffries! Mrs. Vernon’s only son!”

“An’ then—oh, hear me, you landsmen—long as I’ve sailed I never saw such a wicked deed! Down in them hot seas, we was nigh a pile o’ rocks, wi’out a tree or a stream, a speck o’ grass or a drop o’ water, wi’ sharp stones that cut like knives—and he landed that poor, scared, shriekin’, prayin’ boy on them there rocks, bareheaded, barefooted, wi’ only a shirt an’ breeches on him, an’ not one drop o’ drink or crumb o’ food, and he sailed away an’ left him shriekin’ and moanin’ there, and we never set eyes on him agin!”

A yell of rage and horror rose from the listening crowd. Then loud voices—“Why did you allow it! Why did not the crew hinder it? Why not rise and prevent murder!”

“Hear me!” shouted Robin. “I appeals to Mr. Bloss. Sailors can’t mutiny—they must bring their wrongs home, and then speak. This man, this Cap’n Lois, wild drunk, were king o’ that ship, and he had loaded pistols in his hands, threatenin’ the boy’s life, and all our lives, an’ we didn’t

make out that he *could* leave the boy, only to frighten him a bit—until—he sailed clean away and we never see that island agin.”

The crowd fairly shouted with wrath and horror, and the sound rolling up the street, called men and women toward the scene of excitement. Cries rose, of—

“ Didn’t he leave him anything—no food—no clothes!”

“ Hear the man out !” shouted Judge Cole.

“ We sailors threw the boy our shoes, a hat, a knife, a jacket, a kercher, and I flung him my Bible—but no drop of water, not one bite o’ bread did he get. Hark ye! Mebby this Cap’n meant to go back; but next day a big storm came up, and blew us far off. We sailors didn’t know where an’ what that island was, but we made sure the mate did. That mate, Mr. Nagle, knew, but wouldn’t tell. In the storm Cap’n Lois got sober—he sailed that ship like a man, an’ then he run her into port to refit, an’ then he set out to look for that island, and that boy. I do him fair, my lads; he looked,

but, 'count o' havin' been drunk he did not know what nor where that island was, and he couldn't find it, for the mate disappeared; an' for all some accused Cap'n o' makin' way wi' him, I feel sartin', men, that he cut stick to 'void tellin' where the boy was left. So we cruised about a week or so, and we never saw no island where we left that boy, and so we sailed for Guiana Coast. But, my lads, the Cap'n wanted to get rid o' all us who seen that y'evil deed. Three o' the men went on 'nother ship, bein' feared o' Cap'n—two o' 'em died—two got left in 'ospitals, cook took 'nother ship; two he left drunk in St. Jean, and I was told by him as knew, that Cap'n Lois paid a man to make 'em drunk an' keep 'em off the ship. Then, my lads, there was only two of us left as knew yon wicked deed—me an' Mate Harper; an' fearing us for telling the truth when we got home, he left us two alone, one day, havin' sent us on Caycos rocks, on a pretence; an' we with only one day's provisions an' a little boat, was abandoned, cold-blooded, by him,

an' saw the ship sailin' off past great Caycos, and us left all alone an' helpless."

Another yell of fury. Then the loud voice of Captain Lois: "You've heard the lying dog out. Bribed to scuttle the ship, he hides his sins by this barefaced lie about me. It's false—false as Satan, every word of it. Larry Jeffries died"—

"Stop!" shouted Judge Cole. "Those two men that were left at St. Jean reached Mr. Bloss yesterday, and told the very same story that these men told to-day—only they are sure that Captain Lois made way with Mate Nagle; and were left on Martinique before these other two were left on Caycos. Captain Lois, in the name of God, I charge you, answer—as you shall stand before God in judgment, tell us—did you leave Larry Jeffries on a desolate island?"

Captain Lois would now deny, if it sunk him to perdition. He threw up his arms, and screamed, "I swear that I did"—

But before he could utter the next word,

a deeper purple swept over his head and neck, the great veins in his throat throbbed faster, foam poured over his lips, and he fell on his face to the pavement.

If he had uttered his denial, and it had been refuted, this crowd, who were already convinced by the honesty of the seaman's manner, the evident guilt on Lois' face, and the position taken by Mr. Bloss and Judge Cole—in high New England wrath, might have risen to execute Lynch law; or, like the women of Marblehead who tarred Floyd Ireson “for his hard heart,” they might have dealt with him in more vulgar but not less summary fashion—but here he lay senseless, perhaps dead in their midst; and a voice sounded in their hearts, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord.”

The crowd widened and looked at the prostrate figure as if they were all loth to touch him. A dozen voices poured questions upon Robin Rounce—scores of voices shouted the story of Larry Jeffries' desertion.

There are always some harpies to prey on

human pain—there were those in Gilbert-head who ran with swift feet to burst upon Mrs. Vernon with the news. “Mis’ Vernon! Larry didn’t die in Guiana! It’s all out! Cap’n Lois left the boy to starve alone on a desert island, and no one knows where it is!” And others—possibly more thoughtless and cruel still, flew where Helen Lois was kneeling by her husband’s sea-chest, packing the last stores for his comfort in his long voyage, and screamed in her ear, “They’re bringing your husband home dead—and it’s all out, how he murdered Larry Jeffries, and got rid of all his crew to hide it.” And so, when the “feet of them that carried her husband” entered Helen Lois’ house, and stumbled up the stair, no sound fell on her ear, as she lay in the little library, senseless, her head resting on child Claude’s knee, and no one else near her.

CHAPTER IX.

A FORLORN HOPE.

“Suffer us not, for any pains of death,
To fall from Thee,
But O, the pains of life ! the pains of life !
There is no comfort now, and naught to win,
But yet—I will begin.”



WHEN Orson Lois was carried from the place when he had fallen, Mr. Bloss, Judge Cole, and Robin Rounce went toward the Jeffries house. They feared that in the excitement of the last hour, the news, more terrible even than that of the death of her son, had been rudely broken to the mother ; and it was needful that she should have a clear statement of the whole affair. Many of the townspeople who had heard only fragments of the thrilling story of the sailor, demanded to know all of

it ; and they proceeded to open the town hall, and ring the bell for a general meeting of citizens, where Robin could repeat his tale, substantiate it, if possible, and be closely questioned for further facts.

The village doctor had followed, from his office, the lifeless form of Lois, and in a few minutes outlines of the story of the "Recruit" were carried to the parsonage.

It was evident where this blow would fall most heavily, and duty and personal friendship carried the pastor's wife to the house of Helen Lois, while her husband, seeing the three who entered the gate of the Jeffries house, ran thither to get correct information for the unhappy wife.

The plaintive weeping of Claude reached her friend's ear, above the sound of feet and voices in the upper chamber, and Mrs. Warren hurried to the library. Placing the unconscious Helen on a sofa, and telling Claude what to do for her, Mrs. Warren ran up-stairs to ask for a few moments of the doctor's time.

Those men who would have helped hang, or imprison, or perhaps tar and feather Captain Lois, if he had retained life to confront them, were now busiest in their endeavors to arrest disease, and recall the flying spirit: they stood about his bed, removing his clothing, placing his head easily, and applying remedies, as earnestly as if he had been the best and most popular of men in the place. To save life is one of our strongest instincts.

The physician ran to the library, gave a few directions to Mrs. Warren, and left Helen to her care. When, at last, the unhappy woman regained consciousness, and the memory of the words that had fallen on her ears like a doom, returned to her, her face became convulsed; crimson and white spread alternately over brow and neck; she gasped for speech, and having signed to Claude to leave the room, she groaned, "Tell me—is it true—is Orson a *murderer!*"

"No," said her friend, "not so bad as that, Helen, I hope."

“You *hope*. It is possible! Oh, who will go and learn the truth of this thing for me!”

“Here comes Mr. Warren. He has been to find out the exact story, and he will tell you all,” replied Mrs. Warren. “Be courageous, Helen, remember Claude; and there may be much for you to do. Meet this like a brave woman.”

Mrs. Lois answered not a word. Her eyes demanded the truth from her pastor, and he was prepared to tell her all that he had learned. He had questioned Robin Rounce carefully at the Jeffries' house, and had no doubt of the truth of his statements. He felt that the wife must sooner or later learn all, and that nothing would be so torturing as suspense. Sitting near her, he told the whole tale; and closed by saying, “You see, Mrs. Lois, your husband, when he committed this act, was not master of himself; he was wildly intoxicated, and this prevented his knowing the full bearing of the deed, or comprehending where he had aban-

doned the poor boy. It is also evident, that having come to himself, he made vigorous efforts to find Larry; but cruising around the Central Atlantic for an island of which neither the latitude nor longitude are known, is an almost hopeless task. Foiled in finding the boy, he then seems to have kept in a chronic state of intoxication to drown thought and remorse, and finally to have resolved on the most frenzied measures to hide his crime. He has indeed sinned desperately, but I have no doubt that he has suffered just as terribly as he has sinned. Now is the time, if he returns to consciousness, to strive to obtain in him true repentance and restitution of wrongs, if it is not too late."

"My husband, in a drunken phrensy, abandoned Larry Jeffries on a desert island?" said Mrs. Lois, measuring each word.

"That is the accusation—with every degree of probability"—

"He tried to find that island, and could not?"

“The sailor says so, and appears to be truthful”—

“And Larry Jeffries has never since been heard from?”

“That is certainly so.”

“And he may yet be living, hoping, suffering, despairing, on a desert island, while his mother mourns him as dead!”

“It is hardly probable, my dear friend, that life could be thus long sustained on such an island. He must be either dead, or carried off by some passing ship.”

“Then,” said Helen Lois, resolutely, the earth must be searched for him living, or the sea for him, dead. His fate must and shall be known—we will find him or his bones. Oh, God of mercy! give me strength for this—and then I ask nothing more in this life! Let me go to Orson.”

She rose up from her sofa, endowed with strange strength.

“Stop,” said the pastor; “to God all things are possible — all our help must come from him — here is a thing impossi-

ble to men, but prayer can bring us great blessings, and arm us with omnipotence. Let us go to God for help." He knelt down, with his wife, Mrs. Lois and Claude, and cried to God to make them a plain path out of the difficulties and dangers that surrounded them.

Supported by her friend's arm, Mrs. Lois then went to her husband's bedside. He was yet unconscious. "My first work will be to nurse him back to health, that he may undo what he has done," she said, with the calmness of a fixed purpose.

In the mean time a crowd had gathered at the town hall, and Robin had been called upon to repeat his story, and to explain his arrival in Boston, so soon after Captain Lois reached that port. Robin, in his sincere matter-of-fact way, gave his narrative, carefully answering the many questions addressed to him. He finally came to the hour when he and Mate Harper found that they were deliberately abandoned by the "Recruit."

"There we was, my lads; a fresh wind blowin' and we on a long reef like, wi' a

small lot o' grub, an' one keg o' water, not a sail in sight but the one that was leavin' us, and shelter nor help not laid down for us, so far as we could see it. Well, Mate Harper, he cries out, "We're lost! good-bye our chance of makin' home,—here our bones bleach." And down he sits, overcome, and buries his face in his knees. But I hears in my heart a line out of my good Book: 'Call upon me in the day o' trouble, and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me;' so down I goes on my knees, and I cries loud and long.

"Then I says to him, 'Mate, what away land may this be?' He shakes his head, for we two wa'nt used to sailin' them seas, so I says, 'Well, my hearty, there's One up above who's got it all mapped out on his chart and sees and knows the whole o't.' So we sat 'bout an hour, watchin' the line o' breakers, rocks an' foam, and the other edges o' islands here an' there promiscus like on the water, and light comes to me. My first v'yage I went to Turks for salt. Says I to mate, 'Now lad, here's a view o't. There

be the Keys, or Caycos, an' great Caycos will lie north'rd an' Turks will lie south-y'east, where ships come for salt; so, I says, 'Mate, we aint so far to go to fall in wi' sails. Let's look up som'at to eat here; shell fish, or sich, an' make up our minds, hearty, to try for our lives, an' we'll pull away to'ards Turks.' So friends, said an' done; an' by night next day we two, thanks be to God, who heard us cryin' out of the midst o' the deep, was safe on board a schooner bound for Boston wi' salt. So I laid it to heart that God had spared us to tell the truth, and to bear witness agin an evil doer, for the good Book says, that 'he that covers his sins shall not prosper.' But, my hearties, here I do want to say to you, that of my serring knowledge, Cap'n Lois has been a distracted man, and he tried hard to find that boy and couldn't; and I don't doubt but he'd have, fair and square, give all he had, or his right hand, to undo what he did. But when he couldn't do that, he just piled up his sins to hide what he'd been an' done."

Mr. Bloss then stated, that coming from New York, by cars, the previous day, the two sailors who had been left tipsy at Martinique were on the train, having come to New York in a brig; they recognized Mr. Bloss, asked after the "Recruit," and gave their story of the desertion and the voyage of the "Recruit." Mr. Bloss took them to his own house, and then on the morning of this present day, Robin Rounce and Harper came into the office to tell their story, and entered there, just as Judge Cole came to ask some questions about sailors who knew of Larry's death. Mr. Bloss and the Judge went at once aboard the schooner, found that it had picked up the two men in a small boat, marked "Recruit," near Turk's Islands, exactly as they had narrated; and also that the schooner had not been at New York, and that Robin and Harper had had no opportunity of communicating with the men from Martinique. Putting these stories, and the singular statements of Captain Lois, and the discrepancies of his 'log' together, the owner

and the Judge felt that they had a pretty clear case against him; and concluded to bring Robin to Gilberthead to confront him.

The excited crowd in the hall began now to make various assertions--as, that Captain Lois must be tried for his conduct--that he must never get another ship--that, as Larry's death was by no means certain, his mother must not leave her house--that some effort must be made to find Larry; and it was proposed to advertise for Mate Nagle, to find out from him on what island the boy had been abandoned. Late in the evening the throng separated, and Robin and Mr. Bloss went home with Judge Cole.

Mr. Bloss had special reason for departing for Boston by the first morning train. The people of Gilberthead were making remarks which the ship owner thought quite uncalled for. They claimed that as Larry had sailed in one of Mr. Bloss' ships, and been deserted by a captain in Mr. Bloss' service, Mr. Bloss was responsible, in some measure, for his recovery. They thought that he could not

purge himself of complicity, merely by washing his hands, like a Pilate, and saying, "I am innocent;" or, in other words, by dismissing Captain Lois from his service, and with such publicity, as to insure his not getting another position as officer of a ship. They said he should send a vessel to search for Larry. "But," said Mr. Bloss, "the boy—poor fellow—is dust and ashes, months ago."

"You are not sure—you should at least search for him, in the name of humanity, for his mother's sake and for his own sake. What is to become of our merchant service, if ship owners pass lightly over such a case of abandonment?"

And the schoolmaster quoted, with a fine rounding of the vowels—" *Quod facit per alium, facit per se*"—which he interpreted to mean, that Mr. Bloss, in the person of Captain Lois, had abandoned Larry Jeffries *at sea*; so Mr. Bloss took the first train to Boston; he found Gilberthead too narrow-minded a place for a man of his dimensions.

Early on that morning, while Mr. Bloss

was hastening toward Boston, Mrs. Lois sent for Robin Rounce to come to her, and Robin found himself waiting in the little library to meet the lady. It was a dainty little place; books in the cases, pictures on the wall, vases and baskets of flowers, as Claude had distributed them the previous day; a carpet whose moss and blossom the sailor feared to tread upon; long lace curtains drifting about the bay window, and chairs and tables of curious foreign work, for Captain Lois had loved to load his wife with gifts on his return from voyages, and dresses and jewels she did not care for.

Thought Robin, "How ever could a Cap'n, with this home to remember, be a bad man? How could one as had such a place as this, be so unhuman as to leave that poor boy on one rock, an' me an' Harper on Caycos?" And then Helen Lois came in with Claude. Robin jumped up and bowed, and kept on bowing. The good fellow had never been in a *lady's* immediate presence before. Mrs. Judge Cole, at whose table he had sat the

previous evening, was a loud, good-humored, fussy, kind-hearted, stout, ruddy, ready, matron, who found her charter of ladyhood in her money, her clothes, and her husband's position. Helen Lois found hers in herself.

Robin, abashed and awkward, beheld a fair face, gray eyes, unfathomable depths of sorrow, pale brown hair piled in thick braids above a stately neck; a graceful figure in a white morning wrapper; white hands that held fast by Claude. He heard a voice, which a sudden fancy likened to the ripple of the sea along a summer shore; he marked the child, a combination of fair mother and bold father, and instantly Robin, incensed as he was at his late captain, was ready to be a slave to these two forever.

Mrs. Lois sat upon the sofa, clasping Claude near her, as if the girl were her sole consolation; and then she made the sailor give her the whole history of the voyage of the "Recruit." He found himself dilating on the Captain's repentance, or effort at finding Larry, and touching very lightly on the

circumstances of his own desertion. He did Orson Lois full justice, and a little more. Good fellow, how could he do less, with those sad gray eyes of the woman, and the flashing hazel eyes of the child fixed on his face?

But when it was Helen Lois' turn to speak, Robin Rounce became more her slave than ever; every word riveted the chains which he had assumed. The lady grew into the angel. The plan she laid before him aroused the sailor's enthusiasm. He said: "Well, ma'am, my lady, to Boston I go—and there I stops, until I gets orders from you." And then he rose, and edged uneasily toward the door, and twirled his tarpaulin, and did not know how to take leave, until, in his embarrassment, he remembered the signature of a letter which he had once picked up, and treasured in his mind as peculiarly elegant. "Yours obediently to command," quoth Robin Rounce, and backed out into the hall.

That day the "Clementine" sailed with another Captain than Orson Lois, who had not recovered his consciousness. Judge

Cole stayed proceedings of the heir in dispossessing Mrs. Vernon of the Jeffries' property; he asserted that Larry was doubtless yet alive.

"How do you intend to prove it?" asked the heir.

"How do you intend to prove *death*?" asked the Judge. "If the fact of death cannot be shown, then Larry will not be legally dead until he has not been heard from for seven years."

Evening—red sunset light streaming over a white bed; over Helen Lois, reclining in a great easy chair, over the haggard face of Orson Lois, lying on his pillow. He sighed, groaned, stretched himself, awoke, and remembered. Helen came to his bedside. "Orson."

"For heaven's sake, Helen, go away from me!"

"Why?" asked Helen, still standing by the bed.

"Why? When you know all? Go, go!"

“Yes, I do know all; and this is the very time when I must stay and help you,” said Helen, sitting down on the bedside.

Orson turned away and closed his eyes. “I am not fit for you,” he said. “I knew it all the time; it was my poor mother’s selfishness and mine, that tied you to a wretch like me. Well, as soon as I can move, I will go, forever, and you may forget me and my name and my crimes, and be no more disgraced by me. But, leave me — until then.”

“No, Orson,” said Helen’s quiet voice, “we part in no such way.”

“Ah, that is duty, Christian duty, I suppose; but I hate you to hold to me for mere duty’s sake, and I have no more a claim for my own sake. “Oh, Helen, good Helen, that you are tied to a murderer, a liar, a villain! Leave me—you drive me frantic!”

“Hush,” said Helen Lois; “this will never do—listen to me. Orson, you have indeed ‘played the fool, and erred exceedingly.’ But when we sin, we have no right

to go and hide—we must repent before God”—

“I can’t repent before God,” said Orson; “my heart is as hard as a nether millstone.”

“Then,” said his wife calmly, “it remains for you to repent before men, and to make restitution, so far as you can.”

“But I can make none.”

“Listen, Orson,” said Helen. “Your first duty is to get well; meantime, I shall, through Mr. Bloss and Judge Cole, use every effort to find if Larry has been heard from, or if Mr. Nagle has been found. When you are well, if no news comes, I shall fit out a small ship, with what money I have in bank, and you will take her, and go search for Larry. You will go to the south of Turks’ Islands, and take the course which you remember the “Recruit” was taking at your last knowledge, before that dreadful day; and you will search every mile of those seas for that poor lad.”

“Oh, Helen,” groaned Orson, “after what I have done, I cannot get a crew. You do

not know, but not a sailor will go with me."

"Robin Rounce has promised to go, and says he will get Harper. He says for the kind of ship we should want, three officers, six men in the forecabin, a cook and steward, would be enough, and we must find them. He will try and secure the men; we can give a little higher wages than ordinary."

"What, Robin Rounce trust me again!" cried Captain Lois.

"Yes, to give you a chance to repent, and undo a wrong: so I will trust you, and help you—and, oh, Orson, if this is in the heart of human beings, what may be in the heart of God, yearning for your repentance!"

"No, Helen: God has given me up. I said I wanted him to, and he has."

"Yes: 'to humble thee, and to prove thee, and to know what was in thine heart,' so that at least he might do you good."

"It is all useless, Helen; but I would like to search for that boy. If I could only find him, and earn back the money you have to

spend in this search, then I would go away with an easy heart, and trouble you and Claude no more."

"Well," said his wife, "find the boy, and make the money first." She had given him something to hope and think about.

Week followed week, and Orson Lois but slowly regained his strength. Hard drinking, long and terrible excitement, had bowed the strong man, and his entire frame seemed to give way before disease. Sometimes the wife and doctor thought he would never rally. Meanwhile the voice of public opinion, contained in the schoolmaster's quotation, kept resounding in the ears of Bloss Brothers and Co. 'Such rich men! grown rich on sailors' hard fare and low wages, and not send to look for that lad, who might even now be straining his eyes from some lonely rock, to descry a sail.' Louder and louder grew the demands of the public upon Mr. Bloss. Judge Cole advertised everywhere for news of Larry, for news of James Nagle

—but both seemed dead, for all the answer that was made.

Then word went round that Captain Lois' wife was to take her little all of private fortune, and fit out a ship for her husband to search for the lost lad. The noise in the ears of Mr. Bloss grew louder. Bloss Brothers and Co. yielded — they had only been waiting for Captain Lois to get better. They offered a small vessel, schooner-rigged, for the search, and Mrs. Lois was to fit it out and pay the hands.

Robin Rounce secured Harper and four other men to go as seamen—all first-class hands—at wages two dollars a month higher than ordinary rates. A third mate was secured with difficulty ; but a first mate, who had become enthusiastic in the romance of the story, offered to go as second officer. His name was Perry ; and besides being a good sailor, he was of a scientific turn of mind, a good geographer, with a minute knowledge of charts, and an ingenious fellow in contrivances of all kinds ; well read, and fearless.

On a Monday noon, just one year from the time when Larry Jeffries had been abandoned on Sombrero, the "Dolphin" sailed from Boston to seek for him—a ship going on a forlorn hope indeed.

By the advice of the first mate, Mrs. Lois and Mr. Bloss together had put a cargo in the "Dolphin," for trading among the Bahama and Caribbee Islands; as to make inquiries about Larry she would be obliged to touch at every available port, and at many places seldom visited by trading ships. She could thus be given business which would hinder her but little, and would help pay her way, and increase her acquaintance among the Antilles.

"There is one thing left, Orson, to guard against—the drink which has occasioned all this misery."

"To swear is useless," said Orson; "you have known me to break an oath. But *I* don't *want* to drink again, and if the Lord knows any way to stop my doing it, I hope He'll try it, if it kills me."

CHAPTER X.

THE ROCK ETAM.

“Rock, and rock, and rock,
Over the falling, rising, watery world ;
Sail, beautiful ship, along the leaping main :
The chirping land-birds follow, flock on flock,
To light on a warmer plain.
Sail, bird of doom, along the shimmering sea
All under thy broad wings, that overshadow thee.”



WHEN Captain Lois found himself once more in command of a ship, out of sight of the sorrowful face of his wife, and beyond the angry eyes of his townspeople, he began to feel once more himself; the breath of the ocean revived him; the management of his vessel occupied his mind; in spite of probabilities, he felt that he might now be in the way speedily to retrieve his lost character, and undo the evil which he had done.

The little "Dolphin," much smaller than the "Recruit," was yet a beautiful and seaworthy vessel, and proved a fair sailer and easily handled.

As for the crew, they were a curiously assorted company. The first mate had been led to take his position on the "Dolphin," from a romantic interest in the story of Larry Jeffries and Mrs. Lois, and from a desire to cruise at leisure in the tropic seas, visiting many small islands not frequently touched by ships, and so increase his own scientific knowledge, and the collection of natural curiosities which he was making in behalf of a noted philosopher. Mr. Perry was, in his own way, an earnest student, and his cabin was filled with books. At this taste, Captain Lois smiled; and yet he speedily came heartily to admire the frank, generous, chivalric character of his mate; he had been used to lording it, by force of muscle and position, over every one who came on his ship; now he found a man who, while respecting his rank and his sea-

manship, coolly gave him useful information, questioned him, disputed with him, and kept his mind continually on the stretch to follow him.

The third officer, Grant, had been induced to go on the "Dolphin" by high wages and the earnest persuasions of Mr. Bloss; but he felt ill at ease, secretly feared Captain Lois, and in his heart expected that redoubted commander to go through the Southern seas, distributing his crew upon all manner of desert islands. The cook and steward were Africans of the most superstitious variety, who, having sailed for twenty years, had a wholesome belief in Flying Dutchmen, mermaids, phantom ships, ghostly warnings, and all the remainder of Jack Tar's repertory of marvels. The sailors, with the exception of Robin and Harper, while they were first-class seamen, were superstitious, and only half-hearted in the present enterprise.

Urged by his wife, Captain Lois had made some reforms in his ship discipline; he

treated the men kindly, without relaxing the firmness of his government; gave an hour or two on Saturday afternoons for cleaning and mending their clothes, had as little work as possible done on Sabbath, and carried a library for the men.

