

one of the older masters would get her. Ah my, it seems like yesterday I brought her home from St. John's to the very harbour bran' new; and the last I seen of her she was a worn-out old hulk.

"How's ever, to go on wi' my story, I brought my fine vessel home, shipped most of my crew from about these ports, mostly men that had bin wi' me afore, an' went back to St. John's to get our 'crap'—that's our outfit, you know, sir—an' start from there on the fust o' March. At St. John's we took in the rest of our crew, Pouch Cove chaps they was, an' our full number was a hundred an' thirty men, all told. Last thing the owner says the night we sailed was, 'Now, Barter, don't you show your nose in here unless you've got a load o' fat,' an' I told him I'd do my best, an' off we went. It was a lonely night when we left just after midnight struck, a fine, clear, moonlight night wi' the wind well off the land. It was lively times on the fust o' March in St. John's, in these days, sir; scores an' scores o' sailin'-ships all goin' out to the Ice together, and thousands o' men gettin' berths, as reglar as the spring come round, an' makin' good wages if they got anythin'; now 'tis only a few big steamers, an' thousands can't get berths, an' the few that does don't make any wages wuth while out o' the biggest trips. Ah, 'tis a thousand pities they started them 'ere steamers!

"Well, as I was a-sayin', we had a fine time off, an' worked well down north, wi' plenty o' water an' easy sailin', when all of a sudden up comes a gale from the nor'-east, an' jams us up into White Bay, the ice so packed together we couldn't move a yard, an' the fog that thick we couldn't see a hundred yards from the ship some days. Well, there we was, an' there we lay for nigh three weeks; an' a nice fume I was in, you may depend, wi' a new ship, an' a hundred an' thirty men doin' nothin' but eatin' an' drinkin' an' grumblin'. How's ever the wind changed at last, an' we got clear an' kop' clear. Still, we didn't do much wi' the seals; we got a few hundreds here an' there, picked up a scattered one, as you may say, but didn't seem to strike the main body of seals at all. This didn't improve my temper, ayther; I was fairly savage an' had hardly a civil word for anybody. I knew the men was grumblin' at me, too; they're sure to grumble, some of 'em, if everythin' don't go right, y' know. I worked hard, too; an' there was very few minutes o' daylight that I wasn't on deck, or up at the masthead wi' the spyglass, lookin' everywhere for the black patches that would mean seals. The ice was very loose, for an off-shore wind had follied the north-easter; an' my fear was that the seals had gone too far south for us, and had been taken by other vessels. There was nothin' for it though, but to go in the most likely direction, an' keep a good

look-out, an' one day when spyin' I saw, a little to the sou'-west of us the black patches I had been lookin' for so long; an' as soon as possible the ship's course was turned towards em, an' we were soon among thousands o' prime young seals. Plenty o' work now for everybody, an' I tell you them men did work well, an' the *Sea-Gull's* bran' new paint an' varnish soon began to look dirty an' greasy enough. It was a Thursday, just after dinner, when I sighted the seals, an' by Saturday night it was plain that another couple of days' good work would load us chock up to the decks. So I called the men together that Saturday night, an' I says:

"Now, boys, we're more 'n half loaded, an' another couple of days o' this will give us a good rousin' trip. I want every man-jack o' you on the ice to-morrow, at the crack o' dawn. No skulkin' now, mind; but let's bring the new ship home wi' a full load."

"I didn't care much for Sunday then, sir, I'm sorry to say, an' I wasn't alone in that. There was many a man then that didn't think more of breakin' the Sabbath than he did of eatin' his dinner. I'm sorry to say, too, although it ain't so bad now as in them days, there's men now—some callin' 'emselves Wesleyans, too—that don't regard the Lord's Day at the Ice. I called myself a Wesleyan an' 'ed be ready to fight any one that said I wasn't, an' a Christian as well, but 'tis little I knew o' what them words meant. However, nex' mornin', afore I come on deck, I heard argyfyin' goin' on above, an' shortly a master-o'-watch comes down the companion-ladder, an' he says:

"There's some o' the men won't go on the ice, sir, 'cause 'tis Sunday."

"What men?" says I.

"Well," says he, "there's little Billy Peppy an' three more from Pouch Cove, an' there's Dave French, an' Joe Pike, an' nine more from our place an' Bay Roberts."

"Well," says I, "you tell 'em if they're not on the ice in ten minutes I'll be up, an' make 'em go." When I went up, ten minutes or a quarter of an hour later, I seen they wasn't gone, but was standin' together for'ard, so I went down to 'em.

"Well, men," says I, "what nonsense is this I hear! Why aren't you on the ice wi' the rest? Come, now, get your haulin'-ropes an' bats, and away with you." Not one of 'em stirred. "Is it goin' to turn manus on me you are," says I, stampin' my foot, "I'll soon let you know who's skipper o' this craft."

"Then, Billy Peppy—a little, short, dark man, he was—steps out, an' he says, 'Cap'n Barter, we can't work to-day, sir, 'cause its Sunday.'"

"You hypocrite," says I, "I've seen the like of you before, an' I swore a big oath at 'em."

