

# A Terrible Adventure.

BY ERNEST SMITH.

It was the middle of June, one of those lovely warm days which boys and girls always picture to themselves as being most adapted to the sea side. Two youths, Herbert Drake and Walter Johnson, were spending their summer holidays at Torquay, in Devonshire. The sea and all belonging to it always have a charm for boys, but in the case of these two boys there was a special charm. They were cousins. Herbert Drake had lived at the sea side all his life, and knew every corner, every rock, in fact every thing connected with the beautiful beach and rocks which skirt Torbay. His cousin Walter, however, had never before seen the sea,—he had read of it in books, he had seen the pictorial representations of ships sailing majestically on the smooth waters, but he had never seen them in reality. And this was his first day at the sea side. He had been talking about this trip for weeks, and his cousin Herbert had been planning for the same length of time what he should do and where he should take his cousin each day during the month they were to spend together. Well, here they were promenading up and down the pier, Walter asking all manner of questions about every thing he saw, and often making his cousin roar with laughter at his apparent ignorance.

"Well, Waltie," said Herbert at length, "I'm tired of walking up and down this pier. What do you say to a run over the rocks?"

"Just what I should be delighted to do," said Walter. "You know I have never been here before, and whatever you suggest will be new to me, and I am sure to like it."

So off the two started arm in arm, both ready for anything. Five minutes walk brought them to the beach. The tide was a long way out, and, as they walked over the hard sand, Walter could not imagine it possible that the sea would roll right over the very spot on which they were standing in a few hours, and kept Herbert well employed in answering many curious questions, until, almost without knowing it, they had walked two miles, and were at the foot of a large square rock known by the name of "The Thatcher."

"Here we are, Waltie," said Herbert. "What do you think of this for a rock? I'm going to take you to the top of this and show you the English Channel on one side, Torquay at the top of the bay, and the pretty fishing village called Brixham, where William III. landed when he first came to this country."

So the two lads climbed on by degrees, not noticing how fast or how slowly they were travelling, until at last they reached the top of the "Thatcher."

"Did you bring the field glass with you?" asked Herbert, when they were both fairly rested on the highest part of the "Thatcher."

"No, I haven't a field-glass," said Walter.

"But, although I have never before been to the seaside, I know that there are better things than field-glasses or opera-glasses through which to view the sea, so I purchased a splendid telescope. It is by no means ornamental, but I was assured that the lenses were perfect; and, as the poor fellow from whom I bought it was starving, and wanted money far worse than the telescope, I thought I could not do a better thing than exchange my sovereign for his glass. Here it is? What do you think of it?"

"Just the very thing, Waltie," said Herbert, after he had put the telescope to his eye and tried its merits in every way. "It's the finest glass I ever saw. A sovereign did you say? Why, it is just exactly like my Uncle Ben's glass, I declare, and he said his cost five pounds. You were fortunate, I tell you, to get a five pound article for twenty shillings. Now I'll show you the sea with a vengeance."

The two boys amused themselves for hours looking through the glass, even Herbert, who had always lived at the seaside, being delighted with the chance of having such a glass all to himself for a time.

At last Walter looked out in the channel and

saw a big steamer ploughing the waves and tossing up and down occasionally. Had he remained on the beach, he thought, he would never have seen that splendid boat, and he made up his mind that he would be a sailor as soon as he was old enough. But while the boys had been looking out to seaward they had not noticed the fast approaching tide, and they were both amazed and terrified on finding that the sea, which, you will remember, was a long way off when they first started for the rock, had now surrounded them.

"Oh! Look! Look!" cried both voices together, for they both noticed their predicament at the same time. Strange to say, Herbert asked his cousin what to do, forgetting that Walter was not accustomed to the sea.

"I don't know what to do," said Walter. "Can you swim?"

"Yes," replied Herbert, "I can swim; but it is impossible to get across to land by one's self. The water is too deep and too rough. It is useless to attempt anything. The only thing to do is to wait. We must climb up to the top of the rock and patiently sit there until the tide returns."

"Will it ever return?" asked Walter in despair. "It seems to be getting higher and higher. I'll take care if I once get off this rock not to get caught again."

The lads were not cowards, though they were only about fourteen years of age, and they climbed to the summit of the rock and sat down determined to wait patiently until the tide returned. It is difficult to know which of the two was most frightened. But Herbert encouraged his cousin as much as possible, assuring him that the water could not possibly reach them where they were.

It was now getting late, and the cousins had no food with them. Their desire for sea views had vanished with the approaching tide, and altogether they were in a terrible plight. Dusk was beginning to take the place of daylight, and, as they had not returned home to dinner or tea, their parents were getting very anxious about their safety, and sent out in every direction to find them. No information could be obtained beyond the fact that they were both seen that morning about ten o'clock walking across the sand toward the "Thatcher," and had not been seen since. A regular search was organized, and by the assistance of the Coast Guardsmen, two figures were seen at the summit of the "Thatcher." Two boats at once set off for the rock, but on nearing it the men in charge had to be very careful not to get too near or they might have been dashed to pieces.