The "Dolphin" made such speed on her southward trip that Robin assured his mates that they were bound to have good luck and a swift return, as they had the prayers of good people to help them on their way; and that the supplications of such hearts as Mrs. Lois, Mrs. Vernon and Claude, would ensure the highest success of the voyage. However, God answers prayers in methods of his own; and we, praying for certain objects, are often very blind as to the way by which they shall be arrived at.

The "Dolphin" made a straight course for the Bahama Islands, speaking every ship which she met, and asking questions about stray sailors, or waifs picked up at sea. Her first port was at Long Island, one of the Bahamas, south of San Salvador. Here,

stopping to trade for a few days, they heard that on Atwood Island, about fifty miles to the east, there lived among certain poor families of wreckers, a lad who had been brought in from some other island, but whose mind had been so disturbed by his disasters, that he could give no account of himself. The "Dolphin" then run to Atwood Island, and found, as usual, that rumor was only partly true; the half-crazed lad was there, but he was grandson of one of the old men on Atwood's, and had been wrecked while in his father's little vessel.

Captain Lois then turned south, toward Marignana, calling at a number of keys, and inhabited and uninhabited islets, on the way. After a week at Marignana, he heard news of a sailor who had been picked up on a little raft, carried by fishers to one of the Arklin Islands, and had died there. As well cruise toward the Arklins as anywhere—so the "Dolphin" turned westward, and searching every league of her path, reached Arklin, and discovered that the man who had been

picked up was bearded and middle-aged, a German, and his knife and shirt had been marked "O. G."

"We are too far west," said Captain Lois; and he ran for Caycos. There he traded with the wreckers, salt gatherers, and ships that were there loading, but found no trace of Larry. He was told of several rocks and islets not laid down on charts, and then sailed toward Hayti. Here he caught a wind that drove him for a day pretty swiftly along the twentieth parallel of latitude, then dropped, and left him becalmed in a hot sea.

Day after day they had the most unusual and exasperating succession of calms. The ship lay like a log on the water; the night seemed hot as the day. The Captain had an awning rigged across the deck, in pity for the men who were scorching under the burning sun. They saw neither bird nor sail, and this being singular in that sea, at that season, the sailors presently began to declare the ship enchanted. The first mate laughed, and gave them a scientific lecture. The

good tars said 'they guessed they knew as much out of facts and experience as Mr. Perrydid out of books ;' and they spun yarns a whole day, about ships that were enchanted, and saw land no more ; swinging as on a pivot, in a globe of atmosphere which bounded their own vision and veiled them from other eyes ; and at last that globe melted away, and left upon the silent surface of the sea, a skeleton ship, tenented by ghosts ; and as soon as natural sunshine fell on this, it grew thin and dry, and rose on the air like a dead leaf, and forever after drifted along the sky, made visible as an apparition, to sailors on ships where death or a disaster were about to come. They had seen such ships ; yes, indeed, any true sailor had !

Robin Rounce then tried sound doctrine to convince them ; he read to them various passages out of the Bible. Said a shipmate, " Well, now, I tell e' Robin ; this y'ere don't prove that it ain't so. It forbids enchantments and witchcrafts, an' that only shows that these things be in a world o' wicked

men. Bible don't forbid what *aint*, my lad, an' enchantments *is*."

"Come now," says Robin, "Christian common sense, as the parson at the Boston Bethel used to say, shows me there's no such a thing; so just you hold on, my hearties, an' I'll prove it." And so Robin read with great gusto the story of the Witch of Endor!

"Aye, aye," said his opponent; "didn't I tell you there was such things? that there is, do stand fair in your book; and we're witch-ed."

Still the calm continued, and a delegation waited on the Captain. "They couldn't stand being bewitched and turned to ghosts, and they wanted him to do something about it."

"Nonsense, my lads; there is no enchantment. What can I do?"

"Please you, Cap'n, you can cast out him as makes it."

"And who is that?" demanded the amazed Captain.

"Why sir, it is Hans Oken."

Hans Oken, Robin and Harper, were still busy on the forward deck, while their three comrades had gone aft.

“But what has Hans Oken done?” said the Captain; “he’s all right.”

“No, Cap’n, if you please, he’s at the root o’ the trouble. He’s a Finn, an’ all sailors do know that Finns has power to enchant the wind and to bewitch ships. Most Capn’s as ever I sailed with knew that same, and wouldn’t let a Finn stay aboard or cut up his tricks. Yesterday week, Hans Oken had a quarrel with one o’ us, an’ he went an’ stood at the bows and mumbled a bit to the wind, Cap’n, and the wind fell, and there’s none since; and here we lies witched, all for him. Now, Cap’n, that ain’t fair to honest sailors.”

“Call Hans Oken,” said Captain Lois to Mr. Grant. The man came. “Hans, the men say you are a Finn.”

“Aye, Cap’n; folks don’t have the choosing o’ where they’re born, and Finland aint so bad a place, after all.”

“But they say Finns bewitch the wind,

and ships, and that you have bewitched us."

Hans laughed loudly. "Finns are just like other folk, Cap'n."

"Come, my lads, what will you be satisfied for Hans to do about it?"

"Why, Cap'n," said the spokesman, "he needn't deny it: he mumbled the wind out; now make him go whistle it up."

"You hear, Hans," said Captain Lois, who was inclined to laugh the whole affair off, and make his pettish men good-natured, "you are to go whistle up the wind."

"All right. I'll whistle half a day, if they like," said Hans.

"There, that's fair: now, my lads, put him where you like, and let us see if he can raise a fair wind for us."

The sailors stood Hans where he had mumbled, and he proved a rare whistler. He sat on the prow, and whistled like a blackbird—the accusing sailors eyeing him suspiciously, and Mr. Perry laughing heartily now and again at the whole affair.

Evening came, and back came the men. "Cap'n, he's dead set agin doing the right thing. He aint whistlin' wuth a cent."

"Why, he whistles remarkably well, my boys," cried the Captain.

"He aint doin' it right, or the wind 'ud come; Cap'n, suthin' more ought to be done about it, or we're all gone men."

"But what can I do further?" asked the Captain.

"Chuck him overboard," said the spokesman; "that's the only way. Chuck over the Finn, and save the rest o' us."

"Why, that is most barbarous. Clear out with you!" cried the Captain, angrily. But the men, retreating a little, yet remained.

"It's the only way, Cap'n—an' there's Scriptor for it. Warn't Jonah chucked overboard? Robin dealt it out last Sunday to us. When he were pitched out, all went right wi' t' ship. So all goes right wi' us, if you pitches out Hans Oken."

Captain Lois' small amount of self-command was exhausted. He flew at the men.

“Off the quarter-deck, you impudent dogs, or I’ll have you all ironed!”

“Poor Hans,” said Mr. Perry, “wind or no wind, he will get no peace of his life from this out;” and so it proved, for the cook, steward and three sailors were bound to get rid of Hans. Another twenty-four hours, and they got the wind that was desired and began to move along south-east. But now Hans Oken had a request to prefer. He was afraid of his three shipmates, afraid that he might be pushed overboard in some dark watch, or while he was aloft; he wanted to leave the ship. He begged Captain Lois to run into St. John’s or Porto Rico and leave him there to get another ship. Between Hans and his enemies there was so little peace that the Captain was ready to assent to this proposition; besides, he wanted to ask for news, and get some fresh stores in St. John’s, and thither he went. Hans Oken succeeded in getting another berth, and the “Dolphin” proceeded on her way.

Said Mr. Perry, “There are now plenty

of islands near for us to visit. Virgin Islands, St. John's, St. Thomas, Anegada, Sombrero, and numbers of reefs and unnamed chains of islets." And they sailed along before a wind that would have carried them direct to Sombrero.

Cruising and searching among the Virgin Islands, they passed a vessel lying at anchor for some slight repairs. She was about a mile off, and a boat put out from her, to cross the track of the "Dolphin." "Ahoy!" hailed Mr. Perry; "heard anything of any castaways in these seas, for a year or so past?"

"Castaways? Yes, one very singular one," replied the mate in the boat, now within easy speaking distance. "What ship is that?"

"'Dolphin'—Captain Lois."

"Lois—didn't he sail another ship in these seas, lately?"

"Aye, aye, the 'Recruit.'—Heard of any castaways?"

"No. Got any papers within two months' date?"

“No—ours are all older. What ship is that?”

“‘Logan’—Captain Cary, stopping a leak;” and now the ship and the boat were parting rapidly.

“Curious—I thought he said he had heard of some castaway,” said Mr. Perry to himself. Captain Lois, who had been asleep, and roused at the hailing, came on deck. “Looks threatening,” he said; “I had a big storm somewhere within a hundred or two miles from here, my last voyage.”

The threatening of storm grew darker and more ominous; a strong wind came up from the south, and before it the “Dolphin” swept swiftly past to the east of Anegada, and stood out for the open Atlantic. “Give me sea-room in a storm,” said Captain Lois.

“We have not touched on all the little islands around here,” said Mr. Perry. “We will come back when this gale is over.”

“The wind,” said Robin Rounce to Harper, “don’t keep at one pint five minutes of a time; I never in all my days see it whirl

about like it does—now we blows north'ard, an' now we blows south'ard, an agin we blows east'ard."

And the blowing eastward was the most violent and long continued. Never did eight men fight harder for their lives. The storm raged four days; the steward was lost overboard. The galley and all the loose stuff on the "Dolphin's" deck being carried away the first day, on the next the masts went; all the boats save one followed; the rudder was hopelessly shattered—the strained hull of the "Dolphin" began to yield, and the evening of the fourth day of storm saw the doomed ship rocking heavily on the great swells of the sea, dismantled and clumsy, while upon her wet deck gathered a wan, weary, disheartened group. The wind had fallen a little; it had rained, and the rain had ceased. A broad brassy band of light encircled the horizon, and in this lurid gleam the crew of the "Dolphin" saw themselves defeated in the struggle with the storm, and their ship approaching her fate. All au-

thority was at an end. "The ship will soon founder," said Mr. Perry; "we must take to the boat."

The last small boat was lowered, and some provisions and a cask of water hastily placed in her. Mr. Grant entered her, to keep her clear of the ship, as she beat about on the heavy swells. The three sailors who had been so disturbed by the Finn, had now managed to possess themselves of weapons. Said the leading spirit:

"We'll speak out—we ain't skulkers. Cap'n Lois, we'd ought to a knowed better nor to ship wi' you, 'cause you're a man wi' a curse on you. A curse for desertin' of sailors on desert islands. You're the Jonah of this ship, Cap'n, an' we men can't risk our lives, takin' of you in all the boat we've got. Our minds is made up. You don't come wi' us to sink th' boat."

Mr. Perry, in high anger, sprang forward to throttle the bold speaker, but the man was too quick for him, and knocked him down with a boat hook. Robin Rounce

dashed forward to save or avenge the mate. "Stand away, Robin," cried one, "or there'll be blood shed here. We have nothin' agin you—all goes in this boat but Cap'n."

Harper dragged Mr. Perry out of the way. Captain Lois sat down on the capstan. "Go!" he cried; "go, my miserable life is not worth saving. Go; I have a Captain's last duty to do. I can stand by my ship. Into the boat all of you, and cast off if you think there's a chance of saving yourselves. The ship is lost—take your own ways."

The cook entered the boat. Mr. Perry recovered himself, and sat up on the deck. One of the insubordinates cried, "Come on, Mr. Perry! we've nothin' agin you. We'll do you no harm if you keeps quiet. Come into the boat, sir!"

"I'll die first, before I'll go with such brutes," said Mr. Perry.

"Be off," shouted Mr. Grant; "no time to waste. Take 'em all in, boys."

"Not the Cap'n; he'll sink us. No more Jonah's," cried the men, and another of

them entered the boat. "Come now, Robin!"

"I stays wi' the Cap'n. How else could I hold up my face to his wife?" said Robin, doggedly, retreating behind Mr. Perry, who was again unconscious from the heavy blow that had been given him.

"For the love of heaven go, Robin," said Captain Lois. "Drag Perry with you and Harper; go, leave me, for the sake of mercy!"

"I'll not go," said Robin.

"Harper," cried Captain Lois, "drag Mr. Perry with you into that boat."

"I'd rather die with the ship," said Harper. "They're wild and have arms, and if they get starved, maybe they'll be men-eaters. Under the sea is safest."

The last of the three sailors was in the boat. Captain Lois sprang up frantically, and taking Perry in his arms, ran to throw him into the boat. The men below mistook his intention, and thought that he meant to jump in himself with the mate. They

cast off and pushed off the boat so suddenly, that only a strong quick motion from Robin, saved both captain and mate from being precipitated into the sea.

The boat made off, now rising on a long wave, now sinking into a deep trough and seeming lost. Again Mr. Perry lay an inert heap upon the reeling deck, and Captain Lois, Harper and Robin Rounce stood gazing after the boat. In the centre of the little craft, lay piled the provisions which the men had hastily prepared, and there the terrified cook crouched, clinging to them. Mr. Grant held the rudder, and the three men had taken their oars, but seemed unable to use them to any advantage. The leaden sky overhead gathered blackness, the band of light grew dark, a deeper roar sounded up from the sea on which rolled the dismantled "Dolphin."

Captain Lois stooped to feel for life in his prostrate mate, and then to endeavor to secure him from being washed overboard.

Said Robin to Harper, "We might get a raft ready."

"It is too dark," said Harper; "we must wait until morning."

"We will be quiet under the water before morning," said Captain Lois.

Dead silence on the "Dolphin." The mate recovered consciousness, but lay almost helpless. Captain Lois and the two sailors clung to what they could, and waited for their doom. Then thunder rolled, rain fell heavily, lightning zig-zagged along the sky—and on those tracks of fearful light Captain Lois thought he saw a sentence written—an oath of Shem—"God do so to me and more also, if"—

Had he fulfilled the condition of that oath? No. He had left the boy to perish on a barren rock, and now it remained for God to do His part, and mete out judgment to the guilty. Orson Lois had read his Bible, and he thought of David crying that he was guilty; "but these sheep, what have they done"—why should three innocent men

perish in his fate? He recalled the words of Abraham, "that be far from thee to slay the righteous with the wicked."

Face to face with God in that terrible night, judgment calling for his doom, Captain Lois, with a bitter pang, bade adieu in his heart to wife and child; looked back on his past life, and cursed himself for a fool—he had bartered honor, happiness, wealth, home, love, life, for the madness of drunken orgies! But seeing this, storming inwardly at himself who had put the knife to his own throat, he did not *repent*. He saw himself foully wrong; he forsook all hope, entered upon the foretaste of his punishment, and flung himself on the deck with a heart-rending groan. That groan, translated into articulate speech, would have been the cry of the Apostate, "Nazarene, thou hast conquered!"

Morning and the storm had rolled away; but as the night had been without a star, so was the day without a sun. The "Dolphin" lay low in the water, plunging helplessly from side to side. Not a sail was in sight,

and the vexed ocean still heaved and groaned with the rocking of the tempest. Mr. Perry seemed to have recovered. Captain Lois searched for something for his comrades to eat, and then sat, despairing, while they prepared a raft, and put some provisions on it; night settled in darkness, and hours that no one told rolled on, and the four men on the "Dolphin" slept from sheer exhaustion.

They were all in a deep slumber; it would have mattered little if they had heard the roar of the surge. The "Dolphin," lifted up on a great bank of water, lurched forward as it combed and fell—drove with a fearful crash upon a ledge of rock—rent asunder—and the stern fell into the turbulent whirling surf, and was devoured like a child's toy. The four men found themselves clinging to the bow of the ship as it lay upon the rock, and the spray dashed over them as each fresh wave swept in; it was just light enough to see each other's faces. There they hung, at the very jaws of death—and "they wished for the day." An hour of crashing of tim-

bers, and whirling of foam, and raving of waters followed. They saw themselves at last on a long ledge of rocks, in a crevice of which the forward part of the wrecked "Dolphin" had been wedged. The four mariners clambered from their position on the fragment of their vessel, which was being slowly ground to pieces, staggered through surf, and hollows, and over jagged points of stones, and stood, at last, out of reach of the waves in the centre of several acres of rocks. Birds fluttered around their heads, and cried—the sea howled beneath—the last remnants of the "Dolphin" were being gnawed away. They paced up and down.

"Where are we, and what may this rock be?" asked Harper.

"We have no means of knowing," said Mr. Perry.

"Bold, and ragged, and bare," said Robin. "It's a clear rock, and nothin' else. I mind me o' the name o' a place where Samson went and sat—o' the top o' the Rock Etam."

CHAPTER XI.

OUT OF THE DEPTHS.

“I take the land to my breast,
In her coat with daisies fine :
For me are the hills in their best,
And all that is made is mine.”



It is long since Larry Jeffries, on Sombrero, unequal to his fate, gave up the strife and lay upon his face, inanimate, with his hand hanging in the last few gills of water that were wasting away in the hollow in the rock. He fell thus unconscious about noon; and, as the day waned, he drew nearer and nearer to death, each feeble throb of his heart seeming to be the last.

Into the stillness of the sea about him broke the ripple of water upon a ship's prow, the stir of the breeze through cordage, and the sound of human voices. A gallant bark,

all painted white and scarlet, with a great gilded figure on the prow, white canvass filling to the wind; jolly tars on her decks—the “*Astræa*,” drew near to *Sombrero*. On the quarter-deck stood three men—a tall, burly German, wearing green spectacles, wide-brimmed Panama hat, linen suit, shirt hanging open from his heated neck, white canvass shoes, telescope in one hand and microscope case in the other—an enthusiastic man of science. Beside him the Captain of the ship, a young American, student and sailor combined; and the third was a vigorous Jersey sailor, Mr. Cary, intent on sailing his ship and caring for nothing else under the sun.

“*Sombrero*,” said Captain Kinsey — “Spanish name — hat — called from some resemblance, when you catch it at the right point of view, to a Spanish hat. Such a bare, hot, rocky affair, that if it had been named by the early Dutch settlers of New York, they would have called it the “*Duyvel’s Hut*,” and we should now know it as

“Devil’s Hat” — but the Spaniards were less free of speech — and it is “Sombrero.”

“My nephew,” cried the philosopher, “there is no doubt that we might there find some shells, or birds, or rocks of new or peculiar variety — even *one* new specimen is worth a deal of trouble : such rocks are nesting-places for vast flocks of marine birds, and so far from other land, we may get some new, shy, scarce variety ; or, something in the way of reptiles, or shell-fish. We would be wild to pass such an island without examination.”

“Another half mile, and we will lay to and send in a boat. Mr. Cary, have the boat got ready.”

“Jims, Jims !” shouted Doctor Grafnick. “You brings me up my great map from my bed, and gets me ready my little gun, and my bottles, and my basket, Jims.”

“Yes, sah, I know,” said the steward, who was grinning at the head of the cabin stairs, and presently he brought up the map, and spread it out on deck, fastening it by little tacks ready in the corners. The quarter-

deck was covered with a canopy to preserve Doctor Grafnick from sun stroke: he also plied continually a palm-leaf fan, and kept a wet kerchief atop of his bald head. He knelt down before his map, and called to it the attention of Captain Kinsey and Mr. Cary. The one lent himself to the examination with interest, the other out of politeness. Said the Doctor, tracing his way with his forefinger, "Gentlemens, you sees that this chain of mountains, Rocky, Sierra Madre, and Andes, is one; it is the back bone of the western half of the world. In the Andes range, we finds wonderful volcanoes — it is a volcanic range. Along in California, you finds the Cascade and Nevada Ranges, lying alongside the Rockies. Those were great days of creation, gentlemens, when over the water and the half-formed land, these mountains began to rise out of inner depths. There is no such panorama of wonders now, and the angels had much the advantage of us poor scientific doctors of the nineteenth century. Now, as the Cascade and Nevada

mountains were outlying ranges, parallel with the Rockies, the Andes had a range which got loose from them and broke away, and came up at sea ; it is here, gentlemen, the Antilles — the Greater and the Lesser Antilles. They are all volcanic. Fertile soil have volcanic islands, gentlemen ; it is owing to their kind. Where grow so good grapes as on the slopes of Vesuvius ? I have eaten them myself. Well ! behold now, here are your Antilles, volcanic ranges, that did not lift so high as the Andes, but came up at sea ; and God was good to them, and dressed them in verdure, and they became islands full of tropic productions ; but now and then there is a rocky off-lying spur, that is bare volcanic crag, gentlemen, like this Sombrero. The Bahama Islands, gentlemen, are not of this volcanic mountain range, that got broken off the Andes and came up at sea. If the outmost Bahama and the outmost of the Antilles were only one mile apart, you could sort out each to its group, as easily as you sort out

apples and peaches each from each ; for the Bahamas are not volcanic.

“Hah ! this ship stops — our boat is getting into the water. Just notice, gentlemen, you follow the range of the eastern Andes out along this long narrow Cape of Paria, and you almost see its next peak lifting in the southernmost of the Caribbees. Ha ! Jims, haves you got my bags, my basket, my bottles, and my little gun ? Ha, that is right ; I remembers you, Jims, when I makes my will—or before. And, gentlemen, you see this chain of volcanic islands, tip-tops of submerged mountains, that split off from the Andes in great confusions long ago, lying in a great curve along the water, passing south of Florida in the western point of Cuba, and shutting in the Caribbean Sea.”

“Uncle, the men are waiting. Mr. Cary, will you go in the boat ?” said Captain Kinsey.

The stout doctor scrambled to his feet, gave himself a parting fan, looked eagerly to see if gun, bag, bottles, basket, were all right,

shouted to "Jims" to attend to his map, and was assisted into the boat. A few moments more, he stood on Sombrero, and began to execrate the sharp splinters common to volcanic rocks and astray ranges of the Andes.

Days before, Larry's signal pole had blown over, and his ragged shirt had been carried out to sea. The "Astræa's" boat, drawn up into a crevice of rock; the sailors scattered about, good-naturedly hunting curiosities for the jolly Doctor, who, panting with heat and exertion, holding a huge umbrella over his head, peered into every cranny, and poked the scorching sand with his toes, intent on discoveries.

Mr. Cary, seeing small use in rocky islands, resolved to scale the highest point, make a good observation of the whole, and return to report, "nothing worth stopping for." The athletic sailor did not stay to find an easy path. He swung himself upward by seizing a jutting rock, leaped forward, and stood before a rude grotto, under which lay the half naked, emaciated figure of a boy.

With a shout of astonishment, Cary lifted and turned over the figure, dashed the few drops of water yet in the pool upon the hunger-blackened face, listened at the shrivelled breast, and dry drawn lips for a murmur of life; and leaning from the rock, roared, "Here, you fellows! here, Doctor! Here's a dying man, help!"

Sailors are men of sympathy and dispatch; the "Astræa's" men swarmed to the spot where the mate stood, Doctor Grafnick with them, sweating, puffing, his umbrella broken, but the rest of his furniture intact, dragged and pushed there by the sailors, he hardly knew how, helped by them and his humanity.

"Hein!" cried the Doctor, dropping on his knees, and wincing. "Hein—starvation, thirst—fear, poor boys! Ha, my bottles, Mr. Cary; my ammonia—ha, there is lemonade in mine flask. I go prepared, or I faint with heat."

He unscrewed the wicker-covered flask, filled with fresh lemonade, and poured it drop

by drop into Larry's parched mouth. He shook his head. "He is dead, or so near dead, it is all the same. Mr. Cary, find his pulse. Ha, you cannot find what is gone." He held the ammonia cautiously to his patient's nose.

"Looks in my coat tails, somebody. I go prepared, or I faint. There is an orange, or a banana, or some fruit, always in mine coat tails."

Mr. Cary discovered an orange in the "coat tails," and began to squeeze the pulp cautiously into the unconscious boy's mouth. Meanwhile two sailors drew off his ragged shoes and socks, and bathed his feet in the little water of the pool; another bathed his hands and wrists.

"He is a mere skeleton," said one.

"Scarred and cut by the rocks dreadfully," said another. "How came he here? Wrecked? Castaway? Who is he?" So they questioned as they strove to stay the fleeting of his last spark of life.

For nearly an hour they continued their

ministrations, before Larry could swallow properly, and his heart had resumed a sufficiently regular faint beating to encourage the doctor to allow him to be moved. He had not yet opened his eyes, which were swollen and inflamed, nor had he given any token that he knew that people were about him.

All thoughts of scientific researches on the island were abandoned. A blanket had been folded on one of the seats of the boat to make a cushion for the doctor, and the sailors brought this, in which to carry Larry. They placed him on it with the greatest gentleness, took it by the corners, and carefully carried the boy to their boat; there, robbing themselves of the greater part of their clothing to furnish a soft bed for him in the bottom of the little craft, they made haste to row back to the "Astræa." But there the doctor would not suffer his patient to be hoisted on board, lest it should "shake his little breath out of his body," until he had gently forced into his mouth several

tablespoonsful of a strong soup, left from his dinner ; and then, after half an hour's further waiting, he had him conveyed to the cabin and laid on a berth.

No mother could have tended this sufferer with more gentle assiduity than these three men. Young Cary, who, from having found the boy, considered him his particular charge, was absolutely indefatigable. They bathed him, bound up his wounds, which had festered terribly in his misery, anointed his diseased eyes and covered them with a shade, put on him their own garments, watched him, fed him hourly, and the good philosopher doctored him in his own fashion, which, while quite harmless, was less scientific than his discussions of volcanic ranges, and his disquisitions on birds and reptiles.

One of the sailors had advocated giving the patient brandy.