"Then Dave French, a great big man he was, says, 'Cap'n, we're

willin' to work early an' late other days, but we can't go on the ice to-day—'tis Sunday."

"Well, what o' that?" says I. "You weren't so partic'lar last year, Dave French."

"I know that, sir, more to my shame," says Dave, "but I've giv' my heart to God since then, an' I'm tryin' to please him. That's the difference."

"Shut up, you great fool," says I savagely, "an' let me hear no more o' that sort o' talk. Now, I'll be plain wi' you men. You shipped wi' me to obey orders an' do your work, what ever work I give you to do. Now, my orders is that you get over that rail there, an' do your work to try an' get this ship loaded. Are you goin' to obey me?"

"There wasn't a sign of a yield in 'em I could see, an' Dave French speaks up very quiet, but very firm, 'We've made up our mind to obey God, sir.'"

"Very well," says I, furious. "I order you over this ship's side in two minutes. Do you hear?"

"Well, sir," says Dave, "I s'pose you have the right to order us off the ship, an' we'll go, but this is God's day an' we dare not break it. We'll go on the ice, sir, but we can't work."

"Wi' that they all got over the side an' got on th' ice, an', as I turned to go below, I seen 'em all together movin' off some distance from the ship. I didn't feel very pleasant, sir, you may depend. In the first place, the men had vexed me wi' their obstinacy, as I called it, an' in the second, I couldn't help feelin' that they was right, an' I was wrong. Argy as I might, I couldn't but feel that they had the best of it, an' I got so cross an' restless an' fidgety that, at last, I says to myself, 'I believe I'll go on the ice an' see what them rascals is about.' So I got out on the ice, an' follied on in the direction I'd seen 'em goin'. By'n' by I heard voices, an' creepin' up quiet among some heavy ice, there I seen 'em. There was big Dave French readin' the Bible, an' the other men standin' around listenin'. I felt ashamed, sir, I tell 'ee, in spite of myself. Poor Dave wasn't much of a reader, but he was slowly spellin' it out like—it was the chapter about our Saviour's resurrection—but I thought I never heard that 'ere chapter read as plain afore. Then they began to sing a hymn—that one beginnin' 'Christ the Lord is risen to-day'—you know it, sir—an' all of a sudden I remembered that 'twas Easter Sunday. Then they knelt down—right down there on the cold ice, an' three or four o' 'em prayed—such prayers I thought I never heard afore—thanked God for givin' his Son, an' for helpin' 'em to be faithful to him, an' asked him for grace to be patient an' stidfast. Then they prayed for their families, an' their comrades out breakin' the Lord's day, an' for the Cap'n that the Lord would bless him an' make him a man

after his own heart. 'Twasn't very warm, sir, you may be sure, but I tell 'ee I got oll over in a sweat there listenin' behind a big hummock of ice, an' I says to myself, 'Sam Barter, no wonder yo're ashamed o' yerself, that you drove them men off your ship, an' now they're prayin' for you here; an', at last, I couldn't stand it any longer, an' so I crep' away agen, an' went back to the vessel, pretty well upset.

"How's ever nex' day was a very busy one, an' I soon forgot all my good feelin's. On the Tuesday it began to blow heavy, an' as we was gettin' pretty deep, an' the wind was fair, I thought 'twas best to make sure o' what we had an' go home, which accordingly we did. Passin' Pouch Cove on our way to St. John's I mind the bight was full of ice, an' I declare if some o' the crew didn't leave the ship an' go home instid o' holdin' on an' helpin' to get out the seals when we got to port. Jus' after we got clear an' was gettin' round by Torbay I seen little Billy Peppy on deck, an' I says, 'Hullo, Peppy, how is it you didn't go home when we passed your harbour?'

"Because I didn't believe it was right, sir," says he.

"Ah," says I, "I'm glad to see you've got some conscience."

"Sir," says the man, looking at me right in the eye, "I try to keep a conscience void of offence towards God and towards man."

"I said nothin' and walked away, but the words struck me like a blow, an' made me think of Easter Sunday."

"Well, sir, now for the rest of my story;—an' I must cut it short, or you'll be feelin' chilly an' tired. When we old chaps begins a yarn, sir, we hardly know where to knock off. How's ever, nex' year I was expectin' of course to go to th' Ice agen, but in the beginnin' o' January, th' owner sends for me an' he says, 'Barter, Cap'n Bishop of the *Sunbeam* is taken very sick, an' can't leave his bed, an' the brig's loaded for the Mediterranean an' ready for sea. You must take his place an' leave to-morrow mornin' if there's a time off, as I think there'll be.' There was nothin' for it but to get ready, an' nex' day off we went. We was loaded wi' fish in bulk, an' chock-full, an' was to call at L— for orders. Things went very rough wi' us fust startin'; we had a lot o' head wind, an' sea pretty rough, but it cleared up when wed bin about ten days out, an' looked for settled weather.

"Ev' rythin' went well till we got, accordin' to my reck'nin', about a hundred mile from Gibraltar, an' then, all to once, the glass went down like a shot, an' I knew we was in for a real southerly gale. It was an ugly place, an', as I said, we was heavily loaded, but all we could do was to be careful, an' try to ride it out. We hadn't long to wait for it I tell 'ee.

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