

week from another, except that the seventh was, in some sort, a day of rest even with the hardest captains under whom they sailed, who were there they scarcely knew how or why, from idle whim or vague curiosity, to hear the music or "what the parson would have to say," gathered literally from the highways and byways and compelled to come in.

There were unusual sights and sounds for church-goers without. Now loud oaths or snatches of a sailor song from some group strolling along the wharves, then a hiss of steam, a flitting past of steamers, as the Sunday pleasure-boats left on their crowded hourly trips down the bay. Bells rang and dogs barked, men shouted or laughed with coarse, unseemly merriment at coarser jests, the chapel rocked and swayed in the swell of some arriving or departing vessel, and a steady, glaring heat struck upon the small organ loft, whose occupants were familiar with all this in the discharge of their self-appointed duty.

Heat and cold were alike to them so long as they could lead in the "common praise" and respond to the "common prayer" of those in whom they thus evinced untiring interest. English Bessie, for the sake of the father and brother, buried by one wave from the same wreck; and the blind man at her side, whose white hands drew such noble music from the organ's keys, while he sang the pure, clear tenor of which we spoke.

He sat with his face turned towards Bessie, as if his sightless eyes longed to know the features of this familiar friend whom he had never yet seen. His long hair thrown backwards from a forehead that had never known exposure, touched the broad linen collar, turned over a simple ribbon, tied carelessly

about the throat. His dress was simple, far from new, but neat, so neat that you wondered to know a woman's hand had not arranged it. Music was at once his passion and his livelihood. For the rest, he had no relatives and no dependence.

It was a singular friendship that had grown up between these two, who met not elsewhere; and when the sermon was done, it was pleasant to see the sisterly care with which she handed him his hat and staff and led him down the narrow stairs, where he must have groped slowly but for her hand.

"Here is the sill, Richard," she said, "and here the door; and there is the rector, waiting to speak with you."

But the quick ear of the blind man discovered another step, and though he listened to the kindly words of the grave rector, he heard an invitation given and refused where Bessie stood at the door of the vestibule.

"What did he want?" asked Richard in a quick, excited tone peculiar to him as his hand was placed once more in that firm, reliant clasp, and she led him over the swaying plank to the shore.

"Steady! There, now you are on the wharf," Bessie said, as she might have soothed an excited child. "Who?—What? Allen?"

"Yes, Allen. I heard his voice when Mr. Storey was talking. When did the 'Bess' come in? He has had a quick trip."

"Not very; the usual time. There, now, you do not need my hand any longer."

"Why do you take it away, Bessie? There is the crossing, yet, and those piles of lumber."

"Yes,"—and she laughed pleasantly—"but you know them as well as I do. You could lead me here."