“Why, man,” cried the doctor, “what are you talking about? This man is *starved*—the gastric juice in his stomache has been feeding upon the stomache itself—eating it,

I may say, and you want me to throw liquid coals to devour what's left of it! What then would be the use of trying to save a man who had no stomache left, as one may say? What comfort would he take in eating or drinking? How could he live for any length of time? No, my man, we must give him food, not fire—pure, simple, easily digestible food, and let that build up his system, and restore to him a stomache, by what I will call, to you, an ordinary process of nature.”

“Eh, Jack?” said the sailor to his comrade, “I'd think the doctor's head would fair ache with all the idees he keeps laid up in it—and as for calling a sup of brandy coals of fire, why that beats me.”

“And yet,” replied Jack, “I thought he dealt it out oncommon reasonable. But there's whiskey, Bob—seems like the poor boy ought to ha' someat strengthenin'; try doctor with whiskey.”

The officious Robert therefore represented to the philosopher, who was on very friendly terms with the sailors, 'that he had al-

ways heard that a drop of pure whiskey was very strengthening to the sick.'

"Pure whiskey!" quoth the *savant*, bristling up, "pure whiskey, Bob! Do you know what you mean by that? Pure whiskey, raw spirit, if you mean that, is like the fiercest flame; it would be like swallowing molten lead; it eats up water and makes nothing of it; it does not mix readily with water, but lies on the top of it; so if you throw the two together in a glass and drink, the whiskey is down in your stomache and up in your brains, and you're mad, before you get the water. But maybe you mean pure spirit, mixed with water and burnt sugar, to reduce it; then to these things you may add any amount of filthy chemicals and poisons, and you, Bob, come and ask me to give this sick boy, this fiery spirits, dirty water, burnt sugar, and a gathering of vile coloring, acids, and poisons, when he can have instead, fruit, beef tea, gruel, and other good light food, fit for his state. Now there's alcohol—I use it to put dead things

in, to preserve them; but that's no reason why I should put it into the vitals of a living man. Go, Bob, get more judgment, and more knowledge, before you prescribe for an invalid."

"Eh," said Bob to Jack, "there's no forcing the doctor's convictions. If this boy is to get well, he must get well without whiskey or brandy, or anything of the kind. Perhaps it's 'sour grapes' with 'em, for I'll be bound there aint a pint of the critter on board."

"And we get on main well without it," said Jack.

It was a week before Larry Jeffries could sit up in his bed, bear a little daylight, and speak in an audible voice; several days more before he could give the story of his being left on Sombrero. And when he, so came to himself that he could recall all the incidents of those fatal days, the thing that weighed sorest on his heart, that filled him with burning shame and pain, was that he,

Larry Jeffries, had been branded a—THIEF. He had hoped, in those joyous days of home-life, which seemed, in looking back upon them, to have been all summer calm, to make, in some way only half designed, by painting, or by poetry, or by romance writing, a fame for himself. He had fancied living, as he had read of men that had lived, in that retired old mansion, whither people rich and good, and even famous, would come to visit him, who had made an honorable name. But now—now there would be those who would know and say, that against that name had been written—THIEF. He did not stop to consider that his error had been no very great one, that he was the victim of a drunken enemy's fury. He accepted the name and its conditions of shame; it broke his heart; he longed to hide forever from all who had ever known him. Larry was weak—indeed it is superfluous to say that his education by that over-indulgent mother had made him selfish. He did not consider that yearning maternal love that would be satisfied only

with the possession of her son. He did not understand that his return to her, the evidence of his life, was the only condition of her keeping her home and those comforts which she so needed; that his little fair sister's future would be only want and misery, if he, who could provide her with education and support, did not return. He said to himself, "I will never go back: my old friends shall not see me disgraced; I will not go where any one can point at me and say—'tempted—he became a THIEF.' Let my mother and the rest be happy in the old home; they will forget me soon, and I will never go back to share with them. I will get a new name, and perhaps I can make that honorable, or I will starve along and die as soon as possible."

Larry had not found the home and the home friends indispensable to him—he did not understand what he was, even as himself, dissevered from the question of property, to them. There was a romance in this secretly burying himself—changing his name

—making a new life for himself, that fascinated him. He did not know his secret pleasure in this purpose; he saw his wretchedness, and he did not permit himself to acknowledge the drop of honey that was in the gall.

But Larry was one of those natures who must have a confidant—sympathy; some one to talk to, to plan with, to pour out his heart to. At home he had had his mother, Ila, Claude, his stepfather, half Gilberthead to whom to give out his ready confidences; now he must have one human heart to whom to cling. He found among those around him one nature quite unlike his own. Ben Cary, young almost as himself, but bold, fearless, self-possessed, athletic, frank, generous, ready to risk all on a friendship, and carve his own way through the world. And Ben Cary looked on Larry as his especial charge, ever since he had found him senseless on Sombrero. As Larry began to converse freely with Ben Cary, the young sailor was charmed with his Stray's knowledge of

books, his poetic fancies, his artistic tastes and enthusiasms. To Ben Cary, any one who could make such a picture that men could tell what it was without a label, was quite a being of a higher order than himself; and here was a youth, who talked of being a great artist, and covering yards of canvass, and one of whose objects in coming to sea had been to study nature! All the chivalry in Ben's honest soul turned toward Larry in loyal devotion. To Ben Larry revealed, under oath of strictest secrecy, his whole history, even his name. He described his past, his home, even those dreadful days on shipboard, and that awful accusation. Ben clenched his fists, and would have delighted to exterminate Captain Lois. That name became for him a synonym of all evil.

Ben was not at first quite convinced of the wisdom of Larry's resolution to cut himself off from his home and friends, and be as one dead to them. He had a tender spot in his heart for mothers.

“The old lady, my hearty,” he said, “what will she say to that?”

A tear shone in ‘my hearty’s’ eye, as he turned on his pillow. “O, she’s got Ila, and her husband, and, don’t you see, I leave her all the property?”

To Ben Cary, who had never owned any property, this seemed a great sacrifice; while in reality, to Larry, who had never known a want, nor been obliged to provide anything for himself, it was no sacrifice at all. Said Cary:

“Yes, that’s liberal and self-sacrificing; and yet, my lad, these mothers—they are so queer—maybe she’d rather have *you!*”

“I could not go back with a stain like that on my name,” said Larry, with that weak obstinacy which had led him from home, against all good advice.

To the others on the ship Larry only told part of his story. He said that his captain, a drinking man, of bad disposition, had become enraged at him, and left him destitute on that island. He declined to tell his name

or the ship's name; he 'would not disgrace decent relations with the tale of the man's sins,' he said.

The Captain and the Doctor took a great interest in their waif, the more when they found that he must have been of good family, that he had read many books, that he was fond of natural sciences, and could draw. As he grew better they treated him as a friend; he sat at the Captain's table, was clothed from Ben Cary's wardrobe, and spent his time in making drawings for Doctor Graf-nick to illustrate a book which he was preparing. The Doctor had never been so pleased with an assistant, and began to teach Larry German. He said to him, "My lad, you are not so crazy about the sea as my nephew and Mr. Cary. Good — stay ashore."

"I will never step on a ship again, if I can help it," vowed Larry.

"Good. See, you have sense; you write a fine hand. I need some one to make my drawings, and copy my crabbed manuscripts

for the press ; so that when I write *bug*, the printers will not make me say *came*, and when I write *Antilles*, they will not think I am discussing *cabbages* ; that mixes up the sense so that I hardly know what I did say. When we get home you shall be my secretary. I have a good friend, a German, more German than I am by ten years. You shall board with him ; he has a neat little quiet house, and you will draw and write for me, and arrange my specimens, and clean them up, and label them, and set my library in order, and I will be your teacher, and you shall keep my property all right and straight."

Here was a new life opening for Larry. To copy manuscripts for the press was almost as good as to compose them. His drawings would be immortalized in the pages of printed books ! In the beautiful vistas opening out before him, he quite forgot what might be the agony he caused in that old home by his disappearance. He had changed his name from Larry Jeffries to Harry Jordan ; this because Larry and Harry were so nearly

alike in sound that he would be more prompt to answer to the new name, and that he might not be put in a ridiculous position, if he chanced to use a J. in his signature.

And so, as Captain Lois had slain Larry Jeffries by leaving him on Sombrero, this inconsiderate boy, in a manner, buried him, and set up his tombstone, and made his epitaph, "Lost at sea, and never found." When the "Astræa" arrived in Philadelphia, Larry's health was quite restored. Doctor Grafnick insisted upon paying him a small sum for the work done for him on the ship, and with this Larry hastened off to procure clothes. He had promised to paint the portraits of Captain Kinsey and Mr. Cary for their friends, as his only method of recognizing the kindness shown him on the bark. They hesitated at receiving even this acknowledgment of favor so freely conferred, but he urged it so vehemently that they consented. The clothes purchased, Doctor Grafnick escorted Larry—now Harry Jordan—to the home he had se-

lected for him. It was a quiet little place, in a court, a very white, small house, with green blinds, and window boxes full of flowers fastened under every window, as is seen in France and Scotland; above the front door was another box, out of which young vines were creeping to run downwards, for it was now the last of April. The door was open into a tasteful room, where at the supper-table sat a stout Teuton, a bullet-headed boy, and a remarkably pretty young girl.

“O,” said Larry, drawing back, abashed, “you did not tell me there was a young lady here, sir.”

“Why,” said Doctor Grafnick, “this is only a little girl, only Mira;” and he gave her a hearty kiss by way of salutation. He was greeted uproariously by the Teuton, knavishly by the boy. “I have brought a young friend, my Secretary, to board with you,” said the Doctor. “Here’s Harry Jordan; and Harry, this is my friend, from my own town of Heidelberg, Christian Zende. Zende is a scientific instrument maker, Harry, and

a very good man, and this is all his family,
as you see it—only little Mira — and ”—

“Mein poy Pilly,” said Christian Zende.

But little Mira was seventeen.

CHAPTER XII.

GILBERTHEAD.

“And, oh, my heart! while white sails shiver,
And crowds are passing, and banks stretch wide,
How hard to follow with lips that quiver,
That moving speck on the far off side.”



WHEN all is done that can be done, when nervous energy has worked its best, and we have come to where hands can only be folded while we stand and wait—then we are come to the hardest part of life. To wait, when the heart is gnawed by sorrow, is fainting with fear—to wait, when perhaps each moment ruin may fall on all our dearest plans, only for want of a little work that it is out of our power to do. This is the trial that makes days seem long and heavy, and that wears away the strength.

This was the trial that fell to the share of Mrs. Lois and Mrs. Vernon, when the "Dolphin" had sailed away to search for Larry Jeffries. Oh, narrowness of human vision! Oh, useless strife of human hearts! There sat the wife, distracted by her husband's crimes; the mother, agonized by visions, now of the horrible suffering life, now by the no less dreadful death of her son. Yonder Captain Lois sailed toward wreck and disasters innumerable, in a wild effort to repair the wrong which he had wrought; and there was Larry Jeffries, in a cosy white house in a hidden court in Philadelphia, a blue-bird building in a great maple tree near his window, himself happy in covering reams of paper with the writing his mother would have given her all to see in a letter, and daubing to his heart's content square yards of canvas. Once again, Larry had fallen among those who called him a genius, and esteemed him beyond his worth; that was his good fortune.

. At the house of Christian Zende, Larry took his meals, and slept; he spent most of

the day with Doctor Grafnick at the savant's own shabby residence. In the evenings he was back in his own neat bed-room, where he worked at his easel. With what reckless enthusiasm he covered canvas! He made a portrait of Captain Kinsey, of Ben Cary, and of Doctor Grafnick—all of which could be recognized—with the name painted under them.

With the broad rosy treatment of Doctor Grafnick, who was represented with a book in one hand, and a large and very brilliant beetle in the other, Christian Zende was particularly charmed. "Ach!" he cried, "das ist gut! Wonner gut. Kommen sie hier, Pilly, tells me who it ees!"

"It's Doctor Bugs," said Billy, looking at the work askance.

"Pilly, ef you calls mein gut Doctor dats no more once, I poxes dein hets, Pilly; buts you ist ein sharp poy, Pilly, to dells him picture zo quick."

"I couldn't, only the name's painted on," said Billy.

“Gut poy, again — you dells de trute, Pilly; dat ist more best dings you kanst do, py great deal; dat ist vat de name is vor, Pilly.”

Musing on this most satisfactory picture, Christian Zende struck a new idea. “Mein vriend! you shall paint me meine Mira. Sits down.hier in dese evenings, an’ paints she.”

And so Larry, who had hitherto never dared to raise his eyes to the face of Mira Zende, sat of evenings to paint her picture. The happy old man arranged the style. “Meine best Mira, sits and knits me ein stockings in te portrait: puts ein plue rippon at dein white neck, an’ a white flower in dein hair; dein mutter hat a white flower on her het, when we was married in Heidelberg; an’ wears the locket mit te mutter’s hair in it, Mira mein heart.”

And this was the way the evenings went: the lovely Mira, with eyes like violets, and complexion like apple blossoms, plump German face and figure, solid good sense and

kindly nature beaming from every feature, her hair the hue of ripe wheat, bound in a shining sheaf at the back of her pretty neck, blue ribbon at her throat, a stocking to knit for her father in her hand, sat, and was sketched, and admired, and painted, and worshipped, by Larry; while near her her father exulted in the progress of the portrait, and instructed his 'poy Pilly' in arithmetic. Larry had hitherto experienced a high satisfaction in all his work; now he compared the picture with the original, and hated it.

"Where is my picture?" asked Mira, one evening, as he seated himself before a fresh canvas.

"I burnt it up, because it was not half good enough," said Larry; and he burned up three, and might have continued this sort of bonfire, if Christian Zende had not positively commanded him to finish the fourth.

The sittings for the portrait closed at nine o'clock; then Christian Zende had prayers, and Mira and "poy Pilly" went off to their rooms; after that Christian got out a huge

painted China pipe, and sat down to take a smoke. During this smoke, he conversed confidentially with his boarder. His confidences ran in this style :

“Mein vriend! meine Mira vas only two years olt when we komes to this city. She has pin at school, te ferry pest I could fint, until last year. Den I says to her, mein girls, you comes and keeps mein house, and we haves a voman to do te hart vork, an' mein Mira she keeps mein house so nice as ever a house can be keep. Who marries meine Mira, gets ein goot vife; she is so sweet as May, but te young man he must suits me; he must be kint and dells te trute, an' he must drinks no pad trinks. You knows, mein poy Pilly? He ist nicht mein poy at all, just a nudder poy. Soh! ven meine vife bees sick an' dies, his mutter was zo kint like ein sister to her. Poor vomans! her husband trinks an' preaks her heart all in pieces, so she dies. She says to me, ‘Hein! mein poor poy; he does pad, he bees drunken lout, sees me no more in Heaffen.’ ‘O,’ I says, ‘you

bees ein goot vomans, loves God, prays for your poy; you no tink's God hears your prayers?' She says, 'Yes, he does hears prayers; but I am so zeek, an' I haves zo little faith.' So I says to her, 'never you mindt — see, I helps your faith py a leetle sight: I takes Pilly vor mein poy, and I prings him up goot; you hangs on to prayin', mein vriend, an' I hangs on to Pilly.' Now Pilly ist ein ferry goot poy, but he does a great many ferry pad dings. Pilly wants mooch to pe goot likes his mutter, *but* Pilly has te luck to pe pad likes his fader. But I prays hardt for Pilly, and as I prays for him, so I trains Pilly up; and py and py ve vill see him such ein goot Pilly as neffer vas no more."

Or again, the German's conversation would run on this wise: "You sees, most Germans trinks bier, lager, mooch pad trinks! Vell, mein vriend, I driës to pe ein philosopher — dat ist goot. I looks at vork. Does vork do more goot or möre harm in te world? More goot; so I vorks. I sees pread — is

te pread vat you eats more goot or more pad? It is goot, it does no harms; I eats pread. So dere ist meat and botatoes, and all dings. I sees trinks—does trinks do more harm as goot? Hier ist ein man in jail, ein man a peggar, ein man sick, ein man fightin', ein man lyin' drunk in te road, ein man pad to his vife, ein man pad to his leetle shiltern, ein man preakin' everybody's hearts; all dese mens is fond of trink. Ach, trink ist den pad—I vill takes none. I dakes no strong trinks, I ees happy. I sees mein plan vorks vell, I sticks to him.

“Mein Bible says mooch against strong trinks, and ferry much against all dese dings dat strong drink prings about. Mein Bible says no drunkard gets to Heaven! Shall I dakes a trink, that keeps mein poor bruders out of Heaven! No, I vill not do it.”

As for Larry himself, his fondness had been for malt liquors, and he had been dangerously fond of them, to his mother's great sorrow; but now, to his surprise, he found himself singularly cured of his passion. All

sight or thought of ale, or beer, or porter, called up to him that great agony of his life that rose up like a wall of darkness dividing him from his home, his friends, his peaceful early days; the mere sight of malt liquors set before him that terrible Sabbath, Sombrero, agony, thirst, starvation, despair. On every signboard for a beer-house, on every barrel of ale, he seemed to see that word THIEF—wherewith Captain Lois had branded him.

Perhaps this feeling might in time have worn off had not other circumstances conspired to deepen it. Christian Zend was not without his influence on his boarder; Mira had a greater influence still, and these two were thoroughly temperate in all their words and ways and opinions. Ben Cary upheld total abstinence with all the hearty energy of his nature; and while the "Astræa" lay in port he walked Larry off to join a Temperance Society, quite as a matter of course. And then Doctor Grafnick was Larry's ideal of a learned and famous man; the doctor's

attainments awed and inspired Larry; he believed that the doctor could not be wrong on any point, and the doctor was an ardent Temperance man.

One day, while Larry was cleaning the doctor's cabinets, the philosopher seized a bottle of alcohol containing a fine assortment of snakes, as a text, and dilated thereon with marvellous verbosity, to say the least of it; he spoke of the "snake in the grass," he discussed *delirium tremens*, he quoted "at the last it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder;" he discoursed on the foul ingredients that go to make up malt and alcoholic and fermented drinks, and he traced the action of these on the tissues of the human body; he dilated on various chemical experiments, he told several illustrative tales, and he closed by personal experiences. Now personal experiences are those that are of all things the most convincing. "My father," said the doctor, "died prematurely of apoplexy — the physicians said he had used too much beer. My best early friend, in a

fit of insanity, cut his throat; that insanity came from brandy; my only brother quarrelled with a fellow-student, and was shot in a duel; both those young men were partly intoxicated with wine. All these evils then came into my family by means of malt, alcoholic and fermented drinks; and to all these drinks I have a bitter hostility. Did I not see my mother a mourning widow, and then dying of grief for her murdered son; and the betrothed wife of my friend fainting over his coffin, all because of strong drink? No, my good Harry Jordan, I shall never touch malt liquors or wines at all, and I shall only use alcohol to preserve snakes, and toads, and fishes."

And yet the good doctor had his weak points, and his comical whims. He did not have Larry stay at his house, not even to take a meal, on account of his sister Greta. Now, Greta was thirty, absorbed in house-keeping and exceedingly *unhandsom*; but, said her brother, "We must be discreet; young folks are apt to fall in love in haste

and repent at leisure ; you might lose your peace of mind about Greta—we will have you stay with Christian Zende, where there is no one but the little girl, Mira;” and, truly enough, the good old *savant*, doating on sister Greta, who seemed very young to him, sedulously prevented her from fascinating this lad of twenty, and sent him to sit of evenings, painting portraits of Mira Zende !

But we must look to Gilberthead, where Claude and Ila are going to school, and are more happy than their mothers, though across the brightness of these that should be their most sunshiny days, fell the gloom cast by that ill-starred voyage of the “Recruit.” Mrs. Vernon, yet in her old home, worked assiduously at the fancy work she took from Boston stores, but her shoulders stooped with sorrow and discouragement, and her hair grew very gray, though not with age.

Mrs. Lois had invested her all, except the house, in the “Dolphin.” If that ship made

a good trading voyage, there would again be a little store in the bank ; if her voyage were unsuccessful, and Captain Lois got no other ship, there would be almost nothing for the family to live upon. Misfortunes roused Helen Lois to fresh energy ; and, now-a-days, time for musing was miserable to her. She took pupils in music and drawing, drew and wrote for various juvenile papers and magazines, and made wax work for sale at the fancy stores in Boston and New York, where her friends found her customers.

Larry Jeffries had reached Philadelphia before the "Recruit" had arrived at Boston with Captain Lois, prepared to tell his false tale of the voyage, and doomed at last to be discovered in his sins. While Larry Jeffries, in the Quaker City, was happily painting portraits of Mira Zende, and Ben Cary had sailed off as Captain of the trig little "Logan," Captain Lois went out on his disastrous cruise in search of the abandoned sailor, Larry. While Captain Lois, among the

Virgin Islands, almost hit upon the trace of Larry, in the question "Heard anything of any castaway?" addressed to Ben Cary, and Ben Cary, finding that here was the dreadful Captain Lois, late of the "Recruit," had deemed it loyalty to Larry and his secret, to withhold any information, and said "No," on the ground that it was more than about a year since Larry had deserted, Mrs. Lois, searching a New York paper for advertisements which might be useful to her in her new occupations—came upon this paragraph:

"CRUELTY OF A SEA CAPTAIN.—During the autumn of last year, while the ship "Recruit," Captain Orson Lois, was cruising among the Antilles, the Captain, being drunk, in a fit of rage, landed on the desolate rocky island of Sombrero, a young lad, named Larry Jeffries. The boy was utterly unprovided with food, drink, shelter or clothing, and in this horrible condition the Captain left him, sailing away, and persistently refusing to return.

“An officer of the ‘Recruit,’ having shipped on another vessel, prevailed on her Captain to touch at Sombrero, to ascertain if there were any trace of the fate of the abandoned sailor. He found only his skeleton, bleaching on the rock. If capital punishment is not the due of a man acting the part of this Captain Lois, we know no wretch deserving of hanging. Old Hebrew law, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth;’ would demand that this Captain should be deserted in an exactly similar condition, on the same, or a like island.”

Here then was the name of the lost island, SOMBRERO, and here too was the doleful ending of the story. Larry’s bones bleached on that forlorn rock, and his blood lay on Orson Lois’ head!

Mrs. Lois was completely crushed by this direful failure of all her hopes. There was now no restitution left for her husband to make. He stood before men a murderer.

She sent for Judge Cole and showed him the fatal paragraph.

To believe it was to break Mrs. Lois' heart, and to deprive Mrs. Vernon of her home. "There may be some mistake," said the Judge. "Who gives this information? What proof is there of its authenticity? I shall not accept it for truth, until I know more about it. I have business in New York, and I will go now and ferret out this thing. If it comes from that man, that what's-his-name—that mate, that Jim Nagle—I believe it is a lie;" and away went the Judge to prove the tale false.

Only for Claude, Mrs. Lois would have died in those most wretched days. She hid the secret of the paragraph from her child, and schooled herself to think that she must live for the girl's sake, who, without her, would have only her unhappy father left; and he, if spared by the chances of the sea, might fly somewhere to hide his shame, and be heard from no more. Mrs. Lois felt small faith in his return, if he found that Larry had died.

Careful sifting of facts showed Judge Cole that the author of the statement about Captain Lois was James Nagle; that this man had been sailing as second mate on a New York ship, named the "Stella," and that the "Stella," in her last voyage, had really touched at Sombrero, and found there on the rocks a skeleton, which Nagle had unhesitatingly pronounced to be that of Larry Jeffries. A vigorous inquiry into all statements made by others of the ship's crew about this skeleton, made it clear that an old man who was first mate of the "Stella," and had sailed much among the Antilles, had held that he thought the bones were those of a Carib Indian; a few of the Caribs yet lingering about Dominica, whence they sometimes sail to collect turtles for the French ships. Mr. Nagle had not been popular in the "Stella," and had sailed again, as third mate in the "Reindeer." Some one had heard that on Mr. Nagle's strongly insisting that the bones were those of the sailor Jeffries, they had been sown up in canvas, and com-

mitted to the sea. Judge Cole made up his mind that this burial had been that of a Carib.

The paragraph in the paper had been of such a sensational variety, that it had been somewhat extensively copied. Mrs. Vernon heard of it: the heir of the Jeffries' house heard of it, and came up to insist on having his property.

Mrs. Vernon had lost all heart: she felt that nothing could afford her comfort in the shadow of this story of her cherished only boy starving to death on a rock, picked by sea-birds, perhaps even before the life had gone out of his body, and finally the long bleaching of his bones in sun and storm, before their being cast by friendly hands into the sea. It was too terrible—she pictured the agonies which such a sensitive nature as his would suffer in sore straits; she felt that fate had done its worst for her in the woes wreaked on her son; let the heir take his own; poverty or comfort were now all one to her—her boy had been deprived of everything.

All Gilberthead was moved anew by this mournful story. Nothing could exceed the sympathy for the mother, unless it was the pity felt for Helen Lois and Claude. Not a voice breathed a word that could increase their shame and pain, not a look but bespoke kindness.

While every one else now agreed to the fact of Larry Jeffries' death, Judge Cole alone held it unproved; he was disposed to make a fight for the property in Mrs. Vernon's behalf; he had had a kindness for her ever since the days that he and she had sat on the same bench in the district school, reading out of the same "New England Primer."

Truly the Judge fought well. He brought forth awful threats, and he increased and multiplied legal formalities—he condescended to entreat, and he reasoned without limit. He claimed that the "Dolphin" must be heard from; that the search of Captain Lois would clear up all mysteries surrounding Larry's fate; and between the Judge and public opinion, the heir was finally driven to

agree to wait a reasonable time for the return of Captain Lois, before he pressed his claim.