All was excitement on shore, as the news spread like wild-fire that two boys were seen bound on the "Thatcher." The coast nearest the rock was alive with people, anxiously watching the boats on their perilous journey, and many were the speculations as to the safety of the boys.

It is astonishing how quickly the least gleam of hope will raise the spirits of the most desponding. As soon as the cousins saw the boats they became excited and watched with eager anxiety every movement of the men who were trying to save them from a watery grave. The sea was unusually high, and in fifteen minutes would be within two feet of the top of the rock on which they sat. They kept close together—neither spoke—each being absorbed with his own thoughts. At last Herbert broke the silence.

"Shout, Waltie, shout," he said, "as loud as you can." And both together they yelled out "Ship ahoy! Ship ahoy!"

The boats neared them. What was to be done? "Steady, Bill," said one of the men. "Look out for that spur. Halloa, lads, can you hear? Keep where you are till we tell you what to do."

"All right," shouted the boys.

Every second seemed an hour. How the people on shore watched every movement!

"Now, lads," said the man in charge of the boat, "we can't get any nearer 'cause the tide's too heavy, and there's too many rocks about. Can you swim?"

"I can," shouted Herbert, "but Waltie can't."

Here was a difficult task. The water was now within a foot of the top of the rock, and the boys were wet through. Were they both to be drowned?

Was Herbert to swim and leave his cousin to perish? These questions occurred to both. At last Walter begged his cousin to jump and swim for the boat, telling him he was not a bit afraid. At last the men in the boat were ready. It was useless to throw out lines or buoys, because the lads were unable to move for fear of over-balancing, and Herbert stripped (as he sat) to his pants, and with the assistance of his cousin, raised himself to the level of the rock and plunged. In a moment he was seen about three lengths off and two or three life buoys were thrown out to him. He had never been in such rough water before; but this was a case of life or death, and he struggled hard for one of the buoys. It swept cruelly past him toward the rock, and the boy sank for the second time. A moment afterwards he came up again—this time close to the boat—and succeeded in catching a rope which had been hastily thrown out to him. He was soon pulled to the boat and rowed to the shore.

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"Here's the doctor, Bertie," said his mother two days later. "How do you feel to-day?"

Herbert had not spoken since he was taken home insensible, half dead, on the night of the adventure, and he scarcely knew where he was.

"Where's Waltie," he said. But this was not the time to talk about Waltie. Herbert was dangerously ill, and had to keep in bed for many days.

But where *was* Waltie? Had he been left to die on that terrible rock? I will tell you. Just at the time when Herbert jumped into the water the tide began to recede. He did not, of course, notice it, but he had implicit confidence in what his cousin had told him. He sat on, and in an hour he *knew* the tide was going out, and that if he would only wait he would get off safely. It was now midnight and the moon was shining beautifully. The tide had gone out far enough to allow Walter to descend (in fact he had done that with the tide), and in twenty minutes he was clear of the rock—very hungry, very frightened, but safe. He was not long getting home, and after a good meal and a night's rest, felt as strong as ever, but he had learned a lesson. All who have read this story, which is true, know what that lesson was.

## TO ANNIE.

Some day when the sun is yellow like gold,  
And winds blow soft o'er the ocean old;  
And clouds creep into the peaceful west,  
All cradled low for a long, sweet rest—

Some day when the beautiful leaves are dying,  
"To sleep, to sleep," the bleak wind sighing;  
And waves aweary with many a moan,  
Whisper a dirge of the summer flown—

Some day he will come, and his fond heart, true,  
All laden with love will he bring to you—  
Some day he will come in the mellow light,  
Adown the stream in the sun-road bright—

Again in thy happy youth he'll meet thee,  
Again with his fair, sweet smile he'll greet thee;  
And when with his dark eyes seeking thine,  
And thy hands in his, he pleads: "Be mine"—

Some day when the sun is yellow like gold,  
And winds blow soft o'er the ocean old—  
O take not thy dear, little hands away,  
Give love for love all through Life's long day!

Picton, January, 1890. HELEN M. MERRILL.

## THE GHOORKHAS.

The Ghoorkhas—or Ghoorkhas, as they are called in the service—are wild-looking, sturdy lads, with round, flat faces, small eyes, and hair hanging down to their shoulders. This is what they are in the rough. When they have passed through the hands of the barber, the tailor, and the drill sergeant, they are turned out, so to speak, smart little gems of soldiers, with a sparkle of unpresuming swagger about them which is quite in keeping with their brave, independent spirit. They are strong and stout-limbed, but, as a rule, short. An idea of their stature may be formed when we say that the average height of the battalion we first joined was somewhere about 5 feet 2 inches. But their hearts are as large as their frames are short and tough. Indeed, their pluck and faithfulness to their salt have now become proverbial.—*Hindu-Koh*. By Major Gen. Donald Macintyre.