

Carrying considerable sail for her size, she was as handy as a top when working to windward out of the reefs, and when once outside, sailing free, her speed was very great, in spite of the resistance of the bluffer built boat of the *Firefly* which she was towing after her.

Campbell had read the signs of the weather aright: each instant the wind rose, and we soon had to take in first one reef and then another. As the waves began to curl and break, the strain on the tow rope, already great, was increased by the sudden jerks. At length, just as Campbell pointed out to us the low lying Blank Island, the rope parted.

"Make sail Jimmy, and pilot them into the bay," shouted Campbell. Then he added to us, "we should only waste time by trying to tow them further. In sight of port and with their light load they will do well enough, though it would be different if there were ten men in her, and the main land to make. Eh, Captain?"

Indeed it was now very evident that the timely arrival of Campbell had saved our lives; a boat so heavily laden would never have lived in such a sea.

As we drew near the island we could see a little bay on the shore of which were assembled a dark crowd of men watching our approach, and behind them amidst the dwarf trees was visible a cluster of low buildings. A formidable surf broke on the shelving beach, but Campbell and his crew, cool and evidently equal to the emergency, kept the head of the boat straight through the breakers. Before it touched the sand, the darkies, swarming like the inhabitants of a disturbed ant hill, and rushing waist deep into the water, seized the boat and bore it bodily beyond the reach of the waves.

The *Firefly's* boat was not far behind us; and with the *Kanaka* at the helm and those ashore assisting,

was hauled up on the beach with equal success.

We were well received; the crew were at once taken charge of by the two or three white men on the island, and Campbell took the skipper and me up to his own hut.

"Black is away in our little schooner with a cargo of fish," he said, "so we shall find plenty of room for you."

It was a rough but not uncomfortable building for such a climate, and soon we were sitting down to a dinner which showed they did not live badly on their out of the way island. When we had satisfied our hunger and lighted our pipes Campbell produced a square bottle, and we sat down to enjoy ourselves. After we had explained the cause of our misfortune, Campbell entertained us with a description of their mode of life, and related different strange incidents that had befallen him in his adventurous calling.

"This is better than an open boat at sea, eh captain?" he said once, as the wind howled over the building. "I thought we should have it hot and strong."

All that night the gale increased, and in the morning the breakers rolling into the little bay were a magnificent sight.

"Ah! there comes the *Zantippe*," said Campbell, who was standing near me, as he pointed out the smoke of a steamer rapidly approaching. "I must have a boat out and go on board, for I have business with the captain."

"I will go with you," I said, "for one of her officers is a friend of mine, and I will try to get a passage in her."

"Well come, if you don't mind a wet jacket," he said with a laugh: "it won't be fine weather sailing, though I can't say there's much danger."

We took our seats in one of the whale-boats, but in spite of their skill and experience in such matters, a wave caught her, dashed her on the shore, and in an instant we were floundering in the surf.