All this renewed excitement had begun in the latter part of November, and the winter thus drearily ushered in, dragged slowly by in storm and cold and desolation, for those two stricken households at Gilberthead.

Spring came, breathing life and beauty; the "Dolphin" had not been heard from since she had been spoken near the Virgin Islands by the "Logan," Captain Cary; fears were entertained for her safety.

On a late April evening—an evening when Mira Zende had made a cake to celebrate the anniversary of Harry Jordan's coming to her father's house — this bogus youth had bought Mira a very beautiful book of engravings. ("That is right," said Doctor Grafnick, "gives the little girl a picture book,") Mr. Bloss arrived at Gilberthead by the last train, and went to the house of Judge Cole. The maid showed him to the library.

"Judge," said Mr. Bloss, "the 'Dolphin'

is lost—foundered at sea—only one man saved.”

“O, bless me! don’t tell me so!” gasped the Judge.

“It’s true. Some of the men—three of them, the cook, and the third mate, took to a boat. This boat was finally picked up with only one man living aboard her—indeed, he was only half alive. He said the Captain, Mr. Perry, Robin Rounce and Harper went down with the ship—they thought the boat a hopeless chance, and preferred to sink with the ‘Dolphin.’ The steward had been washed overboard, and one sailor had left the ship at Porto Rico. So there is the end of that expedition. I had no faith in it myself, but the thing had to be. Poor Lois, his sins found him out. I don’t know as it would have been better for him to have come back; but Perry was a fine fellow, and that Robin Rounce—well, Judge, I never respected a sailor so much as I did Robin.”

“O dear, dear,” said the Judge; “this is bad news indeed. Poor Perry! I would

like to have shaken hands with Robin again. All Mrs. Lois' money gone, and the 'Dolphin' gone, and now Mrs. Vernon will be obliged to leave her home. Well, I've tried hard to hold it for her, and we will all help her, if she will let us—as nearly a heart-broken woman, Mr. Bloss, as ever I saw, except Mrs. Lois. A bad story, sir—and a bad institution is the sea. I don't know what men leave the land for!"

"Why, Judge! where would commerce be—where would wealth increase? The sea, sir, is not to blame for the pranks of drunken captains. I'd not be surprised, let me tell you privately, if Captain Lois had been drinking again, and lost the 'Dolphin' in some drunken folly. Captains, sir, have a dangerous power, and yet one can hardly make it less. So do the higher officers of the army have a dangerous power. A captain is, for the time, unlimited monarch of a little kingdom, cut off from the rest of the world. If he is a wise, kind, good man, all goes well—if he is a despot, or if he is given to

drink, then all goes ill. We may talk of temperance ships — you may get fore-castle temperance, all very good; we want also *cabin* temperance. Give a man like Lois, Judge, a ship, and a jug of rum or brandy, and then you have a demon let loose in a small space. Talk of the demons that possessed men in Judea in our Lord's time; there are just as bad demons possessing men now; and as our Lord and his apostles cast them out then, the Church, sir, and all good men are bound to cast out these demons now; but they are very indifferent about doing it. I'm not as religious as I ought to be, Judge, but I *am* strong on temperance, just because I've seen so much of intemperance, one way and another."

* * Helen Lois heard at last that her husband had gone down at sea. And the heir had his way next autumn, and took Mrs. Vernon's house.

CHAPTER XIII.

I HAVE SINNED.

“Show me the path. I had forgotten Thee
When I was happy and free,
Walking down here in the gladsome light o’ the sun ;
But now I come to mourn. O set my feet
In the road to Thy blest seat,
And for the rest, O God, Thy will be done.”



WHEN the small remnant of the “Dolphin’s” crew had been cast on that rock in mid ocean, which, hitherto unnamed and unknown on any chart, seemed to have been especially prepared for receiving them, even as the Lord had prepared a great fish to receive the flying prophet—one might have expected an experienced and daring man, like Orson Lois, to be the leading spirit among the four who were thus half saved. In ordinary circumstances this

would have been the case. Lois would have risen to battle with fate, to make the very best of every advantage; but now he felt that this wreck, and even this casting upon a rock, were a manifest judgment on him; that the lingering on the reef was a penalty which he had called down on himself in the words, "God do so to me, and more also." To do anything now but remain passive, seemed a fighting against God, with the certainty of being worsted. He could have cried, like Job, "For the arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poison whereof drinketh up my spirit."

As the two sailors and Mr. Perry paced the rock which Robin had so promptly named "Etam," and looked anxiously hither and thither to know all the certainties and possibilities of their position, the Captain sat upon a fragment of rock and buried his face on his knees, groaning "in the bitterness of his spirit." His comrades lost no time in exhorting him. The rising day showed them a number of acres of barren

rocks, the sea foaming around them on all sides; and as Mr. Perry swept the horizon with the glass that was suspended by its cord about his neck, he saw no other land in any direction. Nor were these acres of rock promising in themselves; they had no food, nor grass, nor tree, nor water, nor shelter, so far as could be discerned.

“Cap’n’s hard hit,” said Harper, looking toward Orson Lois; “but he’ll come to after a while, I reckon.”

Robin Rounce gave a pitying glance toward the wretched man, and thought, in his heart, “Behold, this is the man that made not God his trust.”

“Heave yo, my hearties!” shouted Mr. Perry, recovering the natural buoyancy of his disposition, so soon as there seemed something for him to do. “Never say die—a few hours will be too late for us to help ourselves. There’s some bits o’ yon ‘Dolphin’ sticking fast there yet, and if we don’t secure them we will find ourselves stranded here without a stick or a rope to make a

raft of, nor a keg of biscuit to feed us. Come ahead, lads."

He began striding back to the wreck of the "Dolphin," the two sailors following him. Then seeing that Captain Lois yet remained seated, he shouted, "Chirk up and come on, Captain! While there's life there's hope, you know; give us a hand, sir. Three are too few, and four are not enough for what we want. Don't give up the ship, Captain."

"No—she's give us up," said Harper, with a tar's reckless jollity.

"I owe you that little help, my poor lads," sighed Lois, rising.

The portion of the "Dolphin" yet fast between two jutting rocks was but small, and was in hourly danger of being dragged away by the rising waves: to reach it the men must clamber along a submerged part of the reef, now resting on points of rock lifting above the foam, now wading waist deep, holding each other by the arms for protection; thus arriving at the rocks that

stood like towers to guard the lonely island, they could climb them, and step upon the slanting remnant of the vessel's deck. Mr. Perry was the first to reach the ship. Work must be done with dispatch, and dispatch demanded order. "Come, Captain," he cried, "you give the word, and we'll obey!"

"I can't, Perry," said Captain Lois, striving to imitate the cheerfulness of his mate; "I'm unused to wrecks and desert islands. You may have command here; you be General or King of the island, and I'll be Captain of the ship, if ever I see one again."

Thus put in power, Mr. Perry set Robin to find an axe, and then ordered the tearing up of what planks and timbers they could manage; flinging some into the water to take their chances of being carried ashore, fastening others with ropes to be dragged, and arranging for others to be borne on the shoulders.

When the first instalment of lumber had been thus taken over the half buried causeway, Perry remembered, that though a raft

was the thing uppermost in his mind, food was even more needful ; and he exhorted his comrades to eat heartily, and secure what food they could, to carry back upon the rocks. So trembling and dangerous was the portion of wreck which shook to the throbbing of the sea beneath it, that only two ventured to the shattered interior at once, leaving the others on the rocks with ropes and planks to attempt a rescue, if the deck fell to pieces while they were within ; nor did they stand on the deck to eat, but upon the rock.

The portion of the hold remaining was so small, and had been so washed out by the sea, that very little was to be obtained from it. Of tools, an axe, a crow-bar, and a little wire ; of food, one half barrel of biscuits, a keg of flour, two barrels of water, and a keg of pork ; of goods, a bale of light check cloth—nothing else, except part of a small sail. All the other salvage that they ever made from the “*Dolphin*,” was to find two blankets from the cabin berths floated in upon the rocks, and two pairs of boots. The

water about the tongue of reef was so deep in places, the rocks were so sharp and treacherous, the foam so boiled and whirled in the crevices, that it was quite impossible to get any amount of lumber in safety upon the dry rocks. The wind rose, the sea increased its fury; the four men were forced to fly with their small booty to the centre of the island, and by the next day not a fragment of the "Dolphin" remained visible, except what was piled near themselves on the rocks. Captain Lois once more settled into hopeless despondency, and left Mr. Perry to plan, if planning were to be done.

Soon after dawn, Mr. Perry and Robin Rounce went off together, and made the circuit of the island. They found nothing green, no sign of fresh water, no debris from the wreck around the barren rocks where they were cast. A great circle of foam and dashing spray showed where an outer reef was rising. There were places where a small boat, narrow, light of draught, and carefully guided by a skillful hand, could work her way

among the breakers, to go in or out from the rocks; but the prospect for a raft seemed hopeless indeed. They found at last several hollows filled with fresh water from the recent rain, and seating themselves by these, they took counsel. "Mr. Perry, sir, we can never get a raft out o' this," said Robin; "leastwise, such a one as we could make wi' only timber an' ropes. An' sir, it do look to me far more favorable to lie here waiting our chance to be picked up, than to rattle 'round mid-ocean in a weakly raft. When I feels a ship under me, sir, I feels, one may say, safe; but I has no faith in raftses: howsum' d'ever, Mr. Perry, sir, it's for you to speak the word—what you says, I does."

"We must consult the others," said Perry; "for myself, I favor the raft."

"But we'll do well, sir, not to risk the lumber too much. Sir, it's cloudy this mornin', but imagine a hot sun beatin' on these rocks, an' on our heads, sir, which aint one o' em got a hat; we'd go insane, sir, or drop dead. I knows a bit about this a way, an' its my belief

that this storm an' rain is but a spirt, an' the real rainy season may lie as far as three or four weeks off yet. Then, sir, them boards is our only chance—wi' a few stuns, sir, to make us a shelter to keep off the rain an' the sun, which sun is harder to stan' nor the rain."

"And until that rain, we shall have no water except what is in those two barrels, and the few quarts we have seen this morning," said Perry.

"And so, sir, it's reasonable, that the first thing we do will be to protect them water barrels, to save up the water as far as we can. Food and drink, sir, them is man's first needs—at least, sir, just speakin' o' his body."

Ship's biscuits and water made the breakfast of these men. "We must look up some fish, or some limpets," said Harper, "or we'll find our stock of provisions exhausted, and come to starvation."

A long discussion of their situation brought the four castaways to the conclusion reached by Mr. Perry and Robin, to protect the

water barrels, and seek for food first, and then try and fashion a raft.

The morning was spent in piling up rocks around a hollow where a little water lay, and here making a sort of grotto for the two barrels of water, and the kegs of food. By noon they had finished this ; but the storm was now quite over, and the sun coming out in mid sky, blazed down fiercely on their uncovered heads. One and another began to cry out with pain. Mr. Perry seized one of the blankets and tore it into four strips, which he twisted into turbans of a Turkish fashion ; the inside of these turbans being wet, the men's heads were kept cool—but nothing now seemed so desirable as shelter. The heat was overpowering ; they bathed, sat exhausted on the burning rocks, and only longed for night. To work in that heat was impossible, and scarcely a breeze stirred.

“It is evident,” said Mr. Perry, “that as soon as the sun sets, we must devote ourselves to building a grotto for shelter, or we shall all be dead men.”

And so they sat, marking the slow course of the sun into the western sea. He seemed to linger on his fiery way. Never had a day been so long, and to none so long as to Captain Lois. This, then, was the anguish of burning heat on barren rocks—augment it by absolute loneliness, and not one drop of water—and he could know what Larry had suffered.

Only a fool had said in his heart, "There is no God." Captain Lois had been wicked, but not a fool; if he ever had doubted Righteous Power superintending and meting out all the affairs of men, he would have doubted no longer; he felt, assuredly, "God hath overthrown me, and hath compassed me with his net."

The sun had dipped behind the water at last—happily for the sufferers on the reef there was moonlight. Having eaten sparingly, they set at work making a shelter. The crowbar was the only implement in their possession, and broken rocks were not plentiful. They concluded to take the grotto

already built, for one wall of their habitation, to rear two others somewhat higher for side and back walls, to leave the front open, and cover the top with the sail; by wetting this sail they could create a cooler air in their resting place. After the house was built, Robin and Harper went to a cove where they had seen vast quantities of sea-weed, and brought of that which was thoroughly dry enough to cover the sharp stones, and make the floor of their abode more comfortable to lie upon. Over the weeds they spread the remaining blanket and part of the sail. By this time it was nearly morning, and they lay down to sleep.

Rested by several hours of repose, they bathed in the sea, and took advantage of the strength and coolness thus gained, to search their rocks for food. They found shell fish of various kinds, though not in large quantity, and came upon a number of birds' nests, the eggs of which they carried off. Robin proposed to come at night, catch the birds, and cure the bodies for a store of future provi-

sions; and Mr. Perry, who abhorred the idea of eating raw eggs, managed to roast them by a fire of dried sea-weeds.

Toward evening they sat down near the grotto and began to discuss the making of a raft. Said Robin:

“Shipmates, let me lay out my ideas. My good Book says, ‘It is not o’ him that runneth, nor o’ him that willeth, but of God that showeth mercy.’ ‘Unless the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain. Unless the Lord build the house they labor in vain that build it.’ It is vain for you to ‘rise up early, and to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows,’ ‘for so he giveth his beloved sleep.’ From all which words, shipmates, I do gather, that the heft o’ our work lies on the Lord, and we has luck as he blesses us, and our doin’; and moreover, he means us to call on him, an’ obey him, and sometimes to be still, an’ He’ll show us his salvation out and out. Here are we, cut off from all the world. Eternity may be a deal nigher us than any face of man, or known

land. Now, by my reckonin', to-morrow's Sabbath day; and the long an' short o' it is, I'm just proposin' that we lie by and serve the Lord in it, seek his face, axes him to forgive our sins, and renew our hearts, and send us deliverance right soon. It's my idee that that's just our duty and our best hold."

"I don't say nothin' agin religion," said Harper, "but, mate, aint you carryin' this thing a leetle too far? We want to make a raft."

"I know we does," said Robin, "but, ship-mates all, makin' of that raft will keep over one day, and it 'pears to me that if the blessin' o' the Lord don't go with that raft, we might just as well not have any. Mr. Perry, how does it appear to you?"

"It had not occurred to me before," said Perry, "but, now you mention it, Robin, I'm for keeping Sabbath. Do you object, Captain Lois?"

"No," said Captain Lois, dejectedly, "the raft will fail any how; we are out for bad

luck—it might as well fail next week as tomorrow. It is all on my account; I'm sorry for you, boys, you were innocent; you should have left me—I was, as the men said, the Jonah of the ship."

"Well, I don't take no stock in the luck o' that boat," said Harper, "but, Robin, what a way shall we keep Sabbath day, without a book, or a parson, or a church, or nothing o' the pious sort?"

"Hold hard, my hearty," said Robin; "when you says no Book, you're out there, for my good Book's along, by this token that I always carries it in an oilskin pocket withinside my shirt, and here 'tis just as good as if it hadn't been wrecked, and that's more than can be said for Robin, for I'm a bit done over."

"I dare say we shall all feel better for a day's rest," said Mr. Perry, reviving at the sight 'of the book. "Come, sirs, all. Let us pile up this bit of timber to make us more of a shelter, get in another heap of sea-weed for bed, and for fuel—find us a

supper of shell fish and eggs, and when that is cooked and eaten, Robin shall spin us a yarn out of his Book, before we go to catch birds, and those birds we must get cleaned and drying before morning. I don't mind telling you that the sight of that Book revives me—my mother loves it."

When the supper was eaten, the sun being well nigh out of sight, and the evening breeze having sprung up, the four men sat on the ledge of rocks to listen to Robin's reading.

Said the sailor: "My mates! askin' your pardon, Cap'n, and yours, Mr. Perry, for the freedom of my speakin' that a way, and meanin' no harm or disrespect, it is plain enough that we're in a bad case, and we all feels accordin'. I find in my good book, sirs, a bit for every man's frame of mind, whether he's sick or well, jolly or sad; and, bein' as we are all main sad, and no wonder, I shall, wi' your leaves, deal you out a bit o' the Book o' Job!"

So Robin turned over his Bible, and read with much earnestness the first three chap-

ters of Job. Daylight had almost departed as he finished. Captain Lois held out his hand, as Robin stopped at the words, 'yet trouble came,' and taking the open Bible, read with bitter emphasis—"Why is light given to a man whose way is hid and whom God hath hedged in?" He had begun now, to quarrel with God, because he had spared his life, and not cut him off in the midst of his sins.

The Sabbath passed in rest, in reading the Bible, and in quiet talk. The whole of the succeeding week was spent in ineffectual efforts to make a raft that would hold the four men and their provisions, and pass the outer reef. The rocks cut the ropes asunder, the waves beat the timbers apart; again and again, the men exercised all their ingenuity in constructing a raft, and their whole strength in trying to guide it to the sea. They only succeeded in endangering their lives, losing part of their timber, and sitting down at last, entirely discouraged.

They made a signal pole from some of the

wood they had saved, and having fastened this on the highest rock, they set part of their roll of cloth flying from the top as a long streamer. Daily they scanned the sea for sight of a ship, but none came by; they seemed lost to all the world. If any vessel passed, beyond their view, they probably mistook the floating streamer for a mere wreath of that foam that was dashing about the island.

The leading spirit on this island was Mr. Perry. He encouraged his three companions in various undertakings to wile away weary days. He told tales: he discoursed on all he knew of natural history, he interested the melancholy men in varieties of birds, fishes, weeds and shells; he even invented tales that would have rivalled in length the Arabian Nights. When the project of the raft was finally abandoned, Mr. Perry encouraged his comrades to enlarge their house with the wood that remained; he then reminded them that the rainy season drew on, and that they should increase their beds

of dry sea-weeds. He fashioned cups and dishes out of large shells, constructed fishing-tackle out of their wire and string and a few bits of wood; made snares for birds which they could keep by them alive for some time, and so prevent scurvy by the use of fresh food. He led in the work of enlarging the already deep holes in the rock, that they could secure a good supply of fresh water when the rains fell.

And yet, in spite of Perry's energy and wit, doubtless these men would have yielded to their evil fate, gone mad or died in their despair, had it not been for Robin Rounce and his 'good book,' and the keeping of the Sabbath. It was Robin who kept record on the rock of the passing days, and reminded his friends when Sabbaths drew near. Robin's Bible became common property—we had almost written that his faith became common property. When unusual numbers of birds came to the rocks and were with their eggs taken with ease, Robin told of the quails brought to feed Israel in the wilder-

ness: when limpets covered the stones, here was a parallel to that manna which daily fed the Hebrew host: when rain poured day after day and filled the rocky cisterns, he told of Him who satisfied his chosen with waters out of rocks of flint. Perry and Harper, who had formerly lived with no realization of God's presence and sovereignty, now learned to see His hand evidently supplying each daily need, to cry unto Him as each new want arose, and to talk with Him in lonesome night watches, as one present and ready to help.

For Orson Lois there was no softening of the heart, no drawing near to God; he felt his sins toward his fellow-men; he blamed himself for the doleful situation of these three who were with him; he recalled the outcry of public opinion against him at home, and tutored by that cry, he execrated himself for his folly in breaking away from moral restraints and wronging men; but he did not realize his sins towards God. And yet, Captain Lois, in these days, spent much time in

reading the Bible ; there was nothing else to occupy him, and slowly and surely the Word was driving him toward a knowledge of God and a knowledge of himself. He began to talk sometimes to Perry, when they were alone, of his past, of his indulgence in intoxicating drink, of his periods of abstinence from liquor, of his mad outbreaks, and the manner in which the poison mastered him, roused his passions, and dragged him off into fearful deeds. He said, " I used to promise my mother, and then my wife, that I would stop drinking. I meant to do so, and I even took oaths that I would reform ; but I always knew that I would be able to get liquor ; I thought in my heart that after I had reformed I could indulge in it moderately ; I felt uncomfortable without my stimulant, I hankered for it, allowing myself to dwell upon it, and then giving rein to appetite, I would go and procure drink, and take ten times as much as before, to make up for my abstinence. I always knew that if I left off for a long enough time—say for a year, I

would crave it no longer ; but I did not want to leave off—and the world is so full of the stuff, that it is not easy to cut it.”

“ And now, you see, you are put where the stuff is not ; and where, if a year’s temperance will cure you, you can be cured. How long since we left Boston ? ”

Captain Lois started up : “ I said to my wife that I *did* want to reform, and if the Lord knew any way to reform me, I wished he would take it. He has taken me at my word again, perhaps ! But what good to be temperate, if we are to die on this miserable rock ! ”

“ Maybe we are not to die on this rock, after all,” said Perry.

And yet it seemed as if they were doomed to die there. Month followed month. Their shoes were cut to fragments, and they used the leather of the boots as sandels. Their clothes were quite gone, and they had yards of the bale of cloth wrapped about their shoulders and loins. Their hair and beards hung wildly over their chests ; their bodies

were emaciated, their eyes sunken, their skins shrivelled and bronzed; their voices were hoarse—they seemed to belong to another race of men. They had been a whole year on their dismal rock. Harper appeared to be wasting away, and near to death. Happy he who died first, that his comrades could bury him; who should be he that would die alone, beside the corpse of his last friend, that he had been too feeble to bury? "That miserable lot is my right," said Orson Lois to himself.

One morning, one very quiet morning, when the sea was unusually calm, a wild sobbing cry came from Robin Rounce: "O my mates, my mates, I see a ship, I see a ship!"

CHAPTER XIV.

A PRISONER TO PUBLIC OPINION.

“O the silence that came next, the patience, the long aching!
They never said so much as ‘He was a dear loved son;’
Not the father to the mother moaned, that dreary stillness breaking,
‘Ah wherefore did he leave us so—this, our only son?’”



SHIP! She took her steady course toward “the Rock Etam,” the light wind that pressed her onward, fluttering that signal which had so long floated in vain above the castaways. Surely now any captain with a glass could see those emaciated, half-naked figures upon the rock. Evidently they were seen. The trim ship drew steadily on, then turned shyly aside from the line of foam, not venturing to come too near, and then in a large circle made her way around the breakers, looking for a pas-

sage for her boat. Like creatures fascinated, the shipwrecked party followed the course of that ship. As she circled about them on the deep water, they moved along the edges of their rock; when she sounded and dropped anchor, they stood still; when her boat put off, and crept along through one of those leads out of which they had striven to force their raft, they pressed to the water's edge and held out their withered hands, as if they had some compelling force to draw the rescuing boat more swiftly to them; and when the little craft touched the rocks, they trembled, and cried like children, and must be lifted into it.

And so once more they were on a staunch vessel; and how the crew gazed, and wondered, and exclaimed at these savage looking beings, with their terrible story of a year written as plainly on their faces as on the pages of a book. The Captain of the ship made no inquiries whether they were officers or common seamen. He led them to the cabin; the steward was their barber,

shaved them and cut their hair. They were given shoes, and socks, and clothing, and they were set down to a hearty meal, all but Harper, who was put to bed, by his own request, in a hammock in the forecastle, and was there treated with vegetables and fruit.

When the ship was well underweigh, when Captain Lois and Mr. Perry were going to bed in the cabin, and Robin Rounce in the forecastle in a hammock next Harper's, they learned that this was the "Reindeer," Captain Piper, on a return voyage from New York to the Cape Verd Islands, with a lading of indigo, salt, and turtles. She was running toward San Domingo, where she would make a stop of three or four days, and had picked up the survivors of the "Dolphin" near the twentieth parallel of latitude, within two hundred miles of Cape Verd Islands.

A few days of shelter, clothing, rest, and fresh food, wrought a great change in the rescued mariners. Harper began to creep

about the deck, the other three regained flesh, and felt quite themselves.

Said the Captain to Orson Lois: "Two years ago, under a gale, I passed, near here, what I supposed to be an island or reef, not laid down usually on charts, and I determined to keep a lookout for it. That morning I found you, I took a glass and went up to the masthead myself. I took your signal at first for a great bird, but as it did not alter its place or motion, I ran nearer, and luckily found you, else you might have died on that reef. It is always a pleasure to save life, but your party may come very acceptably to me, for I am short-handed. Just before I left the islands, I was obliged to give up my third officer to be first mate on a vessel belonging to our owners, who had lost two officers and a man in a storm. Fifty miles from Cape Verd, I sent back one of my seamen in a ship which we passed, for the poor fellow was very ill of a fever. I was one man short in the forecastle before that, so if your two men will take their places among

the crew I'll rate them as first-class seamen from this out; and Mr. Perry can have the place of second mate if he chooses. My first mate is now shut up in his cabin with a dreadful swelling of the head and throat, but I hope he'll be about in a few days. Cape Verd Islands are a shocking climate for Europeans. I hope never to take a ship there again."

About a week from the day when Captain Lois had been rescued, he was standing on the upper deck of the "Reindeer," looking back along the ship's track, and thinking of the long imprisonment on the island, when he heard a step near him; he turned, and found himself face to face with James Nagle. Confounded at the sudden meeting, he stood for a moment without speaking. Nagle smiled sardonically. "Good-morning, Captain Lois!"

"Good-morning," said Orson Lois, to the man he had been accused of 'making away with.' "This meeting, Mr. Nagle, is quite

as unexpected as the manner in which you left the "Recruit."

"Yes," said Nagle coolly, "considering, what seemed to be your feelings towards me—I felt safer—more comfortable, in changing ship."

There was one thought forever uppermost in Captain Lois' mind—he spoke it now. "Your going, Mr. Nagle, was, perhaps more convenient to you than to me. I wanted you at hand to tell me where we had left that lad—Jeffries."

