

vessel, they were carried within a few hundred miles of the American continent. Hosts of stormy petrels began to hover round the ship. They are certainly very singular visitants, these little creatures, as they appear hovering like spirits around the shrouds with their white breasts and wild peculiar note, so far away from a spot whereon to rest the sole of their feet, and the subject of a strange, superstitious interest to seamen. They are supposed to build their nests on the ice-bergs, and some of our men entertained the grave belief that they are the spirits of the drowned seamen, never seen but as an omen of approaching misfortune, and missioned to warn their comrades of coming tempests. One of the officers one day sang to our voyagers some wild verses on this subject, picked up from the tradition concerning them, and as they have never been, to a certainty, before published, I shall present my readers with them:

THE STORMY PETRELS.

A speck on the briny plain, from shore,
Five hundred watery leagues and more,
The vessel rides, with wings unfurled,
Like a bird of hope o'er a chaos world.

And a saffron hue from sea to sky,
Makes dim the air,—wherein to spy
His fellow's face, doth shrink each man
In the lurid light, so ghastly wan.

With a flap and a twang, while the white sails there
Swing in the still and stagnant air;
And the vessel's trunk on the billow swell
Like a monster carcass rose and fell.

And low, wild murmurings from afar
Caught o'er the waters booming are,
Like the distant sound of the battle drum
Warning of danger, and death, and doom.

Then with a whirl about the ship
The stormy petrels gathering dip,
Spectre-like fitting the shrouds around—
They are the souls of the seamen drowned!

From the ice-berg steep, from the wandering isles
That sail o'er the seas in frozen piles;
From the far horizon's cloud piled bound—
They come, the ghosts of the seamen drowned!

From over the wide wild sweeping sea—
In whose hurricane circuit doomed they be
For ever and aye to wander round—
They come, the souls of the seamen drowned!

With dark presages of storm and woe,
The omen birds of doom—and lo!
The face of the sky doth in blackness dip—
And the hurricane bursts upon the ship!

The hurricane bursts upon the bark,
Down, down a thousand fathoms dark,
Hull, spar and sail!—and around and round
They rise, the ghosts of the seamen drowned!

Two days of intense increasing cold warned
them of the vicinity of icebergs. They saw one
in the evening low upon the western horizon,
like a far off blue mountain; and then with the

night, came a dense, drizzling fog, in which they were afraid to proceed, knowing from the floating ice that now began to drift past them, and the freezing cold, that they had arrived in the channel where those floating ice-monsters make their annual voyage into warmer latitudes from the Arctic seas. When daylight broke a strong look-out was stationed ahead; and the ship again took her way through the fog. Large masses of ice were continually passing—some white, some blue, some deep sea green, in a thousand fantastic outlines and strange shapes, waving, dissolving, wasting away—lonely, melancholy things as they sailed over the frozen seas. Flocks of sea birds sometimes sat upon them, and upon one was stationed a poor cast away seal that moaned piteously on finding himself so hopelessly removed from the land, that was now too far distant for his strength to regain. Towards evening the fog cleared completely away, leaving the most cloudless of horizons and clearest blue sea. It seemed as if ocean and atmosphere had been clarified by those dense vapours; and in the cold, clear, transparent light, Susan counted near and around them, and in the far off horizon—twelve ice-bergs. High, massive and peaked Alpine heights, rising perpendicularly from a dead level, they presented their frozen summits to the sunlight which tinged them with a thousand rainbow hues. Green, violet, and rose were they—incomparably beautiful, but the beauty of death, cold and serene, which stirs no emotion in the soul, and chills even while it fascinates.

The next morning no ice was to be seen, and the ship careered merrily along with a fair breeze fast towards her destination. They passed through a shoal of whales that kept within sight of the ship the whole day, spouting rainbows into the sky and lashing the water into foam with their unwieldy gambols. Flocks of sea gulls now warned them of their near approach to land; and one morning Susan Anstey was called upon deck to view the entrance of "The Narrows," through which the vessel was now making her ingress into the beautiful bay of New York. They were taken up by a steamer which towed them in an hour and a half to the anchorage ground underneath the Battery. The voyage was ended. With all its physical discomforts our heroine found it to be worth an age of the monotonous life she had hitherto been accustomed to lead. Variety, novelty, interconverse with nature, diversity of emotion—all conspired to fill her with a completer consciousness of existence than she had ever before experienced. It appeared to her as if she had sped years in one short month. We shorten our lives by the monotonous daily round in which we spend them. Time is to be measured less by the lapse of days and years, than by the variety of our sensations and impressions; and how brightly, if we were wise, might we not lengthen out this brief space, by communion with all that bright infinite variety, which God has given in the worlds of nature and mind, to be gathered into the inner world of our own souls.

(To be continued)