"Where *you* had left him, Captain Lois. I had nothing to do with that."

"Where *I* left him, then," said Lois, controlling himself. "I was sure you knew, Nagle. Where did I leave that boy?"

"O, if that is what you wish to know, though it seems to me a late day to ask that question—you left him on Sombrero."

"On Sombrero! Mr. Nagle, are you telling me the exact fact?"

"If I chose I need tell you nothing," said Nagle; "but Sombrero is just where he

was left, and a blessed rock it is too, for an exile."

Captain Lois turned, without a word, and went into the cabin. Captain Piper was sitting before a little desk, and a Bible lay open upon it. Captain Lois had seen him reading that book before, and he had heard him daily asking a blessing at the table. It moved him to confide in this man. Sitting down near him, and hiding his face, he exclaimed: "Captain Piper, I am the most miserable man in the world; perhaps it is because I am the most wicked man in the world. When I tell you my story you will be sorry that you saved me—and—I wish, in my heart, that I had let the others go, and stayed on the reef alone."

"Come," said Captain Piper, "it has been evident to me that you are most unhappy—let us hear the worst of it."

And Captain Lois poured forth his story—told it in all its details as he had recited it in burning days, and in nights of awful silence, again and again on the reef; as he had

passed it in review in those hours of storm on the "Dolphin;" as it had constantly haunted him, until all the other years of his life seemed lost in that one voyage of the "Recruit." It was an ungarnished tale. He did full justice to Robin Rounce, and full justice to Mate Nagle, and withheld nothing about himself. "And now," he said, as he closed the story, "can you, Captain Piper, will you complete for me the voyage of the "Dolphin." Can you stop at Sombrero? It is very long since that boy was left there;—if unhelped he must now be dead—but ships call there, perhaps now and then; there is a trade in turtles along those islands, carried on by French ships."

"Yes," said Captain Piper, "I will willingly stop at Sombrero. But, Captain Lois, let me say to you, that your account for this cruelty is not to be settled with man only, but with God. You say that God has taken you terribly at your word. You said, 'May God do so to me and more also'—and it was done. You said, "if God knew any

way to cure you, let him take it ;” and for a year you have been banished from the abodes and temptations of men. God is true to his word. He is a God who recompenses the innocent and the guilty. He says, “The soul that sinneth it shall die,” and he says also, “that the wicked may turn from his ways and live.” Let me be plain with you: if God’s reckoning with the sinner in this world is so tremendous, what may it not be in eternal ages?”

Captain Lois groaned. “But, as God is a God of judgment, and bound to chastise sin, my sin, so long as it stands, must meet its deserts. I have thought of this for hours. There is my sin—and to come—is penalty.”

“But, you ignore the fact that God has provided, in the method of his grace, not only an Advocate for the sinner, but payment of his debt. The price paid on Calvary was equal even to your sins, if you in humble faith, laying your hand on Christ, accept that price, and his righteousness is considered yours.”

“There seems no hope of my getting on a right footing, nor in a fit position to expect anything. I set out on the “Dolphin” to undo the wrong I had done. I was willing to make compensation to the boy to the last cent of my property ; and there some stronger fate met me, and overcame me, and has left me helpless all this year, until it is too late.”

“You are taking wrong ground,” said Captain Piper ; “you want to go to God with your own undoing of the wrong in your hand, as part of the price of his forgiveness. You cannot deal with God in that way. You must go empty-handed, and cast yourself on his forgiving mercy. The worse your case, the greater your need of him. You have yet a lingering hope that you can rescue this boy from Sombrero—or find things not so bad as they seem, and so stand in some better case before God and man. If the boy had been rescued by some other hand next day, and were now safe in his home, your guilt, before God, would not be one whit the less. You will

reach true repentance only by being shown your sin toward God, and owning your guilt toward him; and without true repentance you cannot get forgiveness. You will call me, like a good many others, the preaching Captain—but I hope you will heed what I tell you.”

That afternoon, Captain Piper and his first mate were on deck together, and Nagle said: “We’re bound to have a squall of some sort, Captain. That’s a demon of a fellow you picked up on the reef. I wonder he didn’t kill his comrades, and perhaps eat them up. He came near killing me once, and of all dastardly acts that ever I saw, his’was worst. He left a young lad alone on that rock, Sombrero, for no special fault, and sailed off, leaving him praying and mourning, scorching and starving, and begging them not to break his mother’s heart by telling her of his fate.”

Said Captain Piper, looking squarely at him: “Our language does not contain words of condemnation sufficient for such a

deed as that—nor for the wickedness of one who *knew* where that boy was left, and would not tell, that he might immediately be rescued. One man murdered—the other assented, and would not help the dying, lest he lessen another's guilt."

Day after day the "Reindeer" pursued her path over the seas, and at last, on a Sabbath morning, just such another hot Sabbath as that of Jeffries' abandonment, the vessel came in sight of a pile of sterile, hat-shaped, volcanic rocks, lying on the outmost edge of the Caribbees. In all this time, Mate Nagle had never hinted that he had already explored this island, and buried from thence a bleached skeleton. He watched with hate and triumph Captain Lois' feverish haste to reach the island, and his smothered hope that Jeffries might be found there alive. When the "Reindeer" lay to off Sombrero, and the boat was lowered, Captain Lois sprang into it with burning haste. Captain Piper, Harper, Robin Rounce, and two men of the "Reindeer" entered the boat, and they were

soon rowed to Sombrero. They saw nothing but the horrors of desolation on that solitary shore. Not a drop of water : not a morsel of food ; rocks that cut like broken glass. All day they searched every nook and corner, and found, at last, under some stones, a pair of tattered blue trousers, and in another place the broken handle of a tomahawk, marked with dark stains, which might be blood. Every vestige of hope of a rescue, of undoing his sin, perished out of Captain Lois' mind. He realized, as never before, the enormity of the crime of which he had been guilty ; he give up all idea that Larry had been saved. He took the torn clothes for Larry's, the weapon for the instrument of his death, the stains for his blood. He felt himself a murderer—he stood now, stripped of all hope of finding any compensation to make to men, and any manner of justification of himself to lay before God. The "terrors of the Almighty made him afraid"—he wandered apart from those who came to the island with him—waves of horror rolled over

his soul. He was convicted now of sin toward God, as if in all the universe he stood alone before his Creator ; he fell on his face crying, " Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight, that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and clear when thou judgest."

From that island went Orson Lois a man of a broken and sorrowful spirit—changed in all the temper of his mind. His plaint to God was, " I have sinned ;" his prayer, " Deliver me from blood guiltiness ;" and He whose sacrifices are a broken and sorrowful spirit, who will not despise a contrite heart, had compassion upon him.

We repent, bitterly repent, of evil deeds ; they are forgiven ; we turn from our ways and live : and—yet the *scars* of our crimes are on our hearts and on the world. So Captain Lois went homeward—not a veteran of faith and heroism, battered in righteous wars, but marred and wounded by the easy triumphs over him of the world, the flesh and the devil.

It was long, long since news had come that the "Dolphin" had foundered with those on board. Gilberthead had partly forgiven Lois, because he was dead; his wife had grown calm and patient after her months of widowhood; the ship owners had learned to say of him, "Poor Lois—a good captain in some respects, but a bad man—he did the best thing for all concerned when he went down with the 'Dolphin.'" And then, one evening, the loungers at the rail-road depot were astounded to see stepping off from the cars two seamen, gray, thin, weather-beaten men—Orson Lois and Robin Rounce.

What of the story of the "Dolphin," and what of the search for Larry? Captain Lois had felt that he could not expect his townspeople to believe his testimony concerning either; he had brought false tales before—he was now not above falling back on the known veracity of Robin Rounce, and bringing him home with him as a witness of his truth speaking.

To Helen Lois her husband was in a

double sense one lost and now found; he had been lost to godliness as well as to her daily life, and he was now found in Christ. She welcomed him with more joy than ever before; and yet, there was the darkness of Larry's fate hanging over them both, and there was that most bereaved mother, impoverished, and uncomplaining.

Now, for the first time, Captain Lois learned of the story of the bones found on Sombrero; he believed them undoubtedly those of Larry Jeffries. Judge Cole had advertised in many papers for news of Larry and had had no response; evidently he had perished. Mrs. Vernon and her family were living in a very rude little house on the outskirts of the village. Formerly they had had the products of the Jeffries' acres, the garden, the sale of fruit and honey, to add to what Mrs. Vernon earned by fancy work. Now all these helps were gone; the sad mother's eyes had wept away their strength, and her embroidery was less productive. Their subsistence was scanty enough, Mr.

Vernon earning a few dollars in copying papers for Judge Cole, or making out the accounts of the village shop-keepers. And yet Mrs. Vernon would not take help from her sympathizing friends. She could work, and endure privation, but charity she would not have. Mrs. Lois instructed Ila with Claude, and gave her lessons in music and drawing; but Mrs. Lois herself had been reduced to great straits by the loss of her all in the "Dolphin," and now Captain Lois found it impossible to get any position in the merchant service. His ill-report had gone abroad; no ship would have him as captain, no captain would take him as mate. He was ready to ship before the mast; but his health was broken by his many disasters and the long anxiety of his mind, and even that resource was denied him. Of his contrition and changed views, Orson Lois said little: after such a record as his, he was content to show his faith by his works, and bring forth fruits meet for repentance. His wife and pastor saw that he who had seemed to be pos-

sessed by a legion of devils was now sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind. They waited until others should also realize this change.

But the people of Gilberthead were not ready to realize any improvement in that *bete noir* of their simple annals; whatever vengeance they could wreak by distrust, by coldness, by dark looks, fell to his portion. His shipwreck, his long suffering on that distant reef, had disarmed their intentions of public chastisement, of bringing him to trial for what he had done. They were satisfied that his fortunes were ruined, his health broken, his friends alienated; this was according to his deservings. And so Orson Lois entered into a new experience of the penalty of sin: he could not go abroad without meeting sharp speech, cold looks, or utter avoidance meted out to him. The very children pointed him out and hooted, women turned away their heads, strangers came to know him as a marked man—and what could be more irksome to this once active captain than

loneliness and silence; house life, and nothing to do.

The family being dependent now on Helen Lois for support, they must stay where she could obtain the little employment for which she was fit. The home was all that they had for themselves or for Claude, and that could not be sacrificed. All that remained for Lois was to endure—and that was all that he had left for Mr. and Mrs. Vernon.

And in all this time, where was that fickle, wayward, kind-hearted lad, who had so easily resigned his home and his mother, with no thought of the consequences either to others or himself? Ben Cary came home in the "Logan," and told him of meeting with Captain Lois near the Virgin Islands. "I fancy he was looking for you. I am sorry that I did not say you were safe."

"I am glad you did not. He shall not brand me as a thief," cried Larry, flushing; "you promised to keep my secret."

"But, perhaps he repents, and wants a

chance to make amends ; and then, consider your mother."

"Yes, poor mother," said Larry. "I always loved my mother, and she was very good to me. But I left her the house. I fancy they are all doing very well without me."

In truth, the presence and charms of Mira Zende were drawing from Larry's heart the memory of his sister and mother ; and yet, if Mira had dreamed of the part that Larry was acting, she and her father would have insisted upon his taking his true name, and telling his friends of his whereabouts. Larry had forgotten that a prime requisition of Christian Zende from his future son-in-law, would be, that "he must speaks te trute." Yet Larry had hardly thought of *son-in-law* ; all he thought of was to live in quiet happiness year after year, working for Doctor Grafnick ; painting pictures in the evenings ; always young ; talking to Mira Zende, who also would be always young, and whose fair face should fill with beauty all his

dreams. There also would be Christian Zende, busy and brisk and loquacious—intent upon bringing up his “poy Pilly.”

Ben Cary was sharper-eyed than Larry. He said to him, one day: “Larry—or Harry—’pon my word I’m too true a tar to likesailing under false colors. You are likely to get into a scrape here. You are in love with Mira Zende, and by and by you will want to marry Mira; you cannot marry her under a false name—you wouldn’t do it, and I wouldn’t stand by and see it, as I’m a sailor. Well then—it will be awkward for you to go to old Christian Zende and tell him you’ve been a fraud all these years, and that you have in a manner deserted your mother; such a bluff, old straightforward as Zende, would say to you, ‘then you might on some excuse be one day capable of deserting your wife; you cannot have my Mira.’”

“Why, you know I’d never desert Mira,” cried Larry.

“Zende would not know it, and fathers of good and pretty girls, are apt to be careful,”

said Cary; "the end of all is, that you must make a clean breast of it to Zende. We can none of us do harm in this world, my mother used to tell me, by being truthful; but there is no telling what a world of mischief we work when we begin to deceive. It is like beginning to drink liquor, my hearty; a glass of ale, a little glass of wine or brandy, meaning no harm; then a thirst for it, more temptations, more yielding; a drunkard, and capable of all a drunkard's crimes. If I knew you to be a lad to indulge in a drop of bad drink, I'd warn old Christian in a minute; and I'm just as much bound to warn him if I see you are deceiving him, and are thinking of Mira."

Larry could not endure to do unpleasant things. He said, "Well, Ben, suppose you break it easy to Mr. Zende, and don't bear too hard on me, nor rile him up."

"He'd take it better from you. Just tell him the whole story, some evening, as you are alone. So now, do it before I'm back this trip."

"I might tell him the story as if it were some other person, and see how he takes it, and then let him know it is my story."

"You'd better by half deal squarely with old Zende," said Ben.

But Larry took his own way, and one night confidentially related the history of this third party to Christian Zende.

"Hein!" says Zende, "das knabe, he hides from his goots mutter, he no dells his name? Ach, de vorlt is fulls of pad poys; ef it vas mein poy Pilly, I vout vop him, ef I dit neffer vop Pilly pefore."

"I surely cannot tell him the truth, now," said Larry.

CHAPTER XV.

ROBIN ROUNCE BRINGS NEWS.

“ And messages from shipwrecked folk
Will navigate the moon-led main,
And painted boards of splintered oak
Their port regain.”



HARRY JEFFRIES now became anxious and unhappy for the first time since his rescue from Sombrero. The natural compliance of his disposition drew him toward fulfilling his tacit promise to Ben Cary; and, moreover, he knew that if Ben returned to find him yet imposing his false name upon father Zende, he would warn the old man;—and yet how face Christian with the words, “I am the man” hero of the story that aroused his indignation. Though not to be “vopped” like “poy Pilly,” he was sure to lose that honorable title, “Mein

riend," and to be banished from Mira. Dozens of plans presented themselves to him. Christian might forgive him if he repented and forsook the error of his ways; so he thought of writing to his mother, telling her that he was safe, going to visit her, confessing to Zende, and "having all straight." But he thought that Captain Lois had been before him with tales at Gilberthead; that he had assured the townspeople that Larry Jeffries was idle, cowardly, weak, a *thief*—branded as such, and abandoned as not worth saving; and his mother would now be ashamed of him, his friends would scorn him, the very children would mock at him. No, he could not go to Gilberthead. He then thought of writing of his safety and present abode to his mother, binding her to strictest secrecy; and thus, having a fond letter from her to plead his cause with Christian, he could settle his affairs in Philadelphia to his mind. But—but again, his mother would surely tell her husband, Ila, the pastor, Mrs. Lois probably; the story would be all abroad

—people from Gilberthead would come to see him, and the *thief* part of his history would be written very large against him. Whimsical, illogical, and sensitive Larry could not see that his self-will toward his mother, his long concealment and deception, were true crimes, beside which that thirsty drinking of the ale was but a small misdemeanor. His morbid self-conceit preyed on that charge ‘thief,’ and found a precious poison in it. And yet this charge had served to rid him of his love of malt liquors: thief, thief, thief—seemed written on those drinks which once had been likely to tempt him on the drunkard’s way. How, when he had first exhibited that taste, his poor mother had wept and prayed over it; had recalled the infinite miseries of her lot with his drunken father, her first husband, and how she had implored God to save her from having a drunken son. And so here was the strange path, by which God led the way to the accomplishment of her desires.

After long conflict, poor Larry decided

that his only hope in the toils in which he had wound himself, was a rude breaking of bonds, another escapade. No good if he did love Mira; Christian Zende's requisition, "he must speaks te trute," made the possession of Mira impossible to him: and then did Mira like him? He concluded not. She patted "poy Pilly" on the head, let him sit beside her, bade him run errands for her. She showed none of these favors to bogus Harry Jordan. Ila had loved him—but *she* had called him fond names, and kissed him; his mother had loved him, but *she* was always watching his looks, studying his wishes, greeting him with a warm good morning, and asking how he had slept—but Mira, she did not seem to know that this young man had any wishes; she gave him placid good morning, and had no concerns about his slumbers. A quiet, gentle, busy, earnest, charming, presence in a house was Mira. "She loves her father and nobody else," said Larry; "I will run away."

Yet day after day passed, and he did not

run. Ben Cary was not coming back just yet—Doctor Grafnick was very busy, and it would be unfair to leave him without help. He would stay to the last moment, enjoying a home; then, gather up his little savings, and be lost forever to the kindly German friends who had given him a new chance for his life.

Meantime Doctor Grafnick, satisfied that his Secretary was not in love with Greta, and feeling him very safe with Christian and “the two childrens,” laid plans for whole years when Larry should be his Secretary: when science began to pay better than now, they would take long journeys in search of new discoveries.

Christian Zende was fully occupied with his work and his “poy.” He said to Larry, “Meine Mira is shoost gute. She gives me no drouble; but mein poy ist ein pickle—not ein sweet pickle, put ein pepper pickle; and yet Pilly ist as gute as he knows how to bees. I am pound to make him ein gute mans, an’ I must not comblain if it ees hart

vork. De Lord has hat harder vork mit old Zende, no doubts."

Indeed Billy was as hard a case as ever came into a good man's hands to be managed; and the Teuton was unique in his management.

One afternoon, coming home with his work from the instrument maker's, what did Zende see but his boy standing in a beer shop, taking off a foaming mug of beer. He was being *treated*, as the price of holding a horse. He put his head in the door.

"Pilly! I deet dinks you vas in school some more."

"School's out," said Billy.

"Ant anodder school ees pegun! Te schools vere dey fits vor te hosbital, te vork-house, te shale, an' te gallows. Eh, mein poy, kommen zie heim—poor shilte! knows no more vat ist gute vor him dan ein poor little tog, nor so mooch!"

Billy followed his adopted father home with a fear that the unused *vopping* reserved for unspeakable enormities would now be

forthcoming. But no, Christian bid him clean the yard, scrub the door stone, and learn lessons for next day. And so Billy thought he got off easily. After tea, Zende seated himself by the table, and placed before him a variety of queer things, whereon Billy looked with curiosity. Were they new aids to instrument making?

“Kommen zie hier, Pilly!” cried Christian. “Vy vast du in te peer shops te tay, hein? Vy drinks peer, mein poy?”

“O—O—because it’s good,” said Billy, boldly.

“No, Pilly, it vast not gute to dein mout. I did see neffer so pig vaces als didst make, Pilly. Pilly, you dinks it vill dast gute py-ant-py, and it ees like a man to trinks, an’ so you trinks. Now, Pilly, eef it is gute, haf it; ef it ees likes ein man, trinks, Pilly. I vill not hinders you vrom vat ees gute ant manly, mein shilt; *but* trinks at home, dakes your trink pure, Pilly, and lets me pays vor it. Kom, mein poy! You likes peer. Vell, kom, open dein mout, heir I haf all te

peer stuff simons pure vrom te schopps, mein poy. Kom, opens dein mout, ant I vill puts it een."

Billy drew near, but kept his mouth close shut. Said Zende, "Don you makes me madt, Pilly! Opens dein mout!"

Thus exhorted, Billy opened his mouth, and Christian put a small bit of alum in it. Billy drew up his face, but boys can stand alum. After a little, Christian cried, "Opens dein mout, peer ist not all alums!" And he dropped in a bit of aloes. This was worse. Billy winced. Again, "Opens dein mout!" The least morsel of red pepper, now, from a knife point; but Billy howled.

"Vat! not likes dein peer!", said Zende. "Open dein mout!" Just touched now with a knife point dipped in oil of turpentine. Billy began to cry. "Opens dein mout, dein peer is not hafs mate, yet, Pilly!" And Billy's tongue got the least dusting of lime, and potash, and saleratus. Billy now cried loudly. "Opens dein mout!" Unlucky

Billy! This time about a grain of liquorice, hop pollen, and saltpetre.

“Looks, Pilly! Here ist some arsenic and some strychnine; dese pelongs in te peer. Opens dein mout!”

“I can’t, I can’t!” roared Billy. “Arsenic and strychnine are to kill rats! I shall die! —O—O—O—do you want to kill me, father Zende!”

“Kills him! joost py ein leetle peer! all gute and pure! He dells me he likes peer, ant it ees manly to trinks eet, ant ven I gives heem te peer he cries I kills heem! So, Pilly, heir ist vater; dere ist mooch vater in peer—trinks dat!”

Billy drank the water eagerly. Zende went on. “Ant, dere ist mooch alcohol in peer. Heir! opens dein mout!” and he dropped four drops of raw spirit carefully on his tongue. Billy went dancing about the room, and then ran for more water.

“Kommen zie heir, dein peer ist not done, Pilly,” shouted Christian; and seizing him, he put the cork of an ammonia bottle to his

lips, then a drop of honey, a taste of sugar, a drop of molasses, a drop of gall; then, "Pilly! heir is more of dein peer! Heir ist jalap, copperas, sulphuric acid, acetic acid, and nux vomica: open dein mout!"

"O no, no!" mourned Billy. "Let me go! I hate beer, I'll never drink any more! I'll never go in that shop again, I'll be a good boy—I'll sign the pledge. Oh, let me be! I can't eat those things! I'll die! My mouth tastes awful now. Oh, take 'em away, father Zende!"

"Dakes em away! dakes away dein goot peer!" cried the old man, innocently, "ven I halves paid vor eet, ant mein Pilly can trinks eet pure at his haus, likes ein shentilman! Vy, poy, dese ist te makins of peer, ant you no likes dem? All dese honey, ant sugar, ant vater, poy?"

"But the other things," said Billy. "Oh, the other things—they are the biggest part—ugh—they make me sick."

"Mein poy, you trinks dem fast to-day! Looks, Pilly—a man he trinks all dese pad

dings mix up in vater, ant call peer. Ach! he gets redt in his faces—he gets pig in his poddy—he gets shaky in hees hands, he gets clumsy on hees toes, he gets veak in hees eyes, he gets pad in his breat, he gets mean in his manners. Vy? Pilly, you sees vy. All dese dings on mine dable ees vy!”

Happy Billy! Few boys get so good a temperance lecture, such home thrusts, such practical experiments as fall to your lot. Billy was satisfied on the beer question.

“He ees all goot now,” said Zende. “I halves no more droubles mit mein Pilly.”

But he reckoned without his host! His ideas of the iniquities of which such Billys are capable were too limited. Hunting after Billy one day, as the lad lingered on the road home from school, he spied him around the corner, pitching pennies. Turning his back, so as not to seem to see the performance, he shouted, “Pilly! Kommen sie heir!”

After tea he called Billy to his table. “Mein poy, I see you vas pitches pennies. Hein. Dit you vins?”

"No," said Billy, "I lost."

"Poor poy—dat vas pad lucks," said Zende, sympathetically.

"But I'll learn, and win next time," said Billy, confidingly.

"Hein Pilly! you means to pitches pennies, ant lets all te poys sheats you? Soh—I vill deaches you at home to blay, and den you vins—*perhaps*. Halfs you any pennies, mein Pilly?"

"I have four," said Billy, driving after them into his pocket; "here they are!"

"Goot," said Zende; "now, Pilly, ve vill do ein leetle pisness mit ein penny, shoost to keeps our hands in, ant to shows you vat te game ist likes, ant not to loose our times, Hein! Hedds I vins, dails you loose. Trows him ups, Pilly! There she goes!"

"Tails! Mine!" shrieked Billy, in an ecstasy.

"No, Pilly," said the placid Zende. "Dit I not zay dails you loose?" and he pocketed the penny. "Toss again, mein poy!"

"Heads—mine!" said Billy, but less confidently.

"O no, Pilly! I said heads I vins—it is mine. Toss up, poy!"

Billy, in a very dubious frame of mind, tossed his third penny.

"Mine!" said the imperturbable old gentleman. "Heads I vins, again, Pilly. Drows up dein last pennys, Pilly; zee ef it ees not 'dails you lose,' vor me agen!"

But Billy clung to his last copper. "Why, then," says he, "it looks to me it is *always* for you."

"That are so, Pilly," said Zende. "Vy shoult I blays mit you except to vins your pennys? I never blays on no odder terms, mein poy! It ist ein dooty always to pe on te vinin' side, Pilly. Vy, poy, vout you haves me go to losin, shoost to shows you how I does it, and to improves your mindt, Pilly? I dakes te blace of te vorlt and of vicked poys, and blays mit you, Pilly, to deaches you. All dese games ist for sheatin' rascals, Pilly; neffer blays dem unless you

likes to bees ein sheatin rascals, ant unless you likes to loose your times ant your moneys. Soh, Pilly, however pig a villin you gets to pe, dere vill always be annodder villin pigger yet; te vorld vas ferry olt pefore you comes to it, mein poy; ant te pig villins vill sheats you of your eye teet, mine shilt, eef you goes mit him. Te vay ees, mein poy, to keeps mit good beoples, ant to bees goot beoples deinself. Dere vill always pe goot beople more petter as you are, Pilly, goot deals; but dey dakes no more advantage of thats, but shoost to makes you goot too, mein poy. Pilly! Here ist dein moneys! Dakes dem, but mindts, mein poy, ven you blays pitches, cardts, betts, nor any pad blays mit te villins, you haves den to blays me at home on my own derms, Pilly, an' I gives you no more pack dein moneys ven I haves dakes te last cent. Goes to dein ped."

"Mein vriend," said Christian Zende to Larry, "now mein poy Pilly ist pound to pe goot, for Pilly does not dell lies, ant now

dere ist no more pad for hims to get intos."

And must Larry leave this home, and this honest original old man, and Mira, and his prized place as Secretary, and have no more the pleasure of watching Billy being trained up in the way he should go? He thought he got a new lease of comfort, when a letter came from Ben Cary, saying that he would not be at home for some time, for the "Logan" had engaged in a good trade along the Gulf of Mexico, and would improve her opportunities. "I suppose you have told Zende the truth," wrote Ben.

But an old friend was destined to cross Larry's path, and mar his hopes. Robin Rounce had found a new vessel, and was high in favor with the Captain. The ship, bound from Boston to New Orleans, stopped at Philadelphia on some trading business, and the Captain sent his chronometer to Zende's employer to be repaired. He was ready to sail before the time expected, and sent Robin with a note to the instrument

maker to get the chronometer. It had been given to Zende for his home work, and the master, adding a line to the note, sent Robin to the old German. Robin reached the house as the family were finishing tea. It was pleasant weather, and Zende, fond of out-door life, left the doors open; so Robin, looking into the dining-room, saw Mira behind the tea tray, old Christian opposite her, and boy Billy facing some one marvelously like Larry Jeffries, at the sides of the table. Larry, looking up accidentally at a square mirror, a relic of Germany; saw framed in it the reflection of—Robin Rounce. Covered by the confusion of Christian's rising to go to the door, Larry slipped out at the yard, and made speed to Doctor Grafnick.

Robin had no time to lose. He handed Christian the note, and got the chronometer; then he said, bluntly, "I saw a young man here, as I came to the door. Not your son?"

"No, mein vriend," said Christian, "a ferry smart youngs shentlemen—Secretary to te famous Doctor Grafnick."

“ Might I ask his name, shipmate? ” said Robin.

“ Vy his names, eet ees Harry Shordans.”

Robin looked mystified, and Mira’s untripping tongue came to his aid. “ It is Harry Jordan.”

“ And is he a good young man? ” asked Robin.

“ Oh, very, ” replied the sweet damsel, blushing eloquently.

“ No offence taken where none is intended, ” quoth Robin Rounce. “ He minded me of an old friend. Does he like to drink—ale and beer.”

“ Vat you says! ” cried Christian in vast indignation. “ Mein Mira dells you he ist ein goot young mans, ant drite on te tops of eet you says, does he likes to trinks ale ant peer? Voulte he pe calt goot in te haus of Christian Zende, eef he vas ein so foolish youngs mans, ein so pad youngs mans als dat! ”

“ No offence taken where none is intend-

ed," insisted Robin the placable. "He minded me o' an old shipmate."

"He sailed *once*," said Mira, "and had a dreadful time."

"Oh," said Robin eagerly, "did he ever speak of Captain Lois, or the "Recruit"—or Robin Rounce—or Larry Jeffries?" At each of these names Mira shook her pretty head.

"I wish I could see him one moment," said Robin.

Billy was sent to seek for the young man, but returned, "guessing he had gone back to the Doctor's."

"Yes," said Christian, the voluble. "He vorks mooch as neffer vas for te Doctor. He cobbies out his books vor heem, he makes de bictures vor heem too."

"Can he make pictures?" asked Robin eagerly.

"O, he can makes shoost als goot bictures als neffer vas," said Christian. "He makes mein Mira so fine as it ist more fine as mein Mira, goot deals—mein vriend ist so smart!"

“I wish I *could* see him,” said Robin, uneasily. “Has he been here long, sir—meaning no offence?”

“O, he halfs been here more als two years, goot deals.”

“Three years, about, father,” said Mira.

“And will he stay here—could I find him here again?” said Robin.

“O, he stays—he neffer leaves me, ant mein Mira,” said Zende.

Robin could not linger longer; he must hasten back to his ship. He wrote Christian's name and address on a scrap of paper, and went off reluctantly.

Mira told Larry of the sailor's eager inquiries about him.

“Sailors always think they know somebody,” he said, fretfully. “Perhaps he wants his portrait painted—but I went to the Doctor's.”

And then Larry lived in a state of terror lest Robin should come upon him, and denounce him, and tell a direful story of the “Recruit.” Here were two likely to ruin

him with Christian, Ben Cary and Robin Rounce; and they were such good honest fellows, and had been such friends of his! And one clear honest statement of his whole story, made to Doctor Grafnick and Christian Zende, followed by a going to Gilberthead to see his mother, would have cleared away all his anxieties, and brightened the whole horizon of his life. But here was the young man's infinite folly—concealment must hide concealment.

If he had only laid the matter before Mira, that honest girl would have set him on the road to his mother, to honor and forgiveness. But if, if, if—how many ifs there are, on a course of wrong doing! Larry had twenty times been drawn to begin a letter to his mother. He would write, "My dear, good mother: Have you given me up, have you forgotten me—will you forgive me that for so long I did not write to you;"—and then he would tear up the sheet, thinking of what all Gilberthead would say about his story.

He took great pains to find out, through the instrument maker, to what ship Robin belonged; and then he went to the docks to learn where this ship sailed. She was bound for New Orleans; and then Larry inquired the usual length of voyages to that port. Larry did not expect Robin to write to or of him: the old tar had small faith in the pen, and had forgotten how to write more than to sign his name. Larry concluded that Robin would come back to Philadelphia in the ship, and then call upon him; or, the ship going to Boston, the sailor would take no trouble about him. He now lived in an unpleasant frame of mind, dreading the return of Ben Cary, or a visitation from Robin Rounce.

Robin set off on his voyage to New Orleans, quite sure that the face he had seen at Zende's table was that of Larry Jeffries; but if so, how had he been saved—why did he hide from his parents, and forego so good a property—and why was he called *Harry Jordan*? Robin could not understand such

tergiversations. He hoped his vessel would call at Philadelphia on her way home, but she went straight to Boston.

It was now a number of months since he had seen the young man whom he thought to be Larry. He felt loth to disturb Mrs. Vernon, or unhappy Captain Lois, with what was only a surmise, and yet he must speak when so much depended on finding Larry. He was wise. He went to Judge Cole. The Judge could not believe that Larry Jeffries had abandoned his mother and reduced her to poverty in such a heartless fashion. He never thought how morbid Larry might be over his injuries, nor that the boy might suppose his mother would retain the property. Larry had never troubled himself about property questions. "If he is living he must have seen my advertisement," said the Judge. But then Larry never read the papers, and his new friends were Germans, and did not often see English secular papers. Judge Cole said Robin Rounce must be mistaken.

“I’m main sure it were Larry,” said Robin, shaking his head.

“Well,” said the Judge, “we’ll sift it, Robin. I’ll give you your expenses, and you run to Philadelphia and hunt this fellow up, and be sure about it. Arrange with your Captain to take you up there. Say nothing here. Stay, I will write the Captain a note so that he will allow you to go to Philadelphia to meet the vessel.”

CHAPTER XVI.

SIGNED WITH AN X.

“For visions of the night are fearful things ;
Remorse is dread, though only in a dream ;
I will not subject me to visitings
Of such a sort again.”



JUDGE COLE'S office was near the depot. When the hour came for the departure of the train by which Robin should set out for Philadelphia, the Judge thought that he would step over to bid the old sailor good-bye, and give him a few parting instructions. Robin was so sure that he had seen Larry, and that he should see him again, that he inspired the legal mind with a little of his own confidence.

“There may be something in it, after all,” said Judge Cole, turning to leave the station ; but as he turned, up ran Ila Vernon, her

bosom panting, her blue eyes shining through tears, her fair cheeks flushed. "Oh, sir, Oh, Judge Cole, is it really true that you have heard something about my poor brother?"

"Why, child, what gave you that idea?" asked the Judge.

"But is it true? Can it be possible, that after all, he is alive? We heard that Polly Anders said that she heard you and Robin talking about Larry, and going to hunt him up; and everybody saw Robin come last night, and he has gone now."

"Evil take Polly Anders! I'll discharge her the moment I get home—a listening, gossiping old crone is Polly."

"But about Larry, sir. Mother heard this morning, and she is in great excitement. Is there any hope for him?"

"Now, Ila," said the Judge, "I cannot think there is any hope of Larry at all. The whole story is, that Robin Rounce, a good many months ago, at Philadelphia, saw a young man whom he thought was

Larry; but this young man's name is, so they say, 'Harry Jordan.' He is a painter, and a doctor's clerk, or something of that kind, Robin does not know what, and the old man is all on fire to go and discover him to be your lost brother. That is all the story."

"But," said Ila, "why should Larry change his name and hide?"

"Why, indeed?" replied the Judge. "It does not look likely."

Judge Cole went on his way greatly discomfited; he had meant to keep Robin's mission a profound secret, and not have these unfortunate people disturbed with mere suspicions. He walked home vowing vengeance on Polly Anders his servant. But he reached home at dinner-time, and for dessert there was—oh, such a pudding! Puddings were the Judge's weakness. Making marvellous puddings and cakes was of Polly's virtues, listening and gossiping were of her vices. The Judge ate his pudding, and forgave the cook. "But," said he,

“the next time—the next time, Polly shall go, and no mistake.”

Ila went home to tell her mother what she had learned from the Judge. She met Claude, and told her also. Claude flew to her father and mother. The Captain awoke to a new interest in life. Oh, if this might only be true! Oh, if he might at last tear that gnawing tooth of remorse from his heart! Now was he willing to humble himself, to ask Larry's forgiveness, to beg him to come back. And Captain Lois, better than any one else, understood how Larry might have been led to hide himself from his home and relatives. “He knows nothing of property—nothing of his mother's anxiety for him. All his past here is darkened and embittered by his misadventures, his persecutions, and his abandonment at sea. Poor boy! I fairly hated him for his sensitive nature; what a wretch I am!” Thus he talked with his wife.

Mrs. Lois went to visit Mrs. Vernon. She found her in bed, prostrated by a new

conflict between hope and fear—but fear prevailed. “It cannot be true,” she said. “My Larry was always a great ‘mother-boy;’ he loved me. The last words Robin Rounce heard him say were, not to break my heart by letting me know his dreadful fate. Would he hide from me for years; break my heart, reduce me to poverty? Change his name! My poor Larry is quite incapable of such conduct—he was a good boy.”

“My husband thinks there may be many reasons for his doing this,” suggested Mrs. Lois.

But sickness and anxiety had racked Mrs. Vernon’s nerves, and made her bitter where Captain Lois was in question. She said tartly, “Yes, it’s much to him to find that Larry is not dead; but I shall not be imposed upon by any false Larry’s of *his* finding.”

Judge Cole being the most sympathetic of men, was not able to endure the torture of his present besetment of the mother’s sus-

pitions and renewed grief, Ila and Claude's questions, Mrs. Lois' trembling eagerness, the Captain's frantic anxiety. He fled to Boston, and while there tried hard to get Mr. Bloss to give Captain Lois another ship, or even a small trading vessel. He said :

“The Captain is an altered man : he is perfectly temperate, and you know it was whiskey played the mischief with him. He always did well when he was sober. He is a skillful and faithful Captain, and if he gets a ship now, he will be a model. To him, this living idle ashore, not daring to show his face out of his garden, is a slow death—he will perish by inches ; he grows a dozen years older every year ; and then his family positively need his pay for their support.”

“But,” said Mr. Bloss, “that desertion of Jeffries was one of the most wicked things ever known in the annals of seafaring.”

“True, but he is bitterly repentant of it.”

“The world does not know that ; and the public will look to us as ship-owners to punish, so far as we can, such cruelties ; the

merchant service would be ruined if that kind of crime could be winked at. All the country rung with that boy's story: if we put Lois on a ship again, we could not stem the tide of opinion that would set against us."

"Poor Lois! Well—then there's no hope for him; he'll soon die of his present life—I wonder he's stood it so long."

"It is all his own fault: we must always suffer for sinning."

"And you can do nothing for him—now, nor at any time?"

"Maybe," said Mr. Bloss, "if Larry Jeffries came home safe and sound, we might reinstate Lois, or do some little thing in the way of a command for him."

"There is small hope in that promise," suggested the Judge.

Now in that active-tongued village of Gilberthead, more wrath than usual awoke against Captain Lois. People are unreasonable in prejudices. People said, "This is all some of Lois' manoeuvres — he's up to any-

thing ; he's deceived or bought over Robin Rounce, but he cannot cheat us. This is all a sham about Larry living under a feigned name in Philadelphia; he would not do such a thing; Captain Lois has made up the whole matter; bribed some one to personate Larry. Why such things are old stories; even royal personages have been so personated — but Gilberthead has cut its eye teeth."

They said all this to Mrs. Vernon over and over again, and she began to believe it, and thought that Captain Lois was trying to palm off a spurious Larry on her: she resolved to be very much on her guard; and yet she lived day by day in a feverish, almost frantic hope, that she would hear, "Thy son liveth."

Meantime, in Philadelphia, Larry's perturbations had calmed a little: there was no prospect of Ben Cary's early return, and Robin Rounce had evidently thought no more about him: his conscience began to prick him less about the false name and the imposition he was practising on Christian and

Mira. Besides, his whole heart and attention were now absorbed in making love to Mira; he thought perhaps she did like him a little—she must be persuaded to like him more. He would win fame and fortune for Mira's sake. Mira must "sit as a queen and see no sorrow;" his whole future should be unselfishly devoted to making her happy. Elated and enwrappt by these thoughts, Larry was hastening home to tea one evening in October, as if wings were on his feet. The dead leaves drifted along the sidewalks; most of the birds had gone—the evening closed in early. To-night the red and golden sunset seemed to linger kindly, as Larry, tired with a day's writing, hurried to his tea and his Mira. Dashing along thus, within a square of Christian Zende's, he saw the well-known sturdy form and rolling gait of Robin Rounce. Should he fly? But then—Robin would go to Zende's and tell his story, and convince them of many hard things against this youth of two names, Larry or Harry. Robin must be kept from Christian, at all risk.

After Robin flew Larry, and clapped him on the shoulder. "Well met, old messmate! Come, no denials, come my way;" and he locked his arm in Robin's and dashed down a side street, and away from Christian's as fast and as far as possible. "Lucky I met you! Where were you going? Where are you stopping? Come, get supper with me."

"And is it truly you, Larry Jeffries? Well, Robin was sure his old eyes did not deceive him. I know a gull from a gannet any distance. Why it was you I came to see, my hearty, and to ask you a question or two, by your leave. You are grown and changed, my boy—changed in more ways than one, I fear. Yes, I'll go with you. I came to see you—but where away are you going, lad?"

"O, all right," said Larry; "you nearly got into the wrong berth, that's all, old fellow—but you're in the right track now."

Larry knew of a small, respectable lodging-house and restaurant, where one of his

acquaintances of the Temperance Society had his home. It was well out of Christian Zende's way, and Robin was unsuspecting. He went thither with the old sailor, and privately ascertaining that his friend was out of the city for a few days, secured his room for himself and the old man, and ordered a private supper. The room to which Larry took Robin bore evidence of occupation. Robin was sure it was Larry's home.

"How long have you been here?" asked Robin.

"Oh, not so long," said Larry, indifferently.

"And I almost went to the wrong place and missed you. There was a providence in my finding you."

"Supper's coming up soon," said Larry. "You'll stop with me while you're in the city, my old mate?"

"No, no," said Robin. "There's a quiet house on Water Street, kept by a laid-by old messmate, where I allus stops. I must go there, after I've seen you, my lad."

"Oh," said Larry, secretly delighted, "well—we'll have our supper first, and then I'll walk to your place with you."

"Come, my boy," said Robin, "I'll be plain with you. I'm on an errand to you. Your folks think you're dead, and a deal of sorrow has that thought made many hearts. What I asks you, my son, as an old friend, is—why have you hid this a way, from your old friends, and from your mother, who mourns an only son?"

At mention of his mother, Larry hung his head; but he roused himself to say, "I guess they do well enough without me."

"My hearty," said the old sailor, "I heard, last Spring that you sailed here under the name o' Harry Jordan."

"There's no harm in that—it's a good name," said Larry.

"But it aint *yours*," said the sailor; "an' I'm dead again sailin' under false colors—there's a wrong in that, lad."

Larry flushed, but was silent. Robin continued slowly :

“Now, there’s reason in all things. I des-say you’ve got a reason for this way o’ livin’, an’ lad, I asks you solemn, in the fear o’ God, to tell me all the truth about this.”

Here the supper was brought in and spread on the table.

“Fall to, messmate,” said Larry; “you eat while I talk.”

He gave Robin a chair, and poured out the tea, doing the honors of the table while he considered what he should say. He concluded that it would be best to express his feelings to Robin just as he had to Ben Cary. His shame and anger at Captain Lois’ treatment, his dislike to being questioned, laughed at, condemned, talked about, in busy Gilbert-head; his feeling that his mother would be ashamed of him, after his career at sea. Thus far he told the truth, and Robin understood it. He asked: “And so you changed your name, so no one would know, and here you’ve lived as another man, my mate?”

Larry here entered into a particular his-

tory of his life on Sombrero, his rescue, his terrible state, his life since; he told all but his acquaintance with Mira, and his fear of confessing to her father. Said Robin :

“Well, lad, I can understand a little how you felt, but it do seem to me, that you overdrew on your feelin’s. I dessay you’ve lived a decent honest life ashore; your face, my boy, tells that tale—but—you are not living square and open and honest with the world and all men, and we cannot go into any manner of deceit without doing harm. It is honest ways is best ways, Larry.”

“I don’t see whom I’ve hurt,” said Larry, sulkily.

“Hold hard, there,” said Robin, “while I lay it down to you. I’ll make you out a clear chart, my man, of the seas you has been a sailin’ these more nor three years by past.”

Robin then gave a description of Captain Lois’ remorse, his efforts to find where he had left Larry, and his first return home. He touched but lightly on the Captain’s

other sins during that voyage—told of his own bringing news to Gilberthead, of the excitement, of Mrs. Lois, of Mrs. Vernon, of the demand for a search—of the fitting out, sailing and wreck of the “Dolphin;” the year on the reef, and the final visit to Sombrero. The old sailor dilated with natural eloquence on the horror of Mrs. Vernon, the frantic grief of the bereaved mother, on Captain Lois’ profound penitence and woe, on the intense sympathy for Larry, and the public judgment against Captain Lois. “You see, my lad, you’re all wrong in your reckonin’s, bearin’s, an’ soundin’s—voice of the public is clean for you an’ agen him—*he’s* the sufferer now. Thief! why lad, they don’t write *thief* agen your name, but *martyr*.”

“Maybe I was wrong,” hesitated Larry; “but, after all this time, it is well to let the matter rest. I’ve got a new life, and I’m suited with my new name, and they have learned to do without me there, by this time.”

“Mothers never learn to do without their

children," said Robin; "and I'm uncommon disappointed in you, Larry Jeffries. I did think you was a kind-hearted lad; but you're hard as hard. As for your talk, boy, it's main selfishness, and shows me clear that you aint been studyin' the good Book for light, nor serving the Lord, nor prayin' to Him as has been so marcfiful in sparin' you through so many dangers. Why, all your talk is about yourself, and what *you* like, and *you* think, and *you* are suited with. Aint there nobody else in this y'ere world to be considered but *you*, Larry Jeffries?"

"And who is there then to care—who minds but me!" cried Larry with heat.

"Don't you rile up," said Robin; "it aint a bit o' use. I'll set it plain down to you, my lad, nilly willy, as the Judge says, or somat o' that kind. 'Who cares?' says you, and what matter is it to anybody? I'm clean surprised at sich questions. A mack'rel an inch long would have more judgment. See y'ere. Aint you keepin' from a penitent man peace, and comfort, and

a chance to get a livin', an' relief from a most awful conviction o' bein' a murderer, and aint you doomin' him to a livin' death!"

"What did he doom me to?" cried Larry angrily.

"Don't you rile up, as I said aforetime. What harm, sence you're so anxious to treat fools accordin' to their folly, did that lady, Mrs. Lois, ever do you, that you're bowing *her* down with shame and sorrow, and spoiling her home, and bringing all the burden of carin' for the family on her two weak hands, that aint able for hard work? What harm did her little girl do you, for you to make her grow up under the mortification o' bein' a murderer's daughter? What harm did your pretty little sister ever do you, that she's fair heart-broke, and livin' like a flower out o' sunshine? What harm did that good crippled gentleman ever do you, that you forget him, and lose him his home this-away? What harm did that good, gentle, lovin', pious mother o' yours ever do you, that you goes and robs her o' her son, o' her

house, o' all her livin', and forces her to live in a shabby little den o' a house, half starved for support, pretty nigh beggared in her old age, sick, and gray, and dying before her time, all along o' you!"

Larry sprang up. "My mother beggared! half starved! sick, lost her house! Why, whatever are you telling me? Who could, who *dare* take her house? That's *my* house, and I left it to her."

"Why, boy!" cried Robin, "aint it writ fair in the will that when you're dead, the cousin—a skinflint, tough, hard, onreasonable, longshore lubber—may I be forgiven for usin' of hard words—is to come and take the house, and all its belongings; and didn't he come and do it, and turn out the sick mother, the lame cripple, the little lass? Eh, but he did, 'cordin to law."

"When I'm *dead!*" yelled Larry, "but, man, I aint dead; I'm alive, and I left my mother to have all the property, and live in plenty, and Ila after her. I don't claim one

cent. I want them to live in comfort. How dare he take it! *I'm alive.*"

"You give folks little chance o' knowin' it," said Robin, dryly.

Light began to dawn on Larry's mind. He continued: "And being convinced that I was dead, that cousin took the place, and drove my poor mother out? O, he thinks I'm dead, does he? He'll find I aint dead; and he'll trot out of that, and fork over, so he will; my mother shall go back and have it all, and use it all, as if it were hers. Why, Robin, you old dunderhead, did you think I was keeping quiet here, with the least idea that *my mother* was poor and homeless! I'm a mind to knock you over for it!"

"Eh," laughed the sailor, "you can't master Robin yet."

"But you went—you dared to think such a thing of me."

"It looked most amazin' like it," said Robin.

"One thing is certain," said Larry; "mo-

ther's got to be set right and put into her house, straight off."

"Now you're coming round, handsome," said Robin. "To-morrow you just run up to Gilberthead, see your mother, show the people you're all right; forgive Captain Lois, make Mrs. Lois and the little girls happy; and ever after you lives in the old home—like the prodigal did with his old father."

Unlucky allusion! Larry did not want to play the part of prodigal—and yet his conduct looked unfilial enough. He was not feeding on husks, he was eating the bread of pleasant labor, and he was eating it with Mira. He was shy and retiring; and to go to Gilberthead and be 'interviewed,' and questioned, and called upon, and have his story in the papers, and his queer conduct commented on, and his secret reasons brought to light, and the 'thief story' blazoned forth, was too much for him—he could not, he would not go. He must now be exposed to Christian Zende, and lose Mira;

—but to go to Gilberthead and be remonstrated with, and gazed at, and blessed, and abused—no, no, no—a thousand times, no. Yet justice should be done to his mother, and that immediately. He said:

“You’re too fast, Robin. I hate the thought of going to Gilberthead. I won’t go there. I’m happy here, and in business here. I don’t want to use that house, but mother shall use it. You’ll bear me out, Robin, I’d no idea this would fall on her. To-morrow morning I’ll go with you before a magistrate, and I’ll swear a statement of the whole case, and you shall take the paper to Judge Cole, and he’ll put mother in her house again; and you shall relieve her mind, and give her my love, and ask her pardon for me, and tell her all about it. That will set Mrs. Lois—and—other folks right too. But I’ll never go back to be hunted, and worried, and stared at. That’s set, Robin, talk all night, and I wouldn’t change.”

Larry took Robin to his boarding-place, and promised to call for him next morning.

He did not return to Zende's, but bought himself a rough sailor's suit, and next day went in that with Robin to a magistrate, explained his errand, and wished the statement written out, that he might swear to it. Robin being voluble, and Larry embarrassed, the illiterate old tar did most of the talking. Robin took oath that this was Larry Jeffries, and Larry was explicit in his declarations. Larry had said so little, and was dressed so like his companion, that the hasty magistrate considered him of the same class. To Robin's statement the magistrate wrote his name, and bid Robin make his mark. Robin saw no disgrace in doing so. When Larry's name was to be signed, the magistrate wrote that too, and giving him the pen, bid him make *his* mark. Larry obeyed mechanically; he was in a state of mental torture; he had no pride about signatures—all his dearest hopes were laid in ruin.


He gave the sailor the papers, and told him to deliver them promptly to Judge Cole,

and all would be right. Robin finding he could effect nothing more, went reluctantly back to Gilberthead, carrying Larry Jeffries' affidavit, *signed with an x.*

CHAPTER XVII.

CLAUDE'S ERRAND.

“ Ah, who am I, that God hath saved
Me from the doom I did desire,
And crossed the lot myself had craved,
To set me higher?”

O steam-car could move swiftly enough to equal the ardor of Robin Rounce's wishes, as he went back to Gilberthead. The train seemed to creep : he had felt a voyage round the world shorter : he jumped off and on at every station. He could not eat, nor sleep ; he continually raised the window and thrust out his head, until some travellers bade him 'keep quiet,' and complained of him to the conductor ; and others audibly called him an 'old fool,' and said that sailors should never travel by

land. Robin forgave them all; they did not know what cause for haste he had, or they would have been as eager as he was. When the train arrived at Gilberthead, he scarcely waited for it to stop before he dashed across the platform and to the office of Judge Cole. The Judge, seated before a bright fire, was enjoying his paper. Robin forgot to knock, but plunged into the room, shouting: "I found him! I was right: it is Larry, sure enough! Hooray, Cap'n Joodge! axin' your pardon, all's right. Hooray!"

"Found Larry Jeffries!" cried the Judge, springing up: "where, where is he? You've brought him, Robin?"

"No, Joodge, I ain't—cause why? he wouldn't come."

"And that—that *Harry Jordan*, was Larry Jeffries, and he has been in Philadelphia all this while, and will not come home? Why, I cant believe it!"

"Which it are true, Joodge," said Robin, seating himself by the fire, bending forward, and twirling his hat between his fingers.

“An’ I’ll spin the yarn to you, sir, from the beginnin’; it’s no fault of mine not to bring him, but he got one of his stubborn tantrums, sir, and in them he do behave more like a ship that’s lost her rudder than ere a thing else in nater; and, sir, you’ll agree wi’ me, that a ship without a rudder is in a poor case. Well, it don’t take much of a storm to carry off Larry’s rudder—that’s so. Well, Judge! I’ll lay it all out plain. I overhauled him easy, and he met me fair and hearty. He told me all his story, and he’s had uncommon bad luck, and uncommon good luck, though its heathenish in me to use them words; for as the parson at the Bethel says, it’s all God, Providence, and not luck, in our mortal affairs. Larry’s uncommon mad at Captain Lois, specially cause he were ticketed out as a *thief*, and he laid it to heart that folks all would side wi’ the Cap’n, and his mother’d be ashamed of him, an’ he’d be made game of, an’ so—long and short is, sir, he says he’s got a new life, an’ he likes that; a new home, and he likes that; new business, and a new

name, and he's suited wi' all, an' he wont leave 'em, now after three years an' a 'alf, he wont, that's dead."

"What!" cried the Judge, "does he mean to say he's cast off his name, his home, his friends, his mother! Oh, the fool! thrown away his pretty little property! Oh, the rascal! Beggared his mother! I don't blame Lois for leaving him on Sombrero, the young villain! If I had him this minute, I'd leave him on a dozen desert islands, and serve him uncommonly right too!"

"Softly, Judge," said Robin—"axin' your pardon, sir. D'ye see, sir, he didn't know his mother'd come to any harm by him an' his hidin'. When I laid it out to him he riled amazin'. 'It's my house,' says he. 'I aint dead; I left it for my mother an' Ila, the whole thing. Who dared to steal my house from me!' So I laid it out to him, how he was dead, as one may say; how he'd committed a kind o' suicide, if you look at it in that y'ere light, and the long and short o' it were, Judge, that this little blow carried away his

rudder, as I laid it out to you, and come home he wont; but I'm to explain him to his mother, and axes her pardon, and convey his love;—and to you, sir, he sent a paper, duly took down by a Judge or som'at; a paper called an afferdaver, or the like, but signed by him an' me, an' the magistrate, and he do say it will be a clean chart for you to sail by and steer his folks clear into port agin, at Jeffries' house."

The Judge controlled his impatience while Robin, with great deliberation, unfastened several jackets and vests, and from some inner repository drew out the papers mentioned. The Judge began slowly reading them aloud, and Robin sat nodding his grizzled head affirmatively, at each new proposition. "Humm—well," said the Judge, "such an idiot I never saw! Humm—well," looking hard at the signatures. "What, Rounce, can't you write your name?"

"Oh, aye," said Robin; "I can write my name easy enough, though I don't drive a quill well enough to keep a log."

“But, man—you’ve only made your mark here!”

“Aye, aye, sir. The magistrate, or joodge, or somat, he set down my name—‘make your mark,’ says he; and mark or name it’s all the same to me; so I marked, for mark was the word. What’s wrong, sir? Ought I to put my name full out in my own fist? I’ll do it now, or I’ll back to Philadelph’y, and do it. Give the order, Judge.”

But the Judge’s puzzled countenance grew darker. “Why, confound it all! Robin—here’s Larry Jeffries signed with an X! Why, Rounce, what does this mean? Larry was educated—he can write. You say he’s some great man’s Secretary, and here he makes his mark!”

“But you see, sir, the magistrate, he writes his name, as he did mine; ‘make your mark,’ says he, and Larry made it. Judge, ain’t all ship shape? Give me the paper and I’ll go back wi’ it, and I’ll make it right this time.”

“Robin,” said the Judge, seriously, “are

you *sure* this lad is Larry—are you not mistaken in him?”

“Oh, bless you, Judge,” laughed Robin; “*mistaken!* Why, could I be mistaken in myself, or my ship? I know Larry—and then, sir, don’t you see he *says he’s himself*. It’s him all over agen, only he’s grown, and he looks stronger and more of a man, and older, and he’s got no more love for liquors. He told me, Judge, that Cap’n Lois had broke him of that. ‘Well,’ says I, ‘you can forgive him a good deal for that same;’ it’s worth desert islands and sich, to be free o’ a cravin’ for strong drink.”

“Well, come on with me, Robin,” said the Judge. “I wish we had the fellow’s handwriting in this. We will go to his mother and see what she makes of it.”

Going to Mrs. Vernon’s little house at the farther point of the village, Judge Cole saw Captain Lois standing, haggard and disconsolate, in his own door-way. The sight appealed to his sympathies; he went in and read Larry’s paper to the Lois family.

They were wildly happy; they accepted it at once as from Larry; said the whole conduct was like him, and that they would trust Robin Rounce's declaration and sight, anywhere. Captain Lois also pointed out that there were statements of fact in this paper, and a knowledge of Gilberthead and Jeffries' affairs, that could only be possessed by Larry himself.

"I look at it in that way," said the Judge; "but you know the present owner of the property will fight for possession, and he will see imposition where we do not: impostors are sharp, and the Jeffries' story has been bruited all over the country."

"Oh, let it go at once to Mrs. Vernon," pleaded Captain Lois; "what a joy this will bring to her. She will see that this is Larry." And in his earnestness Captain Lois' hastened with the Judge to Mrs. Vernon. She heard Robin's tale, and half believed; but it was hard to think that her first-born, her only son, could for years hide his existence from her, — could so easily forego her love and

her presence—could reduce her to poverty. Even the fact that Larry did not anticipate this evil to her, did not console her for the thought that he could do without his mother.

Again, Mrs. Vernon was ready to believe any enormities of poor Captain Lois; she was prejudiced—and who can wonder at it?—against anything which he favored. Meddlesome neighbors had told her, hundreds of times, that the Captain would try and lighten the appearance of his own misdeeds, by luring some one, and instructing some one to personate Larry. And then this X—her pride took fire. Her Larry could write; he was well educated: she ‘had beautiful poetry which he had written, and stories, too. Ah, let no one thrust an ignoramus upon her for Larry Jeffries. Away with this paper—it was false!’ She sent for her minister and explained to him all her suspicions, and her utter repudiation of a declaration signed “Larry Jeffries, X his mark;” she sent for the schoolmaster, and bade him corroborate her statements.

"Of course we all know Larry could write well," said the master.

"And why, then, did he not write his name? Just because this is not Larry, but some one hired to make believe Larry."

Captain Lois went home bowed down under this new accusation; his wife and Claude sympathized with him, and believed with him about Larry. Claude was fiercely indignant. "People," she said, "were so cruel and bad, that they did not want to see any comfort come to poor father."

Meanwhile, as Robin Rounce had finished his work in Philadelphia in time to catch his ship in Boston, he must be off in haste to join her. He said to Judge Cole:

"That's Larry, true as preachin'; but I can't do no more than I did do, unless I can make him write a letter to his mother. He won't come to Gilberthead."

"She would hardly believe a letter from him now," said the Judge; "she is determined that he is dead. I'll go to Philadelphia myself, day after to-morrow, and fer-

ret this thing out. Give me that address, Robin, and go to your ship in peace."

Judge Cole now announced that he himself would go to Philadelphia and sift this affair: he was not to be deceived nor doubted. "That is true," said all Gilberthead; "but the Judge will come back owning to the trick somebody put on Robin Rounce. A nice way for a rascal to get a little property, by claiming to be Larry Jeffries!"

Judge Cole reached the house of Christian Zende about four o'clock one afternoon. He found Christian at work upon some small instruments at one window, Mira sewing at another, their room tasteful and neat, a bright fire blazing in the grate, and Mira herself so charming that the Judge incontinently resolved to believe all that she said.

"Is there a young man here named Harry Jordan?" he asked. "*Dere vas,*" said Christian, "but, we are in great drouble vor dat same young mans. He ist gone. He leaves me an' mein Mira no vort. He

gives mein vriend ein great Doctor Grafnick no goods bye. We complain to dese police vor our Harry Shordan has pin madt away mit so mooch; buts te police dey finds no Harry Shordans yet, ant mein goot Mira, she gries all de times some more, als eef it vas mein poy Pilly. Zee mein Mira, she gries now! Cheer up, mein harz!" And the good man brushed a tear from his own eye.

"But when and how did he disappear? I came to see him: if you explain all, perhaps I can help find him—at least money shall not be wanting. I am Judge Cole of Gilberthead."

"I knows nots Gilberthet, put I dells you all. Mein vriend, von nights he koms not heim. Next day he koms ven I am gone. He goes to his rooms, he stays von goot vile. He koms down heir: mein Mira she ees makin' pread. He says, 'Mira! mein harz ist proke! I leaves you foreffer. Goots-byes. I vishes I vas deat, and I vil die so soon as neffer vas:' and he catches mein Mira in his arms, and kisses her, ant he gries, and before she kan zay von vort, he ist gone,

and mein Mira, he did neffer kees her pefore, ant she ist so surprise, ant he koms no more again."

"Oh, then," said the Judge, glancing at the weeping and blushing Mira, "he was not *made way* with; he went of his own free will and intention."

"No, Herr; did I not say, 'he gries, and 'says mein harz ist proke?'"

"But he went voluntarily, all the same," said the Judge.

"Berhaps, put I does not understand such longs English."

"Will you tell me all that you know about him?" said the Judge, kindly, to Mira; "where he came from; how long he has been here; his name, how he behaved, what he did for a living; all that you can remember."

Mira, checking her tears, complied, and gave such a minute account of Larry, that the Judge smiled to himself at the innocent revelation of her interest in him. The narration being finished, the Judge asked to see Larry's room and the pictures which he had

left. Christian Zende took him up-stairs and expatiated largely on Larry's talents.

The Judge then went to Doctor Grafnick, and gleaned all the particulars that he could about the rescue of Larry from Sombrero. Of his present disappearance the Doctor only knew that Larry was lost and lamented. "But," said the Doctor, "I do suspects. That day I told Larry, 'my lad, Greta is engaged to be married,' he said, 'O, I am so surprised, what will we do without Mees Greta?' I did not know that Larry had a love for Greta, but I see now that this news broke his hearts, as he told Mira Zende, and made him run away."

"Is Greta the young lady at Zende's?" asked the Judge.

"O no, she is the one who left this room as you came in; she is my sister. At Zende's is only little Mira."

The Judge privately thought that "only little Mira," was far more likely to destroy a young man's peace of mind, than Greta. He felt now quite convinced that this Harry Jor-

dan was Larry Jeffries. Next morning he went back to Christian Zende's.

Said Mira, "Father said you looked at all Mr. Jordan's pictures; but here is a little one that I found under his mattrass, after he went away."

She took from a drawer a very tolerable, at least a recognizable likeness of Mrs. Vernon, as she had been before Larry went at sea. He needed now no other proof that this was Larry; but proof to him might not be proof in a court at law. He begged the picture to carry home to Gilberthead. He then gave Christian Zende an account of Larry's life, family, voyage on the "Recruit," the feelings and motives which he had explained to Robin, and finally told him about Robin's visit, and the paper which Larry had sent home. Christian Zende struck his hands together. "Vy! Mein vriend, he dells me shoost such ein dale one effening. All apout ein suchs pig fools of von youngs mans. 'Vat,' he says to me, 'wouldt you does to heem?' 'Ach,' I says to heem, 'eef it vas

bin mein poy Pilly, I voutt vop him — to leeves his goot mutter so longs; it ist not goot of heem.’”

“Probably that frightened him out of confessing, lest you and this young lady should drive him off,” said Judge Cole.

“Oh, but we would have made him go home to his mother,” said the sweet Mira.

Judge Cole remained a week in Philadelphia: set the police to search for Larry, advertised him, addressed personals to him, and getting no trace of him, went back to Gilberthead, to state what he had learned, and to assert his own convictions that this was in very deed Larry Jeffries. The portrait, and the report of where it had been found, did much to reconcile Mrs. Vernon to the idea that this was her son in very truth; besides her forgiving mother-heart yearned hungrily to see her boy once more; forgetting all the past, and satisfied if in future he would be home-loving and dutiful. As for the present owner of the Jeffries' house, he vowed that the portrait was only part of a big fraud,

and that the "Pennsylvania Dutch" were leagued with Captain Lois and a whole posse of people to defraud him.

This so angered Judge Cole that he remarked, "If I ever get that fellow under my thumb, I'll make him squeak before I let him go."

And now, for two months, all Gilberthead waited to hear something of Larry Jeffries. The mother, the step-father, and the sister, were almost rivalled in their anxiety for news of the lost youth, by the Lois' family. People began to say, "All is over: it was just a cheat, a play put up by somebody, keen enough even to cheat the Judge—but they have given it up."

January came—and waiting seemed worn out to Claude Lois, an ardent, energetic girl, now past seventeen. The Judge had heard several times from Doctor Grafnick, "Nothing new;" from the police, "No trace." Claude saw her father wasting away in his remorse and anxiety: her heart ached with its pity for him. She said to him, "Come,

father, you and I are dying of Gilberthead and waiting. See now, I've got seventy-five dollars, all my own, which I have been earning this year at fancy box and frame making, all unknown to you and mother. That will take us two to Philadelphia. Come, we will go and find out something for ourselves. It will give you a new life—you are dying by inches here."

"It takes long to die," said Lois; "I would be better dead."

"Oh, for shame!" said Claude, briskly; "you will weather this storm and put in for repairs, and refit, and there will be long fair sailing for you and mother and me. To begin, we'll go to Philadelphia by Monday morning's first train; and I am going to fix me up the most beautiful travelling dress that ever you saw; and put new braid and buttons on your overcoat. Our going is a fixed fact."

Claude had her own way, and on Monday morning she and her father were off early. People said, "Well, that Claude will never

lend herself to a sham." "She will come back disappointed, poor girl." "We'll believe when she brings back Larry Jeffries."

Getting away from Gilberthead, away from gossip and suspicion, having change of air and something to do, revived Captain Lois wonderfully; he seemed something like his old self. Having reached Philadelphia and found a quiet boarding-place, the father and daughter set off on their further search. Doctor Grafnick's was nearest on their way, and they called there. The good Doctor pined for his secretary; nothing went right without him. Greta was married, and the Doctor still thought that Larry had fled in despair at the news of her betrothal. "And yet, I was very prudent," said the wise man of science.

Then to Christian Zende's. Here they met a most hearty welcome. Claude and Mira fell in love at first sight. Robin and the Judge had made Christian compassionate deeply this penitent sinner, Captain Lois, and he gave him his arm-chair and his confi-

dence, and told him all about "poy Pilly," and how he had improved of late.

"You must stay to tea, and spend the evening," said Mira to Claude, and she took her up-stairs to lay by her hat and cloak. Once alone, the two girls entered into marvellous confidences. Mira told many things about *Harry*, and Claude rewarded her by telling her reminiscences of *Larry's* childhood, when he and she were playmates at Gilbert-head.

"Now," said Claude the sage, "Mira, all depends upon you. Larry will never be able to stay from you very long. I know what he is like; he will come back some day just to see you, and then you must keep him. Telegraph to Judge Cole, or to me, and do not let him go until we come and make him go back to Gilberthead."

"Yes, indeed," said Mira; "I'll keep him if I have to lock him in the cellar. I'll tell him, if he does not take his own name, and go home to his poor mother, never to speak to me, never so much as look at me

again — not that he'd care for that — very much."

"Indeed he would, dreadfully," said Claude. "I *did* think that Larry might never come back; but now that I have seen you, I know he will, and very soon, too: why, he just could not stay away, I am quite sure."

"Oh, do you think so!" said Mira, blushing like a sunrise.

"I'm quite *sure* of it," said the wise Claude; "and now all depends on you're making him do his duty. You must talk the fifth commandment to him—he needs it terribly."

"Oh, I will—if he comes," said Mira, "be sure of that."

And the two went down-stairs hand in hand.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A PERVERSE FELLOW.

“Ah, who am I, that God hath saved
Me from the doom I did desire,
And crossed the lot myself had craved,
To set me higher?”



ALTHOUGH Judge Cole was convinced that Larry Jeffries was living, and had been seen by Robin Rounce, he was not prepared to enter upon a law suit to re-instate Mrs. Vernon in her home. Larry was now twenty-three years of age, and free from control of his guardians: Mrs. Vernon had no money to spend in processes at law; the heir who had taken possession demanded *proof*, and the mother's friends kept hoping that the best of proof would be furnished by the return of the missing son. Waiting and hoping thus, winter grew into

spring, and no Larry was heard from, in spite of Claude's confident assurance that the perverse youth could not long remain away from Mira Zende.

On the morning when Larry had signed his affidavit with an x, and given the paper to Robin Rounce, he left the sailor and returned to the little boarding-house where he had spent the night. He was in a maze of doubt and distress: he had never thought what a great injury he was doing his mother by his silence; and now he felt less inclined than ever to return to a town where every neighbor would feel competent to demand of him, "Larry Jeffries, how could you be so foolish, so unfilial, and make your mother suffer so much all these years?" His mother must be seriously angry at him; he had made now what amends he could—let it pass. The next thing would be visitors, friends, busy-bodies, letters down from Gilberthead, to lay open this whole affair to the Zende family, and they would hate and despise him

for his long deceit. He indeed hated himself for it. He would go away: when the whole story came to Zende's ears he would understand why he went. To live where Mira was, and feel that he could never expect her love and esteem, would be impossible.

All Christian Zende's life and conversation had not made Larry a Christian. He was a moral young man, a church-goer—that was all. In these his cogitations, he made no reference to God, whether he had sinned against God, or what God would have him to do. He was to himself the centre of his own universe. Probably his loving mother had never thought of this result, when she had made him the centre of her life and home, had consulted all his wishes, and had taught him not to sacrifice himself for others, but to expect that others should sacrifice themselves for him.

From his dreary musing, seated forlorn on the side of his bed, Larry rose, to write a letter to Ben Cary, telling him all his folly and trouble. He said, "I shall go away.

I cannot stay and face this, and see Christian disappointed in me, and Mira turning from me, as unworthy. I am glad she does not care for me—how could she? I shall change my name and wander off, I don't know where, and I don't want any one else to know."

Again, that insatiable romance of this youth's disposition! Amid his pain, this hiding, this *alias*, this seeking new adventures, partly consoled him. He laid aside his sailor's suit, went home, packed a small valise with his few valuables, some bits of canvass, a few paints and brushes, took his money—about an hundred dollars—bid Mira good-bye, as Zende said, and away. He returned to the boarding-house, resumed his sailor's suit, put his other clothes into his valise, bought a stout cane, and set forth on his travels.

It was noon of a glorious Indian summer day: a purplish haze lay over all the landscape; the trees were nearly leafless, but their branches were ruddy in the warm

light. The reaped fields, as he entered the country, were bare, and the nuts were dropping in the woods. Squirrels were darting along the fences and among the trees; the windows of the country school-houses were open, and the children's voices hummed into the outer air: on the barns the pigeons cooed and fluttered, and dressed their feathers; sheep and cattle browsed lazily the remnants of the aftermath; insects, which knew not the shortness of their time, swam in the sunny rays. Who would be very sad in a world so wondrous fair?

Larry wandered out of the city at the western limit, and took the old stage road toward Lancaster. He was strong, and fond of walking; and exercise seemed to relieve the unrest of his mind. He bought some supper at a little village, ate it under a tree, and as the evening was moonlight, he pursued his way until nine o'clock, when he called at a farm-house, and asked for a night's shelter, for which he would pay their price. The farmer received him cordially, and find-

ing that he had had his supper, presently remarked that it was time for prayers and for bed.

“ You’re used to prayers ? ” said the farmer’s wife to Larry, as they rose from their knees.

“ Oh, yes ; we always had them at home, ” he replied. But where now might home be ? he thought.

“ And what is your business, young man ? ” asked the farmer.

“ I have been helping a gentleman make up books, ” said Larry, “ and drawing pictures for him. I can paint, and I shall do something at that as I go through the country ; ” and in proof, he opened his valise, and showed his canvass and paints.

“ Dear, dear, ” said the farmer’s wife, “ I’d like dreadful well to get our Minty painted, with a sheep beside her. I saw a picture of a little girl took like that, and I do say it was handsome. ”

“ However, the farmer did not seem to favor having Minty painted, and the next morning

Larry went his way, the good people refusing to take any payment for his lodging and breakfast. That night he slept at a little country tavern, and felt lonely enough—the sound of the jesting, swearing and quarrelling of the tipplers in the bar-room coming up to him as he lay in bed. He felt tempted to give up his folly and go straight to his mother; but romance and obstinacy combined to keep him to his purpose. Trudging on, next day, about noon, finding tramping becoming a little monotonous, and rain threatening, he passed a farmer sitting in a great wagon, and talking to a German on horseback. Said the German, “you’d better sell the grain; I offers you a cent and a half more than markets prices.”

“But I don’t like the use you’ll make of it,” said the farmer. “I raise grain for good food, and you propose to spoil it for bad drink: it’s a waste of honest provisions.”

“But not wastes to you, when you gets more than the prices.”

“It is a waste somewhere, a terrible waste

of health and strength, money and morals to people who buy liquor. It is inconsistent to complain of that sin and waste, and yet help it on by turning my grain into your hands."

"But if you sell to the general dealer, it may go to liquor, all the same—how do you know?"

"I don't know, and I can't know; I could not follow it up, if I would; I know that a large amount will go for pure food. I sell to him and ask no questions for conscience' sake. It is a different thing, this selling to you, who buy directly for distillers. I have then not the benefit of a doubt where my grain goes to. No, sir, don't ask me for my grain; I would not give it to you for double the ordinary price."

"Ach! you draw the lines too tight!" laughed the German.

"Well, look you, I don't wish deliberately to take a course that will rise up to condemn me at the Judgment day."

"For me, I don't believe in a Judgment day."

“ Evidently—or you would not venture to be in this liquor traffic.”

Larry had lingered to listen to this conversation. When it closed the farmer chirruped to his horses, and then drew up again.

“ Young man, you are loaded ; shall I give you a lift ?” Larry accepted the offer, and as he took his seat by the farmer, the man, continuing the thought uppermost in his mind, said :

“ These Germans, what a pest they are with their beer and their drinking, and their distilleries and breweries.”

“ But all Germans are not fond of drinking,” said Larry ; “ two of the warmest temperance men that ever I met were Germans.”

“ And you are temperance—not half way, but total-abstinence temperance to the backbone, yourself, young man ?”

“ O yes, certainly,” said Larry.

“ That’s well—but let me tell you, temperance is not a *certainly*, or matter of course, with many folks. ‘It’s *my* hobby. Now I

like to gather up temperance experiences and facts. I put a question to temperance young men, based on what I once heard a temperance lecturer say. He said, 'Some men are born temperate, some men become temperate, and some men have temperance thrust upon them.' Now, which of them three cases may be yours, young man?"

"Well," said Larry, meditatively, "I think—temperance was thrust upon me."

"Possible! And what is the story of it, if you don't mind?"

"It would be a very long story—one—one I heard."

"Good; if it is quite true, tell it. As we are coming to some long hills, the horses will go slowly; perhaps your story will give me a few ideas."

The farmer leaned back in his seat, dropped the lines on his knees, and looked at Larry. Larry told the story which he had told to Christian Zende; told it as he had told it to Zende, of a third party; but as the occasion seemed to demand, he dila-

ted upon the lad's love of malt drinks, and his forced reformation, and the Captain's drunkenness, and its terrible train of results. The listening farmer became wholly engrossed in the theme ; he forgot to turn out for teams, and he let his horses stop to brouse along the road. He would the way had been longer and harder ! Stories of the sea have always a singular fascination. When Larry had concluded his story, the man demanded, " Is that *certainly true* ? "

" Yes," said Larry, " I can vouch for its truth. Indeed I know the young man well. The mate who picked that boy up, is my intimate friend. I was once in a ship with him myself, but I only went to sea to study a little, and for health. I prefer to be ashore."

" Well, well, it beats all," mused the farmer. " It ought to be in a book ; and, young man, what became of the Captain ? "

" I heard about him from an old sailor who was on two voyages with him. His strange story is stranger than the boy's ; and if you choose, I'll tell it."

Larry had now become engrossed in story telling. He liked to be listened to, to be of importance. He undertook the *Captain's story*, as he heard it from Robin Rounce, with enthusiasm.

"Goodness!" cried the delighted farmer, "I never heard such tales in all my born days! And he lived all that time on the island, and got paid in his own coin, and then got temperate! My stars! And did he ever meet the young lad, and know he was safe?"

"I think he heard that he was safe—but they never met."

"And I think you said something about his being penitent and getting converted, but you passed it over lightly, young man. Did he get converted?"

"Yes, I believe that he did."

"Why, that's about the best part of the whole thing; for if he got converted, he's staunch, and sure to stand, you see; for then God would be continually 'working in him to will and to do of his good pleasure. Haven't *you* been converted, young man?"

“No,” replied Larry, half indifferently, “I don’t know as I have.”

“If you had, I fancy you’d *know* it. Old things would have passed away, and all things would have become new. It is a most awful pity, young man. I hope you ain’t an unbeliever?”

“Oh, by no means,” said Larry, who was pretty well satisfied, in his ignorance, with his own spiritual condition. “I read my Bible, and go to church.”

“That’s very well, so far as it goes ; but it don’t go far enough. Now, young man, I’ve got a proposition to make to you. We have a Temperance society in our township ; it meets to-morrow night. We don’t have interest enough, ’cause we have no speakers. Our members are nice, honest young men, good stuff in ’em, but though I do reckon they’ll be heard from some time, they ain’t heard from now. So here is my idea. You go home with me ; I’ll introduce you to our parson and the doctor, and you’ll stop over, and we’ll send word round, and to-morrow, at our

meeting, you give them two stories you told me. It will take like wild fire; you may have the whole evening for it, for there aint nothing else going on, and we'll pass around the pledge afterwards."

This pleased Larry exactly. Be a lecturer—honored star of an evening! Oh, happy idea, he would stop, by all means.

"And," continued the farmer, "you just write them two stories for our country paper, and I'll get you paid as much as five dollars for 'em."

"I could not, possibly," cried Larry; "it would be unfair, you know, to write the private stories of living people. If it should reach them, they might be angry."

"Well, that's so," admitted the farmer; "but there's no objection to telling them. You can keep the names to yourself; you didn't tell them to me. And so, what's your name?"

"My name,"—hesitated Larry—"didn't I tell you? Oh, it is Mark Gordon."

"Well, Mr. Gordon, here's my house, and

yon's my six children ; six as stout temperance boys, as all on fire for good stories, as any ever you see in your life ; and my name is Jackson—Andrew Jackson ; but I ain't the General, you know ; ha, ha !”

So Larry was takèn into the sitting-room and introduced to Mrs. Jackson and the six junior Jacksons,—“and not a girl among 'em, more's the pity,” said the farmer. And Mrs. Jackson showed him to a tidy bedroom, and ‘hoped he'd make himself at home.’

Larry looked about him when he was alone. “Well ! if my luck don't beat all !” And not one thought of gratitude to Him who had so kindly guided all his way. “What a jolly place this is—if—only Mira were here,—and my mother.”

Larry entered into his new surroundings and prospects with enthusiam ; he “addressed the Temperance meeting,” that is, he told his stories, with great success. He had been introduced to the minister, the doctor, and the storekeeper, and he remained over

Sunday and went to church. Monday he proposed to go on his way, but was urged to stay and paint a little girl's picture. It was a precious daub, but gave satisfaction where pictures were scarce. Then farmer Jackson said to him: "Young man, this is a pretty bit of country; winter is a poor time for going about seeing scenery and painting. The roads will soon be very bad. Suppose you stop and teach our district school this winter. I'm one of the Committee, minister's another, doctor's another. We want a good, decent, temperance young man, and we won't need any higher studies than I'm bound an educated young man like you can teach. Come, stay."

Poor Larry! He had none of the instincts of a tramp: he loved home life, and something to do, and somebody to be kind to him. Here was a chance indeed. He asked not, "What will you give me?" but, "Can I board with you?"

"O no," Mr. Gordon. "I am too far from the school house; you must board

with widow Miller, she is just handy there. She always expects it: she needs the help. It seems her right, and she'll make you comfortable, just like a mother. Come, we'll give you thirty dollars a month, and widow Miller will give you room and meals, fire, lights, and washing, for fifteen. Say the word, and we'll settle it."

Larry settled it. He went with farmer Jackson to call on the minister, and having given a few evidences of his proficiency, he was promised the school. Farmer Jackson then took him to call on widow Miller. She seemed very kind. As they went home, said the farmer, "Widow Miller's about the best old lady that ever was. She's one of the saints, for sure. I always think of her by that text, 'These are they that have come out of great tribulation.' Poor soul, left a widow, with one only son. He went off to Kansas to make his fortune. After five years he was coming back with his money. He wrote his old mother when to expect him. The day came—she set her tea table, and waited for

the stage. No son came. Next day and next day, and no word, and so on for three long years, she waited her tea every night for the stage, and no news, and no son, and never a word from that day to this. Folks concluded he'd been killed on the road home, by accident maybe, or by some one for his money; but in her heart she has never given him up. She has grown white-haired, pale, and patient in her sorrow, waiting for a son who never comes, and whom she only half believes to be dead. Oh, young man, there is nothing to equal the love, and faithfulness, and patience of these mothers, except the love, and faithfulness and patience of God; and he who neglects and injures his mother, is he who neglects and insults his God."

A simple story, and oh, how it cut home to the heart of this selfish and wilful son! He almost repented—not quite. Larry went to the widow Millers, and opened his school with success. The pupils numbered thirty—not untrained at home, and varying in age from

five to seventeen. Larry was quite able to teach them what was needed, and he pursued his new vocation with some degree of interest and faithfulness.

But the widow Miller fascinated him. There was something in her air and figure like his own mother. Her voice had a kindly, sorrowful tone. She tried to act a mother's part by him, was interested in his health, in his pursuits, in his soul. They went to church together; she talked to him about the sermons; she asked a blessing on their food; she had morning and evening worship; and Larry's hot tears fell many times as she prayed for blessings upon her son, "if he yet lived." She began to talk to him about her son, revealing all her craving love, her terrible suspicions of evil that had overtaken him, her vain longing for his return. Then Larry's heart would point to him his own mother and her similar woe. But he said, "She has Ila and her husband, and now the house."

One day he asked Mrs. Miller, "Which would you prefer, to find that your son was

dead, or that living, he had voluntarily separated himself from you for these eight years?"

She replied, "I think I had rather feel that he was dead. God's blessing could not rest upon an ungrateful son."

"But God often does heap mercies on bad sons," said Larry.

"Not knowing in their hardness and impenitent hearts, that the goodness of God should lead them to repentance, they are treasuring up to themselves wrath against the day of wrath," said the widow.

Larry was having a sharp conflict with himself. He longed to see Mira,—every day away from her seemed years. He felt disgraced by his ingratitude to Christian Zende and Doctor Grafnick, and daily the widow Miller's sorrow and loss was preaching to him about the iniquity of his conduct to his mother. A wise child, in his school, unintentionally described to him his own spiritual state. The youngster was reading something about an impenitent sinner, and hard hearts. She remarked, "Teacher, I don't

think all folks' hearts is so *hard* when they is bad ; some hearts is *tough* ; and, sir, isn't a hard heart easier to break than a tough one ? Why, Ivey Pond ain't got a hard heart, for he cries when anything is killed. Ivey's heart is *tough*—he don't mind his mother, and he wont."

"Well," said Larry, "you must ask the minister about hearts."

And so Larry kept his hard heart, or his *tough* heart, until spring ; and then one day widow Miller suddenly died. This woke Larry as with a shock. His mother might die ! He would fly home and beg her forgiveness. He would only delay for the widow's funeral. He went after the funeral to Mr. Jackson's. The rain had poured all day : he woke in the night, terribly ill, and for three weeks lay near death. Then consciousness and remorse returned together. God had spared him once more ; should goodness lead him to repentance, or should he treasure up wrath against the day of wrath ? He yielded. He sent for Mr. Jackson.

“ Sir, do you remember the story of the lad, I told you, the day we met?”

“ Of course, every word of it.”

“ Oh, sir, that was *my* story! I am not Mark Gordon, but I am Larry Jeffries. But you don't know half my story yet;” and so he told the good farmer all the story of his neglect of his mother; his deceit, his ingratitude. He said, “ Can God forgive all that, Mr. Jackson?”

“ Yes, for Christ's sake, he can and will forgive anything to the penitent; but it is repent and undo; vow and pay; march back on your path, young man; get straight and keep straight.”

“ Doctor says I'll get better; and then, sir, I'll go straight home. But wont you sit down and write a letter for me to Christian Zende, and put fifty dollars in it, and tell him to come here to see me right off?”

“ And your mother?” persisted Mr. Jackson.


“ Yes, sir, I'll get Mira Zende to write to her, and I'll put a word in too. Oh, sir, I am

going back, and I'll go saying—you know the words sir. 'I have sinned against Heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son—make me as one of thy hired servants.' ”

CHAPTER XIX.

ALL ENDS WELL.

“The home you left but late,
He speeds to it light-hearted ;
By the wires he sent this news, and straight
To you with it they started ;”
O joy for a yearning heart too great,
O union for the parted !

OW impatient was Larry for the coming of Christian Zende! Suppose he should bring Mira! “When will they come: I cannot wait!” he cried.

“Eh—how long have you kept your mother waiting?” said farmer Jackson, who believed that a little caustic was good on occasion. Indeed Larry was doomed to a very tedious waiting. His letter did not reach Philadelphia until the third day after it was sent, for Mr. Jackson’s house was at a dis-

tance from the railroad. Then when the missive was delivered, Christian Zende was off for the whole day on some work in Germantown, and Mira laid the letter under the clock to await his return. The letter was finally received, and read. Christian, who had never left Philadelphia since the day of his arrival from Germany, spent the evening in countless inquiries of all authorities, where and when he should take his departure, to get to Larry. "Mein Mira," he said, "she shall go mit me; she dalks more petter ast I does, gute deal. Poy Pilly shall kept te hous; he ist now some more gute poy as neffer he vas py ant py. Now, mein Mira, mein herz, dein olt vater and zie all does forgeeve these young man. He ist more sorry ast neffer he vas, ant de gute Lord he has dake dese young mans in handt to makes heem gute; ant ven de Lord he gives dese lessons, he does it so vell as neffer vas, ant all he leaves for us ist to forgeeve, and it is that mein Mira likes more best."

Filled with these genial intentions, father Zende and his pretty daughter set out on their journey, and found themselves at farmer Jackson's, late on the evening of the fourth day after his writing. Larry was yet very ill, his impatience during these days having hindered his improvement. But indeed there was as much repentance and shame, as impatience in the perturbation of his mind: he had had, all this while, to lie and reflect on the error of his ways—to recall the devotion with which his long-neglected mother had nursed him through former illness. She might even now be dead. He vowed to be the best of sons, if God would permit him to return to her.

Christian Zende had not sent any word to Mrs. Vernon. He had told Mira that there would only be a little longer delay by waiting until they saw Larry, and that it would be better to tell the mother something definite about his state—perhaps that he was rapidly recovering.

As soon as Christian reached Mr. Jackson's

house, he was taken to see Larry. He said heartily, "Ant how ees mein vriend, these effening, hein?"

"Oh, Mr. Zende," said Larry, "I was afraid you would never call me your friend again; I have deceived you so!"

"Ach," said Christian, "you rebents—dat ish vell: *eef* you goes to does petter, vy I says mein vriend, hein?"

"Ah," said Larry, "I do repent indeed, and hope to do better."

"Ant, mein vriend, vere did you rebent first? Dit you rebent first to de Lord, or to Christian Zende?"

"I hope first to the Lord," replied Larry.

"Ach, das ist petter ast neffer so goot, mein vriend. Ant, I dit pring mein Mira, ant to-morrow mein poy, she writes dein mutter such gute letters as neffer vas, all apout dein rebentance, hein?"

"I wish it were to-morrow," sighed Larry.

"I does not," said Zende. "Our gute Fader, he makes von night petween two

days, ant He says 'ferry gute:' and I says 'ferry gute,' too, to all He does."

Early next morning Mira might have been seen seated before the window in Larry's room, busily writing the letter to his mother, while Christian, in an arm-chair beside the bed, nodded approbation to all the young man's earnest expressions of his sorrow, promises of amendment and future devotion, and petitions for forgiveness.

Said Christian, "Mein vreind! you asks ein gute mutter to forgeeves you. Ferry gute; but dein mutter's herz ist like ein gute Fader in mein Pook: he sees ein Brodibal Son ein great long wide vays off, ant he *runs* ant falls on hees necks. Now, • dein mutter's herz it vatches vor sie ein long vays off—ven she sees dein vorts, 'mein deer mutter,' ant dein name—Larry Jeffries,—she forgeeves you pefore she reads alles als ist petween. Ach, zo de gute Fader apove, he sees dein rebentance a long vays off—ant he meets eet half vay—ant, mein vriend, dien rebentance is alles vrom Him too."

May had whitened all the apple and cherry trees with bloom when Christian and Mira reached the farmer's. They remained several days, and then returned to Philadelphia, Larry promising to come to them as soon as he was able to travel, and rest one night on his way home. He commissioned Mira to purchase some gifts for his mother, Ila and Claude, and have them ready for him when he came. A light heart, a conscience relieved of its burden of wrong, did more for Larry's restoration than even the balmy May air and the zealous attentions of Mr and Mrs. Jackson. The farmer, who had had little variety in his life, felt under special obligations to Larry for bringing such an unusual story and experience to his roof, and particularly for the sequel to the tale which had there taken place.

As soon as he was able to sit up and hold a pen, Larry wrote a long letter to his mother, pouring out all the conflict of his heart, his folly and sorrow. Mothers are always very ready to forgive. Before that

letter reached Mrs. Vernon, she had written to her son in answer to the letter from Mira.

Able, at last, to leave the country home where he had met such boundless hospitality, Larry went to Philadelphia, and there found not only the Zende family, but Doctor Graf-nick and Ben Cary ready to greet him, the "Logan" having just arrived in port. Mira displayed her best housekeeping in a supper for all, and boy Billy conducted himself in an exemplary manner. Larry sent a telegram to his mother, telling her when he would be at home, and early next morning set forth on that long delayed return. It was now five years since he had left Gilberthead.

Meantime, at Gilberthead, the winter had passed, as we have said, in a nearly hopeless waiting; and by spring Mrs. Vernon seemed slowly sinking under the burden of her troubles. She was ready to cry, "All thy waves and thy billows are gone over me." Just here came consolation, came rejoicing. Mira's letter told her, 'thy son liveth'—more than

that, he lived penitent, humble, loving. He was now at last truly in his right mind.

The letter containing this joyful news had hardly fallen from Mrs. Vernon's trembling hand, when all Gilberthead seemed to have learned the story. The neighbors began to flock to the house. But joy made Mrs. Vernon more considerate of others than she had been in her deepest trouble. She gave the letter to Ila, and bade her run to Mrs. Lois with it. Ila met the minister and Judge Cole.

"What is this, Ila?" said the gentlemen; "we have heard that you have had good news!"

Ila waved the letter over her head. "Come in, and read it," she cried; and the two went into the Captain's, and behind them went the present occupant of the Jeffries' house, and stood in the doorway to listen to the reading.

Judge Cole said to him, "My friend, I fancy you will have to vacate that dwelling. If you act properly, perhaps we will let the

repairs and improvements stand against the rent, for these two years and a half."

That day Judge Cole went to Boston, and found time to see Mr. Bloss. He said :

" Larry Jeffries is coming back, as good as new, maybe better ; for we hear he's a sound temperance man now, and I fancy he is going to be married to an uncommonly good, pretty, and sensible girl. So now, I want you to do something for poor Lois."

" No thanks to Lois that Larry has turned out so well."

" No—that is true. But don't hit a man when he's down. We sinners ought to forgive each other, Mr. Bloss ; we make large drafts for forgiving on One above. Give the Captain a ship."

" Well—maybe. We have one, just about to be launched. She will go into the Savannah trade for the present. Possibly Lois can have that. We'll see if a crew can be raised for him."

" You can count on Robin Rounce for one, I know," said the Judge ; " and other good

men too. Come, sir, let the man have a chance to retrieve himself."

"Well—when young Jeffries comes home, I think I'll run up to Gilberthead to see how our troubler looks, and then I will talk to Lois about the ship."

But Judge Cole could not delay the good news; that very night he told Orson Lois that he was likely to get another vessel, and so sent him to bed, about the happiest man in Massachusetts; but the happiest woman was Mrs. Vernon.

Then came, in a week's time, Larry's letter; and that threw Gilberthead into another furor. The heir who had owned for three years a house which he was never likely to hold again, concluded that the real Larry was living, and presently to return; so he made the best of his bad bargain, and behaved handsomely while there was opportunity. He went to Mrs. Vernon and told her that she should have possession of the place immediately. He said, "It would be painful to your son to find you where you now

are. You can move at once into your old home, and put it in the order in which it was before he went away." So he moved his own furnishings to Boston, and departed, leaving Mrs. Vernon all that was Larry's.

Word went round among the townspeople that furniture had grown scantier and shabbier in the Jeffries' house; the other owner had not particularly valued the things of which Mrs. Vernon had taken great care; and so there was, for two or three days, a continued procession to the Jeffries' house, bearing gifts, until the place seemed restored to all its former simple comfort.

Meanwhile Mr. Vernon and Ila were busy in the garden and among the bees, so that at last one could not have seen a change in the home from what it had been five years before, except for some new roofing, paint, and paper, which were decidedly an advantage.

And then came the dispatch telling when Larry would be at home. Gilberthead resolved to have a little celebration on its own

account. Larry Jeffries has not seemed much of a hero in this ungarnished tale, but the Gilbertheadians determined to treat him as one. There are many kind-hearted people in this world, and a fair share of them lived in that little Massachusetts' village. The townspeople thought that Larry would be home by the evening train. The village was a side station, where trains were infrequent. Now Larry, the nearer he got home, became the more impatient. When he had been twenty-four hours on the way, he thought he could not endure another hour's delay; and stopping at the junction, nearest Gilberthead, he left his luggage to go by train, hired a horse, and went tearing home by the turnpike.

A man from Gilberthead, who happened to be at the Junction, saw this, and kindly sent a dispatch to the village announcing the manner of Larry's coming. Meanwhile, Larry flew over the smooth turnpike, little sparing the beast that bore him. Mr. Vernon had set out to buy some roots of a farmer

who lived on the turnpike, not expecting Larry so early, or on this road. He chanced then, about mid-day, to be the first one to meet the restored youth. As the good man hobbled along the road, he heard a shout. A sweating horse stood still, and a tall young man, springing at him, gave him a hearty greeting. Vernon recognized his long-lost step-son, whose return would doubtless prolong the mother's life, and would secure comfort and a home to his own old age. A few hurried words on both sides. Then Mr. Vernon said, " Ride on, Larry, ride on, to your mother !"

But no—the village was not far. Larry would not abandon the first relation whom he had discovered, and the two walked toward the town together, Larry leading the horse.

But the news of his approach had spread in the town, and Gilberthead turned out *en masse* to meet him. Jeffries' house stood on the turnpike, nearly the last house in the village. Thither ran the school children, the

young lads and lasses, idlers, and some eager old friends, a joyous troop. They seized Mrs. Vernon and hurried her along at their head. The usually sedate village had gone mad; the steadiest of towns do foolish things occasionally. One of those who could not restrain his impatience was Orson Lois; he must see with his own eyes the restored youth, whose supposed death had lain—a long nightmare—on his soul.

The long parted son and mother met, and both bursting into tears, they were locked in each other's arms;—the sympathizing crowd shouted exultation, and in the happiness of that moment they forgave Captain Lois, who, for so long, had borne among them the mark of Cain. Half a dozen stout fellows seized Orson by the shoulders, and thrust him forward to shake hands with Larry. They enjoyed that part of the scene as much as any; indeed it began to seem to them as fine a thing to receive Orson Lois back into favor, as to welcome Larry's return. And now some sharp urchin had shrieked, "He's come !

he's come!" through the village streets; and incontinently all the bells were set ringing; church bells, school bells, fire bells, town bells, all dinging and clashing with all their might. Gilberthead had never before had a hero, and meant to make the best of its rare opportunities.

A very busy house was Jeffries' house all that day; the wide hall, and the shady green garden were crowded with friends who came to question and congratulate. True, they had had all his story before, piecemeal, and from one letter and another, but they must hear it from Larry himself. He touched upon it lightly. This neighborly inquisition was what he had dreaded; he had been enabled heartily to forgive Captain Lois, and he did not wish now to renew the old animosity nor torture the Captain by a recital of the agonies which he had endured on Sombrero. His own morbid fancies about the charge of theft, were things not to be proclaimed from the house-tops. He enlarged most freely on the kindness of the Captain

who had rescued him, the friendship of Doctor Grafnick and Christian Zende, and the hearty goodness of farmer Jackson. These were things good to talk about.

In a few weeks Ben Cary came up to Gilberthead to make a visit, and brought "poy Pilly" along, as a reward of merit for having kept house faithfully during Christian's visit at farmer Jackson's. After that Ben found it good to come to Gilberthead far more frequently than mere friendship for Larry seemed to justify. Ila looked at Claude Lois, and said, 'Who wouldn't come?'

Mr. Bloss made his promised visit. He congratulated Larry on his safe return, and told him bluntly that 'he had played the fool more than any lad that had ever been heard of.' This remark, as it was perfectly true, Larry accepted in a spirit of meekness. Mr. Bloss had fully intended reading Captain Lois a very serious lecture on the manifold evils of his conduct, and on the carefulness with which his ways would be watched by all the world. Instead, he told him that the "Oriël"

was about as trim a ship as was in the coast trade, and that he should have her, and be at sea in two weeks' time.

Closely following Mr. Bloss, came Robin Rounce to Gilberthead. The old man beamed and chuckled, and quoted his Good Book, fulfilling to the minutest letter the injunction to rejoice with them that do rejoice. Moreover, he regularly, every evening of his stay, gathered the Gilberthead boys together, and in his own style talked Temperance to them, until they were all astir on that great question, and formed a Society among themselves. At the first meeting of this Society, "Poy Pilly" delivered an address, describing the way in which father Zende had broken him of drinking beer.

Robin told Captain Lois that he had come to secure a berth on the "Oriel," and that Harper would go with him.

In June, Christian Zende and Mira came for a short visit, and took Billy home when they went back. Gilberthead regarded Mira with great favor, and trusted that some time

she would come to stay. The village was also, during that summer, illuminated with the presence of that great light of science, Doctor Grafnick, who made himself very happy examining all the rocks, insects and plants in the vicinity, and gave Gilbert-head a vast amount of curious information when it assembled at the post-office in the evening.

The Doctor's advice to Larry was of a most practical kind. He examined the acres belonging to the Jeffries' house, and instructed Larry no more to rent them to his neighbors for small prices, but to have them thoroughly cultivated for sweet herbs, small fruits, fine vegetables and honey, for the Boston market; and the plan he laid down for Larry's management of his patrimony was likely well carried out to bring that young man a very tolerable income.

Captain Lois sailed in the "Oriel." One of farmer Jackson's elder boys wished to go to sea, and came to join the "Oriel's" crew. Being now given an opportunity of re-

trieving his character as a man and a captain, Captain Lois had not only a Temperance, but a religious vessel; and was unwearied in his efforts for the safety, comfort and instruction of his crew. Said Robin Rounce, "Speak of a floatin' Bethel, and you speaks of the "Oriël."

Return to his favorite profession, and to his beloved element, restored Captain Lois' vigor: looking old for his years, gray, wrinkled and grave, from the bitter experiences which he had undergone, he was yet alert and hardy. His wife no longer trembled when he left home, fearing that he might admit a demon upon his ship; and the weeks he passed ashore in the intervals of his voyages, in the home where once more ease, beauty and abundance reigned, became the happiest of Helen Lois' life. In port, Captain Lois often went to the Bethel, to talk to the sailors gathered there. He would frequently say, "Boys, it's all useless to fight against God. When he takes you in hand, He is bound to win the day, and

you had better 'agree with thine Adversary quickly, while thou art in the way with him.' Sometimes God takes us at our own word, and out of our own mouth 'judges us, wicked and unfaithful servants;' and then, my lads, we know what a cup of trembling is;" and, thereafter, he would tell them such parts of his own story as would impress the hardy tars, who listened, with the folly of fighting against God. For the work of the Church of Christ among sailors, Captain Lois often and warmly plead. He had learned by his own experience, that in the ports of heathen nations the sailors of American vessels often largely undo the work of the foreign missionary, and that the Church would strengthen her hands abroad, if she wrought carefully at home among these toilers of the sea, who have been so greatly neglected. Drunken and riotous sailors disgrace our nation abroad, and cause iniquities to abound, against which our missionaries painfully contend: but every temperate, honest, Christian sailor, is an unpaid mission-

ary, an apostle of good morals, and a noble exponent of a Christian civilization.

THE END.

Perhaps there may be yet living in Marblehead, Massachusetts, those who remember Jeffries the sailor, deserted on Sombrero, whose fate for years occupied much of the attention not merely of his friends, but of two great nations.

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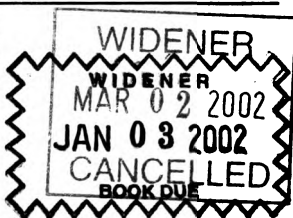
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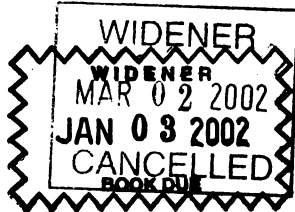
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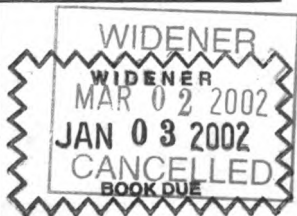


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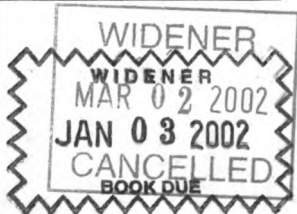


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